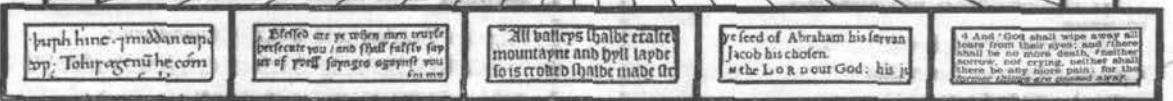


# BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



Vol. 16 No. 1

JANUARY, 1939

THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

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### Public Meetings

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S. A. Couling, 42 Fareham Avenue, Rugby.

## THE AUTUMN PUBLIC MEETINGS

These meetings were held between October and December. They were well attended in the main and considerable interest has been manifested, in many cases this interest having been maintained. The Committee is happy to render assistance to local friends planning meetings for the immediate future, and urges such to write to Bro. Batcheller, who has care of this section of the work. In these difficult days there are many who are seeking an answer to the grave questions of the hour. It lies within our power to expound the greatest message of all time and to reveal the character and Plan of God in a light which many have never seen before.

<b>Newcastle</b> —News Theatre :	Oct. 9	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Hope of Universal Peace."
	" 16	Bro. A. Kirkwood—"Christ's Return: Where; How; When."
	" 23	Bro. John Hall—"Two Salvations. One Saviour."
	" 30	Bro. Norman Hall—"God has a Plan!"
	Nov. 6	Bro. W. Reid Sharp—"The Mystery Hid from Ages."
<b>Glasgow</b> —Central Halls :	Oct. 16	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Christ's Return solves World Problems."
<b>Dundee</b> —Oddfellows Hall :	Oct. 23	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Hope of Universal Peace."
<b>Edinburgh</b> —Oddfellows Hall :	Oct. 24	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Coming World Dictator."
<b>Glasgow</b> —Christian Institute :	Oct. 30	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Outcome of World Crises."
	Nov. 6	Bro. Morton Edgar—"The Divine Plan."
<b>London</b> —Battersea Town Hall :	Nov. 13	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Outcome of World Crises."
	" 20	Bro. W. Knight—"Divine Remedy for Earth's Distress."
	" 27	Bro. A. O. Hudson—"Christ—A King."
	Dec. 5	Bro. Norman Hall—"What of our Dead?"
<b>Leicester</b> —New Co-operative Hall :	Nov. 21	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Coming World Dictator."
<b>Rugby</b> —Radea Hall :	Nov. 22	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Hope of Universal Peace."
<b>Birkenhead</b> —Beechcroft Hall :	Nov. 28	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"Coming World Dictator."
<b>Braintree</b> —Walbrook Hall :	Dec. 4	Bro. W. N. Woodworth—"God's Remedy for World Distress."

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter I. "I WILL COME AGAIN."

A party of men stood gazing into the sky. Overhead, the Syrian sun blazed in a vault of blue. In the distance a patch of cloud drifted lazily away. That solitary group on the eastern slopes of Olivet stood looking still, faces radiant with sudden understanding. Their Master and daily companion had just ascended into Heaven before their very eyes, and still in each mind echoed the words spoken by strange visitors only a few minutes before, "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1; 11).

No longer could there be room for doubt and perplexity. He had left this world; they had seen him go; and one day He would return to establish that Kingdom on earth which they in their ignorance had imagined so close at hand. In the meantime there was a commission to execute; the building of a spiritual Kingdom of God, of which they were to be His witnesses, not only in Jerusalem and in all Judea, but to the uttermost parts of the earth. That was the vista which opened before their mental vision as they climbed over the brow of the hill and found themselves back in the world of men.

From earliest times men and nations have dreamed of and looked for the "Coming One." Nearly every race under heaven has amongst its most cherished traditions the story of One Who came from above to do good, and departed with a promise that upon His return the utmost desire of every man would be fulfilled and the woes of humanity should be no more. Whether in the "Coming One" men saw Tamuz or Adonis of ancient Sumeria or Greece, or in more recent time Hiawatha and Quetzacoatl of the New World, there has always been a deep longing in men's hearts for that Deliverer Who shall come to save them from themselves. Behind such traditions there is a common origin, the story of how to man, fallen from perfection, a wilful violator of Divine Law, and consequently condemned to reap the penalty of that violation—death—came a ray of hope in the promise of God that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3; 15). God was one day to undo the effects of that evil which man had brought upon himself, and as men multiplied and

spread abroad over the face of the earth that promise was carried with them and evolved into a thousand fantastic mythologies all having in the same basis of fact. One day "He that shall come" shall descend from the heavens to the salvation of man.

Small wonder then that it is recorded of the day of Jesus Christ's first Advent that "all people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not." (Luke 3; 15). Little cause for surprise that they asked him "Art thou that prophet?" (John 1; 21, Deut. 18; 13, Acts 3; 22). Greater cause for wonder perhaps that being thus in expectation they failed to realise in the person of Jesus Christ the Deliverer for whom they looked. Blinded by an incorrect conception of the manner as well as the object of his appearing, they knew not the time of their visitation (Luke 19; 44) and lost an opportunity which can never be regained.

Now in our own day history is repeated. For nearly two thousand years disciples of Christ have followed in the footsteps of those first eleven men, looking for and expecting the Lord from Heaven. Nevertheless, until the general enlightenment of these past two centuries there has never been that marked advance in the understanding of this age-old hope, which enables disciples of the present day to view in clear and accurate perspective the teaching of Christ and the apostles regarding his promised return. The materialism of orthodox theology through the centuries has reflected itself in current expectation regarding the Second Advent, and not until the Bible began to be widely studied and discussed a hundred and fifty years ago did the doctrine of His coming begin to take great strides forward out of the gross literalism with which its ablest exponents had invested it.

Now we live in a time when the literal fires of Hell, the golden floors and pearly gates of Heaven, the falling mountains and the strident trumpets of the Day of Judgment, are all recognised to be material symbols of spiritual truths. In many quarters among Christian people the call of the Church and God's provision for the world which is outside the Church are beginning to be seen as two phases of a beneficent

Plan intended to bring "whosoever will" into full harmony with righteousness. Election and Free Grace are no longer considered irreconcilable doctrines involving the spilling of much theological ink. Death as the logical and inevitable wages of sin, rather than a method of revenge adopted by an offended Deity, is seen to be the law of God's creation; and everlasting life, on either spiritual or human plane of being, to be the glorious prospect held out to those who willingly align themselves with the principles of righteousness.

Therefore it should be considered a reasonable proposition that, recognising this marked advance in the spiritual perception of Scriptural teaching, the sublime theme upon which preachers and students alike have dwelt for centuries should share in such progressive development. The material trappings surrounding every man's conception of that day when the "Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout" can be very reasonably expected to wax old and vanish away when progress in Christian thought renders it possible for a clearer and more lucid vision to be received and understood by the "Watchers."

It is then with a sober recognition of the value of past expositions and an intelligent expectation of progressive revelation in the understanding of this theme that the subject is approached. To reject the present plane of belief and to go back to the ideas held two centuries ago is out of the question. To imagine that there is nothing further to be known regarding the subject is nonsense. Increasing knowledge of the physical universe and a deeper understanding of the nature of that spiritual world which is beyond the reach of human sense, will prepare the mind for a more definite revelation than has ever been possible before. In this day of trouble and perplexity it is possible to attain to a clear knowledge of the transcendent truth implied by that most startling of all the statements of Jesus:

"If I go away  
I WILL COME AGAIN."

*The second article in this series will appear next month under the sub-title "The Glory of the Celestial," and will deal with the manner of Christ's coming.*

## DEATH—THE GREAT ENEMY

Life and death are manifested every day in many different aspects, but so effective has been the influence of Greek philosophy upon the doctrines of Christendom during the ages, that the fact of death to a human being, no less than to an animal or a vegetable, being purely and simply the absence of life, is not generally realised. Confused ideas respecting the nature of the human soul and the life to come have obscured those natural laws upon which an understanding of this subject should be based.

It can be remarked here that nowhere in the Old or New Testaments is there any direct teaching which upholds the Platonic philosophy (that man, at death, becomes more alive than before). Consistently throughout the Bible, death is represented as unnatural, abnormal, and an enemy, so far as man is concerned; and yet coming upon man as a direct consequence of the operation of Divine Law. This does not ignore the fact that death is essential to the continuance of life. Living plants and fruits, for example, must be developed and destroyed in order to sustain animal and human life. Without this normal operation of the life/death cycle humanity would perish from the earth. The continued life of a human being

In the day that thou eatest  
thereof, thou shalt surely die.

depends also upon the constant perishing of living "cells" which compose the physical body, and their replacement by other cells which in their turn must die and pass away. This form of death is quite normal to God's creation and is the basis upon which life endures. In such cases death comes when the purpose of life has been fulfilled. But death in the Biblical and theological sense has to do with the human being as an individual, and here a new factor enters into the situation.

Man is the crown and glory of material creation. (Psa. 8; 5-8). The earth and all its resources were created for him and that he might live in harmony with his fellows and with the laws of God in just the same way that the previously created inhabitants of the spiritual world—the angels—fulfil their appointed destiny and place in creation. (Job 38; 7). It follows therefore that for man, death is an unnatural condition, and the Scripture states plainly that this is so, that it is due to the presence of evil in the world and the consequent imperfection of mankind; and that with the reconciliation of man to God and their restoration to perfection of life, death will cease for ever. (Rev. 21; 4).

This brings to light the fundamental law expressed by Paul when he said that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6; 23) and implied by the Divine warning in the story of Eden "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2; 17). Nothing that comes short of the Divine standard of perfection and fails to remain in complete harmony with the laws which God has ordained for the orderly conduct of His creation, can continue to live. Containing within itself the seeds of its own destruction, it must eventually cease to exist—pass into death. James 1; 15 is a clear expression of this immutable law.

The same teaching is evident in the Old Testament. In speaking to Israel through the prophet Ezekiel, God declares that when in the age to come the law of righteousness begins to prevail, those who die shall do so for their own sins and not be involved, as now, in the sin of others through heredity, influence or compulsion. The visiting of the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation (Exod. 20; 5) now known to be a biological fact, has been permitted for a wise purpose, but in that day will be true no longer. Ezekiel 18; 4-32 and 33; 11-15 gives a clear statement of the Divine intention in this respect.

As evidencing that death implies the cessation of being, of existence, and not the setting free of the soul to live on in the spiritual world, we have the cry of the demons confronted by our Lord in the case of the demoniac man. The story is recorded in Luke 4. These demons were admittedly spirit beings, "fallen angels," who had obsessed the unfortunate Galilean, and to Jesus they cried out, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? ART THOU COME TO DESTROY US?" (Luke 4; 34, Mark 1; 24).

Those words can mean only one thing. The rebellious spirits know of a surety that the wages of sin is death, destruction, extinction of being; and in their cry to Jesus they revealed their knowledge that in their own case there must come a time when the Divine law would inexorably operate—even although they also knew that at the time of Christ's first Advent that day of judgment was yet in the distant future. (II Peter 2; 4, Jude 6).

Hence the many allusions in the Old Testament to death as a sleep and to the grave as a place of silence and unconsciousness do not denote, as is so often thought, the uninformed

mental attitude of men who had as yet no real knowledge or expectation of an after life; but rather the intelligent and clear sighted understanding of a people who from the very beginning of their national existence were the custodians of Divine revelation (Romans 3; 2). Hence David, who expressed in poetry some of the most profound thoughts of his day, declared of the man who goes into death "His breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." (Ps. 146; 4) and as to the state of the dead, "Shall thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave . . . and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness." (Psa. 88; 11-12). "In death" he says again, "there is no remembrance of thee. In the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6; 5). To which good king Hezekiah adds his lament, "The grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The LIVING, the LIVING, he shall praise thee, as I do this day." (Isa. 38; 18). The words of Ecclesiastes 9; 5 and 10, "The dead know not anything, . . . for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" and of many other sages of old, are all confirmatory of this same truth.

Christian thought on this subject has been beclouded by the tendency to think of the "spirit" of man as an intangible, shadowy personality inhabiting the body, and set free at death. The word "spirit" is from the Hebrew "ruach" meaning breath or wind, and the idea the ancient writers intended to convey is clearly that union of the breath of life with the material body which constitutes a human being. "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2; 7). Death is then easily defined as the separation between this body of flesh, which returns to its constituent elements, and the breath of life, which returns to God Who gave it.

Life after death, the constant hope and ineradicable belief of man, comes, as the Bible clearly states, by means of a resurrection from the dead; not the resuscitation of the old body which has resolved into its constituent elements long since; but the same identity, impressed upon a newly created bodily organism by the power of God, rising from the dead to conscious life and sentient being again. This is a fundamental teaching of Christianity and the basis of hope for mankind.

## "REVEALED BY FIRE"

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he," is a saying of the Wise Man. (Prov. 23: 7). We believe we are right in adapting and construing that to mean "As is the quality of a man's faith, so will his response be in the day of test and trial."

Such a conclusion seems to be warranted by the words of the Apostle in writing to the Corinthians. "Fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Some men's works will be destroyed; others' work will abide, when the day comes for the flames of fire to play around their handiwork. The Apostle's words seem to show that a man's characteristics in the day of stress and alarm will reveal and make manifest the constituent elements of that heart and mind. Strain will show of what elements his faith and convictions have been built. In other words, character response showing in word and act, will be according to the convictions which have made that character.

Reducing this observation still further we say that "action, under stress of trial, will be according to accepted belief." What a man has believed will determine what he does, in his seasons of test and difficulty. Among Christian people, who all profess to build their 'faith' structure alike (upon the sacrificial work of Jesus) there are great differences in conduct when the day of adversity comes. Fiery trials cause some to shrivel and shrink—pain and anguish of soul displacing and destroying faith and steady trust. Others come through the 'fire' purified and strengthened; not only with a stronger faith, but grateful to God for having permitted the trial.

To the sect-ridden, divided Corinthian Church the Apostle illustrates this principle by the differing work of builders, building upon a common foundation. In some of those ancient Eastern cities, excavators have found several structures built upon one prepared platform, laid at the expense of the owner of the land. One basic foundation was common to them all; the further structures erected thereon being built according to the means or taste of each individual builder. Sometimes the resulting erections presented a most grotesque appearance. Sumptuous edifices of granite and marble, ornamented with gold and silver, on the one hand; and the hovels and shacks of the poor on the other, with walls of wood, and

"Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor., 3. 13)

roofs of thatch, and interstices stuffed with hay and straw. Sometimes these extremes of structure and elegance would be found alternately placed, the shack hard by the palace, presenting at one glance all the extremes of poverty and affluence. Should the hand of some fanatic incendiary, Nero-like, start a conflagration, the shack of the poor peasant would speedily disappear in the flames, leaving nothing but ash to cumber and litter the common foundation. The sumptuous palace, though scorched and blackened by the fire, would still remain undemolished—a tribute to the superior material built into its walls. This tragic experience was a common occurrence in those old-time cosmopolitan cities, and constituted a vivid illustration which would be understood and appreciated by every member of the Corinthian Church.

Now what does the Apostle mean by the use of this illustration? First of all, notice that it is he, who as a wise architect, has laid the common foundation. "According to the grace of God given unto me, as a wise master-builder (Gr. *architekton*) I have laid the foundation" (1 Cor. 3: 10). That common foundation, well and truly laid by the Apostle, was Jesus Christ. Foundation other than He could not be laid by any builder who builded under God's guidance. Let us pause to enquire what the Apostle means by that statement. In what sense did he lay Jesus Christ as the foundation? Did the Apostle claim to have given Jesus His unique place in the purposes of God? Did he cause Jesus Christ to be laid as a foundation for Redemption and forgiveness of sins? Assuredly not! none but God could do that. Only by God's invitation and favour could Jesus become the basis for reconciliation. That was God's sole prerogative. In what sense then, had Paul laid Jesus Christ as a foundation? Obviously by being the first to preach to the Corinthians about Jesus, telling them of the Plan of Redemption already centering in Him; telling them of the great privilege already offered them of becoming united with Him! But on that one solid foundation, oh, how many differing structures they were putting up! How many theories and philosophies were being added to that basic truth! Each sect and party had its theory and its acclaimed leader and exponent. We read of a Paul-ite party; a Cephas-ite party; an Apollos-ite party; a no-

resurrection party; a libertine party; and so on—each with its theory and philosophy; or with its negations and doubts and denials. "Who indeed is Paul?" he asks indignantly—"or Cephas? or Apollos?"—"Mere servants only"—he answers, "through whom God sent His Truth." What if Paul had planted, and Apollos watered; only God could give the increase! How moribund and earth-bound and carnal were these sects and factions therefore, to link themselves to some mere human servant, when the whole vineyard was God's—when the whole structure was God's!

Thus Paul brings home to these carnal Corinthian teachers the folly of their sectarian outlook. Unfortunately for them, the Paulite section, while claiming Paul for their leader, were not really following Paul at all—for Paul would have none of their sectarianism. "Was Paul crucified for you" he asks. "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Cor. 1: 13). Why then did they link themselves to the name of Paul? "Oh" they would reply "Only to become a Paulite Christian—a follower of Christ through Paul." Thus they were building in the name of Paul a doctrinal structure upon the basic foundation, improperly adding the name of Paul to the honour that was Christ's.

Every section among them was using the common foundation of Jesus Christ, but running up a super-structure, in the name of this or that chosen leader. Thus to the primary 'truth' basis—redemption by and acceptance in Christ—they were adding their theories and speculations and vain philosophies. But would these speculative, divided theories stand the test when the day of Christ should come; for indeed that 'day' would test their worth? The saddest feature of all this deplorable state was that their characters—the moral fibre of their hearts—were being developed and moulded by the things they were teaching and believing. A sectarian church would produce divided interests—and divided interests would gender strife and contention, even if not bitterness and hatred. And thus in general experience, as they believed, so were they. Their super-added beliefs were the moulds in which they were being made. If they were building with gold, silver and costly marble, then, when the stress and strain of the evil day should come, their faith structure and their heart qualities would endure; but if their building material was wood, thatch, stubble, then the day of fire would burn up their theories, and strip them of their shelter, and leave them with nothing but their foundation to stand on. No spiritual

growth, no New Creature development, no enduring product of grace and experience, to carry forward into the eternal years, but just the bare elementary story concerning a Saviour, and the salvation wrought by Him,—this, and this only, would be left when the fire of trial and the day of visitation had done its work.

Their attachment to and utilization of the foundation had not brought them an eternal and abiding habitation with Christ. Their years had been wasted, their service mis-directed; and their whole life a failure. Unlike God's faithful ones, they would not emerge from the furnace floor without the smell of fire upon them, but, if delivered at all from their vain philosophies it would be by the fire burning the fetters and shackles of their minds, leaving to them nothing but their simple foundations, as at the beginning.

How great the responsibility, then, that rests upon those who seek to serve their brethren as co-labourers with God. Their mistaken philosophies and doctrinal blunders affect not only themselves and their own characters, but also the understanding and characters of their fellows, to whom they minister. On the other hand, if they build well and provide enduring material, they build for their friends and themselves imperishable structures, to stand the eternal years.

It is a solemn thought to realize that what we believe makes us what we are, and that we may even be building upon the basic facts of Christ's redemption truths and yet find ourselves and our buildings in danger in the day of visitation. Obviously it is not enough merely to hold the truths relative to the foundation only—there must be something built thereon by each believer who accepts that foundation. "Christ and Him crucified" is only the beginning of the Christian experience. Acceptance of those foundation truths only gives us access to the building site. These primary basic truths are given us by Paul in I Cor. 15: 1-4. The facts regarding Jesus' death, resurrection and return, constitute the foundation. But an un-built-on foundation is a mis-use of that foundation.

Every earnest Bible Student will be found building his structure of doctrine and character on the portion of the 'site' allotted him. Every sincere believer will be seeking to add a deeper understanding of the Word to those foundation truths. It is these additions which will be put to the test in the day of Christ. The foundation truths will remain undamaged through all the day of fire,—but what of our own build-

ings? Will these additions to our faith stand the day of fire and test? How very serious this thought should make us in reading and teaching! How important it is to take heed what we hear and accept. For after being granted access to the 'site'—after being justified by our belief in the redemptive work of Jesus—it is by what we believe that we are being 'made.' If any other material is used in building our faith and character than the gold, silver and precious stones of Divine promises and facts, then in the day of scrutiny and fire all these philosophies and theories will be consumed.

This situation abounds to-day. Thousands there are whose creedal structures are perishing in the flames of modern difficulties. In some cases the un-housed tenant quits the foundation altogether, and wanders away into the wider world. In many other cases, the destruction of their creedal structures leaves the tenant with nothing more than the simple truths of Redemption,—a bare foundation only—not enough for the day of trial. Happy indeed are those whose building, though put to the test, remains through it all a habitation and a resting-place for faith and trust and peace of heart. We are living in 'the day,' to-day, when every man's work is being revealed by fiery test. This is 'the day which will declare it'—the 'day of His Presence'—the presence of Him who was foretold to sit as a Refiner of gold and silver. The havoc wrought upon men's faith and character structure throughout the whole Christian world is proof of that refining and of that Pre-

sence. The decreasing respect for all the old moral religious sanctions and the craze for pleasure are proofs that the fires of this time have been burning up some of the old erections of wood, hay and stubble, driving the hitherto creed-bound tenants as wanderers and fugitives abroad on the earth.

Take heed, beloved, how ye hear, and how ye build, for the opportunity of eternal habitation or loss is involved in it all. Pray that ye be not as a brand plucked from the burning; as one 'saved as by fire'—stripped of all the labours of by-gone years, with nothing save the foundation left. Contrariwise, do not dismantle and demolish your own structure, throwing away this or that Harvest Truth, till you have little more than the foundation truths left; for it is on the basis of what has been added thereto, that a well-built faith, and trust, and peace, will furnish a safe abiding-place throughout the day of fire,—and for the eternal years. If the truths which have been learned since coming on to the foundation have provided us a bulwark of safety—a place where our hearts are at rest in peace and quietness—then, hold on to those precious truths to the very end, for in very deed and truth, they are as gold and silver and igneous rock (marble and granite) withstanding the fire; and as our faith structure is an edifice of abiding material, so will our character structure be, and so will our salvation be, when all things are 'revealed by fire.'

## ESSENTIALS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

We all, beholding as in a glass,  
the glory of the Lord, are changed  
into the same image.

have clearly fixed in our mind a right idea of relative values.

What is the great aim and object of the consecrated walk? Surely it is to become united with our Lord and Head by intimate communion with Him in this present life and by eternal association on the Divine plane, in the Kingdom. It is obvious that we can never be fitted for this great honour of the future unless we, here and now, draw so near to His heart of love by constant communion, that when the time comes for our union with Him in the Kingdom, we shall be competent to co-operate, in the fullest sense, with the One whom we have come to love so well while here below. The Scriptures make it quite clear that only those begotten to this position of intimacy and oneness with our Lord and Master in this present life, can hope to share His Divine life in the future. (Col. 3. 1-4).

One of the greatest dangers besetting the Lord's people at this time is that of becoming so engrossed in and perplexed by the many and divergent theories which are presented as truth, that the vital issues are left in the background and almost lost to view. It is essential that the mind be centred upon the hope set before us and upon the great object of our calling, otherwise the main issue will become dimmed by a haze of non-essential details and the things which should help will eventually prove themselves to be hindrances. However valuable the means of obtaining that for which we seek, it is of necessity, less important than the end in view, and an over-estimation of its value must inevitably result in a lack of balance in our attitude towards the whole issue. By all means let us use the helps provided to enable us to realise the fruition of our hopes, but let us ever

Having agreed then, that union with our Lord, both now and in the future, is the great aim and object of our earthly lives, it is for us to use those means which will be of the greatest help in bringing this about, ever remembering that these means are only valuable in so far as they assist us towards that end.

Is doctrine one of these means? Most certainly it is. Were it not for the Word of truth, we should not have any clear ideas concerning the existence of an intelligent Creator, nor should we understand the grandeur of His character. Without the Scriptures to set before us their high moral standard, it is doubtful whether we should even know right from wrong. Still less should we know of the great plan of redemption which God has arranged to lift up the groaning creation to the Edenic perfection forfeited by our first parents. Carrying the thought still further, we should not know of God's purpose to provide a Bride who would become a joint-heir with His Son. With the Scriptures to help us, by pointing out the great hope set before us, it is difficult to imagine the extent of our darkness, if we had no such lamp to guide our feet. Our hope of being united to Him could not exist and faith would have no basis for its beliefs, if the firm foundation of Scripture truth had not been provided. An understanding of the philosophy of the ransom and the part which we are privileged to play in the sin-offering is an essential phase of our spiritual life, without which we could not so closely approach the Father, nor make such an intelligent consecration of ourselves to the service of His will. In like manner, present truth concerning our Lord's return, the harvest work and the establishment of the Kingdom, is of vital importance to the watchful child of God (Isa. 52: 7). Facts brought to light in the Divine Word, may be likened to a lifeless human body, which forms the framework of our life upon earth—surely a necessary function to perform. Of what use, however, is a human frame unless there is life in the organism to set it in motion, in order that it may perform useful service? A dead body without a life principle behind it, is useless—and so is a merely theoretical knowledge of the Divine Word. If, in the Scriptures we see only doctrines and theories and a historical relation of events, we see nothing more than the outline of God's purposes, which will fail completely to bring us nearer to Himself. Something more is needed; the great life-principle of the Holy Spirit.

When we see a human body with the life-

blood coursing through its veins, we recognise that it is a creature of tremendous possibilities. The whole organism is subject to the control of an intelligent mind, and there is warmth and vitality which are completely absent in the case of a lifeless form. We can love such a creature, because it is capable of reciprocation, or at any rate, of responding in some way to our presence and attention.

Such is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, when its begetting power has become active and a new creature is thereby brought into being. Such, too, is the effect so far as we ourselves are concerned, upon the Holy Scriptures. They come to have a new meaning for us. The cold words of print become words of life answering to our own hearts in language which is satisfying and inspiring. Such is the effect upon the doctrine when the Spirit's power is focussed upon it, verily bringing life to what before was merely theory and fact. When this influence was brought to bear on our own lives we began to recognise the warmth of God's love behind the well-planned scheme of redemption, and we saw that it was the love of a **personality**. Before, we saw the nobility of character and moral goodness of our God, but viewed in this new light, we see a Being Who is something more than the embodiment of goodness—we recognise the individuality of a Father's love. We needed the doctrine to satisfy our intelligence, our reasoning faculties, but **this is not enough** without the fruitage in the life. We need the Spirit to reveal the full depths of our Father's love and to beget in us the reciprocation which is necessary if we are to make our calling and election sure. The human mind is formed to love; and the knowledge that justice requires a sin-offering is not sufficient—we need the Spirit to show us the personal love of God for His creatures, in order that our desire for love may find full satisfaction in the faithful carrying out of a covenant vow of consecration. Thus, on this basis of mutual love, we are brought nearer to our Father and to the Lord Jesus; and the great object of our lives, unity with Him, is another step nearer realisation. Surely nothing but the Holy Spirit of God could produce such a longing desire to be one with Him as we experience when its power becomes operative in the life.

It has been seen that doctrine, although essential, is not sufficient, but that the Spirit also is important in enabling us to attain the great end for which we seek. It would almost seem that having received this further means

of assistance, no more would be needed, but another step is necessary.

Returning to our figure, if we could imagine a human structure with every part in proper condition for active service and with the necessary life pulsating through its veins, but lying in a recumbent position and refusing to move, we should not feel that such a person was fully matured and able to deal competently with the affairs of life. The **experiences** of life are essential for the development of the human creature, and not until he has reached ripe years can he be regarded as one who has learned the lessons of life and whose advice and assistance can be relied upon.

The same principle applies to the spiritual life. A knowledge of the doctrine is essential and so is an indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but a person so equipped (if it were possible to remain in this condition) would be totally unfitted for the work of the future and would certainly not be enjoying the full blessing of communion with God here and now. It is a mistake to close our eyes to the ripening ministry of experience, for although its mellowing processes are slow and almost imperceptible, they prepare us for the Kingdom in a way that nothing else can do. It is necessary also to bear in mind that our reactions towards these experiences will make it quite clear whether or not we have come through them successfully. We must ever be on guard to see, behind each happening in our lives, the guiding hand of our Father as He directs the most trivial incident, in order that it may bring out the desired result. He desires our co-operation in all these things. Let us then humbly and prayerfully seek His guidance in every detail of life's affairs, endeavouring in each experience to fulfil His designs for us. Every experience, whether joyful or sad, should leave us nearer the grand goal for which we seek, more closely knit to the Divine heart of love, more fitted for an eternity at his side.

We should not regard the principles of Christian living laid down in the Word as a code of rules which reveal the high moral standard required of us and which can be ignored once we have been justified to a standing before God. Rather, they represent various laws the keeping of which will bring just those experiences which are necessary. They are there to prove our love and devotion by a faithful carrying out of them; they are there to help us into a fit condition to be recipients of the Divine Spirit which will accomplish far more than the stated requirements ever can do. Nor should

we regard these principles as elementary in their application. We need to remember that it is **extremely difficult**, even for a child of God enlightened by the Holy Spirit, to carry out the Divine Will in everyday life, and that one who does so has reached a very advanced stage in the *School of Christ*. If we bear this in mind, we shall not make the mistake of thinking that a brother with a keen perception of the logic of the Divine Plan has been privileged beyond the brother who has gained not only doctrine, but an intimate appreciation of the Father's love and care by personal experience. Both are equally privileged and blessed, provided that they are sincerely consecrated and endeavouring daily to lay down their lives in sacrifice. A happy blending of intellectual and practical revelation is the ideal Christian life, and a fusion of these two aspects will bring us ever nearer to the Lord and give us an ever-increasing sense of His protective presence with us.

Let us, then, make full use of all the means which the Lord has provided for our spiritual well-being, ever keeping our eyes fixed upon the great goal of our endeavours. Let us imbibe the teachings of the Word concerning the great Plan of God, here and there filling in the details of the scheme as the Lord reveals them but never allowing detail to loom more important in our minds than the fundamental principles of the great plan of redemption. Let us also pray earnestly for a fuller indwelling of the Spirit, so that its holy influence may pervade our whole lives and draw us ever closer to the Master. Let us also watch closely the chequered pathway of our experience, feeling always for the guiding hand of our Father, leading, comforting, and directing as we have need. In this way, by patience and perseverance, we shall find ourselves becoming gradually more fitted for the work which lies just ahead. When the door of this life, with all its sufferings and waitings, has closed upon us, and we find ourselves face to face with our beloved Master, we shall look back and praise Him for the ample and wonderful means which He has provided to make such an unspeakable joy a possibility. Let us constantly turn our eyes to that glorious event so near at hand, and thus gain strength and fortitude to withstand the wily efforts of the Adversary to dim the vision and destroy our hope. Let us not be waylaid by controversies and arguments which are of no avail, but rather let us even now enter into the rest of personal acquaintance with our loving Father, with its sweet foretaste of heavenly joys.

## THE QUIET TIME

### THE SOUL.

As some rare perfume in a vase of clay  
Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,  
So when Thou dwellest in a mortal soul,  
All heaven's own sweetness seems around it thrown.

The soul alone, like a neglected harp,  
Grows out of tune, and needs the hand Divine;  
Dwell Thou within it, tune and touch its chords,  
Till every note and string shall answer Thine.

*Harriet Beecher Stowe.*

### An Autocratic Kingdom

In view of the danger of placing great power in the hands of a ruler and the advisability of the republican form of government of the people, by the people and for the people, the question arises, "How will it be with Immanuel's kingdom?" The Scriptures teach that his empire will be autocratic in the extreme. Nevertheless, no one who understands the matter need have any fear, as he who is to take the throne to be the Emperor of the World is the one who so loved the world as to give himself a Ransom for all. Instead of his empire being one of selfishness, which would ruin its subjects for its own aggrandisement, he has shown his Spirit to be the very reverse of this, in that he left the glory of the higher courts and humbled himself to a lower nature and became man's substitute, a ransom for man's penalty, "tasting death for every man." It is this One who is now highly exalted and appointed heir of all things.

Let us remember also that the church now being selected from the world is composed only of such as have their Master's Spirit and delight to lay down their lives for the brethren and for the truth in co-operation with their Lord and Head. Who need fear an autocratic government in the hands of such a glorious King? Indeed we may say that such a government will be the most helpful, the most profitable, that the world could possibly have—wise, just, loving, helpful! While others are seeking for earthly honours, earthly name and fame and substance, let us who have been called to this high calling lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and, by the Lord's assistance, gain this great prize of joint-heirship with our Master in his kingdom and have a share with him in the blessing and uplifting of mankind in general!

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### THE MASTER'S TOUCH.

In the still air the music lies unheard;  
In the rough marble beauty lies unseen;  
To make the music and the beauty, needs  
The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.

Great Master, touch us with thy skilful hand;  
Let not the music that is in us die!  
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us; not let,  
Hidden and lost, thy form within us lie!

Spare not the stroke! do with us as thou wilt!  
Let there be naught unfinished, broken, marred;  
Complete thy purpose, that we may become  
Thy perfect image, thou our God and Lord!

### God's Word Alone Will Uphold.

Delve into the promises of God more and more. As you do this the roots of faith will draw up the nutriment and send it out into your life and you will grow, just as a tree grows, because nourished, fed. Thus alone will you become established in the Faith, and not in your imaginings or the imaginings of others. Our faith is to grow stronger and more vigorous day by day. It is not to be a faith in ourselves or in anything apart from the Lord. Faith is what we started with in the beginning and we shall need it in increasing measure as we go on our upward way—faith in God and his sure Word. All that we know as children of the Lord has come to us through the channel of Jesus, his holy apostles and the prophets of old, and we are to continue feeding at this same table of thanksgiving.

The "Tower"

### Prayer

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." This expresses adoration, appreciation of divine goodness and greatness, and a corresponding reverence. In addressing our petition to the Lord our first thought is to be not a selfish one respecting ourselves, nor a thought respecting the interests of others precious to us, but God is to be first in all of our thoughts and aims and calculations. We are to pray for nothing that would not be in accord of the honour of our heavenly Father's name; we are to wish for nothing for ourselves or for our dear ones that he would not fully approve and commission us to pray for. Perhaps no quality of heart is in greater danger of being blotted out amongst professing Christians than this thought of reverence for God.

### LOOKING FORWARD.

A momentous year lies before us. Momentous it must ever be to the Christian; for those who acknowledge that the Kingdom to which they look is not of this "cosmos" must to-day view with ever quickening expectation the spectacle of earth's empires being shaken to pieces. We who look for a city which hath foundations, a city whose builder and maker is God, can view, with an equanimity denied to many of the world's greatest men, the failure of mankind's attempts at self-government, knowing as we do that the glorious reign of the Prince of Peace is at hand. The New Jerusalem is on its descent from heaven to earth, and soon—very soon—the nations will walk in its light.

But what of ourselves? We who know this great thing; we who have been enabled to believe and see the evidence of God's work among the nations and who maintain and teach that nothing but Messiah's Kingdom can save the world; we who declare that our own standing before Him is that of sons? How shall we face the unknown experiences of this coming year unless we have reiterated to ourselves our inflexible resolve to stand firmly for the maintenance of that standard of Christian living which is proclaimed by word of mouth so often amongst us; but which, alas, is only too frequently "a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and that can play well upon an instrument." Remorselessly, insistently, the words of the Lord to Ezekiel echo down the corridors of time to our own day, "For they hear thy words, but they do them not." Let our first New Year resolve be this: that the days to come shall witness to a tenfold deeper and more sincere endeavour to put into daily practice the principles of the Sermon on the Mount.

The challenge to Christianity will become more articulate in this year upon which we enter. More than one great Power has declared open war upon the message of Jesus Christ. Not because they understand it—it must be admitted that the only Christianity they know has been, after all, but a pitiable travesty of the real thing; but the fiat has gone forth. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed" little reckoning that in thus ranging themselves against the Infinite they are attacking a Rock upon which Caiaphas, Nero, Domitian, Attila—all hurled themselves and were broken. The faith great conquerors sought to exterminate still illuminates this dark earth with its bright star of hope, and it is because the standards of Matthew 5 are being exemplified to-day that the eventual overthrow of evil is assured. "Watchman, what of the night?" Clear as a bell rings the answer "The morning cometh, although it is yet dark!"

### THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

The Ministry of Reconciliation is the name Paul gives to that company of people which will be entrusted with the task of teaching all men the principles of Divine Law in the next Age. The necessity for wise and efficient administration in a world which will contain all the failures, the criminals and the human derelicts of all past history, clearly requires an arduous course of training. It is none the less arduous in that the disciples of Christ, who are the ones now undergoing this training, can show little of its results in their outward actions, until after perhaps a lifetime of Christian experience the transforming influence begins to reveal itself in a glory which is not of this earth. Yet in the little things of life, in our daily conduct and behaviour toward our neighbours and acquaintances, we should expect something of that higher standard to be manifest. Those who expect to be entrusted with a task which the noblest and best of men in all ages have consistently failed to achieve should be able to demonstrate in some small measure that even now they are capable of sober and right judgment. They should be known amongst their neighbours as men of integrity and reliability; as women of understanding and kindness. They should be incapable of a mean action; slow to partiality or prejudice. A sane and balanced outlook upon the affairs of everyday life; a quiet conviction that righteousness is mighty and will at last prevail; a keen desire to instruct those who will listen on the ways of our God; these are the present characteristics of those of whom Paul again says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world . . . . Are ye unworthy then to judge the smallest matters?"

### BIBLE STUDENTS BOOKSHELF

This column records books which are likely to be helpful to Bible Students, the class of reader to whom they will mostly appeal being indicated. Each book is provided with an index, unless otherwise stated.

#### NEW DISCOVERIES IN BABYLONIA ABOUT GENESIS. P. J. WISEMAN.

150 pages. 3/6, post 4d. Marshall, Morgan and Scott.

An intensely interesting work for the student. It demonstrates from the internal structure of the Book of Genesis, the evidence that the earlier chapters were written in the cuneiform script of the Sumerians and preserved by the patriarchs and others, until at the hand of Moses the book was edited to its present form.

#### THE BIBLE IS TRUE. SIR CHARLES MARSTON. 285 pages. 7/6, post 6d. Eyre and Spottiswoode.

This book, written in a readable and interesting style, gives a clear picture of the relations between Palestine and Egypt in Old Testament days and cites discoveries of the past decade as fresh evidence confirming and illuminating the Scriptures. Considerable space is devoted to the Exodus and siege of Jericho. Eminently suitable for all readers.

## THE TOWER OF BABEL

A seemingly insignificant expression in Genesis 11; 3 throws light upon the story of the Tower of Babel. The narrative declares that "as they journeyed eastward (*margin*) they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. And they said one to another 'Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and slime (*chemar*—bitumen) had they for mortar."

The plain which these migrating peoples found in Shinar was Mesopotamia, where the ruins of Babel (Babylon) stand to this day. The people who "journeyed eastward" are revealed by this verse as being accustomed to build with stone and mortar, but, finding themselves in a land where stone is absent, compelled to adapt their skill to a new material—brick made from burnt clay.

The Book of Genesis declares that this is the people which built Babylon. They were not the Sumerians, whose cities, Ur of the Chaldees, Erech, Lagash, Shuruppak, etc., existed long before the founding of Babylon. Centuries after the Sumerians had settled in Mesopotamia, another race, the Semitic Accadians, entered from the west along the course of the rivers and subdued the native population—but as has happened so often in the case of invading peoples, finally united with the Sumerians and lost their own language and culture in the process.

These are the people who built the Tower of Babel. Descendants of Shem, (Gen. 10; 21—25) they left their ancestral home and pushed down the valley of the Euphrates, seeking space in which to dwell. That they were unacquainted with the art of burning brick is evidenced by the expression "let us . . . burn them thoroughly" as though it was quite a new experience. The Sumerians had long passed this stage in their knowledge of the art, which the Accadians had yet to learn.

Tradition declares that Babylon was founded about 2350 B.C., which is roughly two hundred and-fifty years before Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees. The Hebrew play on the name "Babel"—Confusion—is well-known to Bible Students. The original name for Babylon was Tin-tir-ki, meaning "The Place of Life." This became changed in the course of time to Ka-dimirra, "The Gate of God," in the Accadian tongue. Later on the Sumerian culture and language became predominant and the city became known as Bab-ili, which was the Sumerian equivalent of "The Gate of God." The Hebrew transliteration of Bab-ili is Bab-el, and in writing the history of Genesis, Moses used the name which was current in his own day.

The original word for "confound" or "mingle" was "Balbel," which is sufficiently close to "Babel"

The brief account in Genesis 11 has a special attraction for students.

to give point to the "pun" indicated in verse 9, "Therefore is the name of the city called 'Babel,' because the Lord did there confound the language . . ." In later times this word became "balal" which is the one used in all extant manuscripts of Genesis. Since the earlier form is so much more appropriate to the play upon words indicated in this passage, we have here an evident although unintended testimony to the antiquity of the text. The present word "Babylon" is the Greek form of "Babel."

The cessation of building operations described in verse 8 is confirmed by history. After the founding of Babylon, building was arrested for several centuries, whilst another invading people, the Elamites, swept down upon the Mesopotamian plains. When the curtain lifted, these three peoples—Accadians, Sumerians, and Elamites—had largely become one, with Elam in the ascendancy, and just at this time Abraham was born and the re-building of Babylon commenced. A hundred years later Khudar Lagamar, King of Elam (the Chedorlaomer of Genesis 14) marched into Palestine and the history of Abraham comes into prominence.

The period during which the people "left off to build the city" coincides with the Elamite invasion and consequent troubled condition of the country, but in the time of Abraham (about B.C. 2000) conditions were sufficiently normal for Sumerian scribes to take upon themselves the task of compiling records of that older empire which had passed away with the "confusion of tongues" of Genesis 11, and some of these records are still in existence.

A generation ago three Mesopotamian ruins were considered likely candidates for the distinction of having been the original "Tower." These were: the Temple of Belus at Babylon, which was raised to a height of 625 feet; the "Birs Nimrud" or Temple of the Seven Spheres, at Borsippa; and the Tower of E-sagilla (meaning "reaching to the clouds") at Babylon. All of these were already old in Abraham's day. It is now considered that the last named structure is the original one of the story, having been erected, as declared by Genesis, to be a landmark for the people and raised in defiance of God. The Jewish tradition that the tower was to facilitate an invasion of Heaven is not borne out by the Bible, and neither is the later Christian idea that it was to be a place of refuge in the event of another flood sweeping over the earth. It was to celebrate the founding of a new nation avowedly apostate from God, and known amongst men as a people standing in their own strength—and the irony of the situation is that both their nationality and city was absorbed by a foreign invader before a century had passed.

## THE LAND OF TO-MORROW

Will nothing end this state of things? Is creation to go on groaning and travailing forever after this fashion? Thanks be to God, the second advent of Christ supplies an answer to these questions. The Lord Jesus Christ has not yet finished his work on behalf of man. He will set up a glorious kingdom, in which the consequences of sin shall have no place at all. It is a kingdom in which there shall be no pain and no disease, in which "the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick," (Isa. 33; 24.) It is a kingdom in which there shall be no more partings, no moves, no changes, no good-byes. It is a kingdom in which there shall be no more deaths, no funerals, no tears and no mourning worn. It is a kingdom in which there shall be no quarrels, no losses, no disappointments, no wicked children, no bad servants, no faithless friends. Where is the Christian heart that does not long for this state of things to begin?—

Bishop Ryle 1880

The Millennial reign of the great Restorer is the "time of restitution," a time in which imperfection will still continue, but in which it will gradually give place to perfection in the obedient. It will be the time for **making** all things new; but all things will not be perfectly restored and new until its close. It is to be the great schooling time for earth's billions, in which they shall all come to a knowledge of the truth; the great restoring and perfecting time both for man and for the earth, both so far from being perfect or very good now. It is the great Day of Judgment in which Christ shall "judge the world," and "judge angels" (Acts 17; 31; Psa. 96; 13; and 1 Cor. 6; 2, 3) rewarding with restored perfection the willing and worthy, and cutting off from life, forever, all wilful sinners. This "righteous judgment" of all necessitates the fullness of knowledge and assistance promised to all, in that day.—(The "Tower").

The following words were written by Robert Ingersoll (1833-99) Freethinker, and one of the bitterest opponents of Christianity in the nineteenth century. They reveal his conviction that in some way truth and righteousness would one day prevail even although the Plan of God was an enigma to him.

A vision of the future arises. I see a world where thrones have crumbled and where kings are dust. The aristocracy of illness has perished from the earth.

The problem of evil will be solved in that day when Christ reigns, and sin, disease and death are abolished for ever.

I see a world without a slave. Man at last is free. Nature's forces have by science been enslaved. Lightning and light, wind and waves, frost and flame, and all the subtle powers of earth and air are the tireless toilers for the human race.

I see a world at peace, adorned with every form of art, with music's myriad voices thrilled; where lips are rich with words of love and truth; a world in which no exile sighs, no prisoner mourns, a world on which the gibbet's shadow does not fall; a world where labour reaps its full reward, where work and worth go hand in hand.

I see a world without the beggar's outstretched palm, the miser's heartless, stony stare, the piteous wail of want, the livid lips of lies, the cruel eyes of scorn.

I see a race without disease of flesh or brain—shapely and fair, perfect harmony of form and function—and, as I look, life lengthens, joy deepens, Love canopies the earth; and over all, in the great dome of Heaven, shines the eternal star of faith.

### DELIVERANCE.

Still o'er Earth's sky the clouds of anger roll,  
The curse of sin lies heavy on her soul.  
Yet shall she rise—though first by God chastised—  
In glory and in beauty then baptised.

Yea, Earth, thou shalt arise; thy Father's aid  
Shall heal the wound His chastening hand hath made  
Shall judge the proud oppressor's ruthless sway  
And burst his bonds, and cast his cords away.

Then on thy soul shall deathless verdure spring;  
Break forth, ye mountains, and ye valleys, sing!  
No more your thirsty rocks shall frown forlorn,  
The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn.

The sultry sands shall tenfold harvests yield,  
A greater Eden deck the thorny field.  
E'en now we see; wide-waving o'er the land,  
The mighty angel lift his golden wand.

Courts the bright vision of descending power,  
Tells every gate, and measures every tower;  
And breaks the tardy seals that yet detain  
The Lion of Judah from his destined reign.

(Bishop Heber 1788-1836)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GONE FROM US.

Brother W. C. Moody, of Luton, laid down his cross in triumph on December 7th. Well known amongst the friends for many years, his was a deeply spiritual personality and many will remember with gratitude his ministrations in years gone by. The labours of early days are recalled by the passing of one who manifested in rich measure the spirit of the Master.

## BEESTON (Nottingham).

The quarterly gathering of friends in the Nottingham district will be held on Sunday, January 29th, at Hand's Cafe, Beeston, and a warm welcome is extended to all who can attend. Speakers will be Bros. F. Froggatt (Mansfield), A. Cruickshank (Croxley Green), and A. O. Hudson (Welling). Further particulars from Bro. H. R. Noble, 9, Muriel Road, Beeston, Notts.

## SHOTTON.

The annual gathering at Shotton on October 23rd was attended by a goodly number of friends who spent a profitable time listening to addresses by Bros. Boyce (Dewsbury); Stanley (Warrington); and Sidney Smith (Manchester). Their messages called attention to the importance of consistency in our profession as Christian disciples and a vital and active faith in the Divine Plan.

## WHITSUN DISCUSSIONS.

Classes and brethren intending to put down suggestions for discussion at the Whitsun Convention are requested to forward same to the Secretary of the Committee by February 15th next. Friends are reminded that practicable and constructive proposals only should be put forward in order that the available time may be used to the best advantage.

## BRILLE LIBRARY.

For Braille readers a free circulating library is in operation and a succession of books and pamphlets dealing with the Scriptures along similar lines to this journal may be had upon enrolment. Some of the principal works available are:—

- "The Divine Plan of the Ages."
- "The Atonement."
- "The New Creation,"

together with a wealth of literature on various aspects of Scriptural teaching. Return postage only (one penny) is payable by the reader, and new members will be gladly enrolled upon application to the Braille Librarian, Brother S. A. Couling, 42 Fareham Avenue, Rugby.

### The HERALD

of Christ's Kingdom

### The DAWN

of Christ's Presence

Two interesting and helpful magazines published monthly in Brooklyn, U.S.A.; and containing devotional articles and expositions of considerable interest to our readers.

Subscription price.....5s. per year.  
Three months' free trial on request.

British Correspondents :  
BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE

## ANONYMOUS.

Sincere appreciation is expressed in recognition of three anonymous donations—£1, £1, and £50—recently received. The latter donation was for application to a specified purpose, and in the fulfilment of this request, the Christmas season brought added happiness to some who have found the way grow more difficult with the passing years.

## KINGDOM CARDS.

One of the most effective means of awaking interest in the message of the Kingdom is by the use of "Kingdom Cards." These cards carry a short comment on the significance of world events and the Divine solution, and invite recipients to return them to the office with name and address, suitable literature being then sent to the applicant. Facilities are provided for any who are interested to be put in touch with local meetings. The cards may be distributed in any manner desired and friends can "follow up" enquiries resulting from their own efforts, if they so desire and make request to that effect. A proportion of the donations received by the Committee is set aside to meet the cost of this work in order that Kingdom Cards can be supplied in any quantity free of charge, the friends being perfectly free to contribute to the cost, or not, according to ability.

## FREE LITERATURE.

Leaflets for judicious distribution are supplied free upon request, the titles at present available being as follows:—

- Peace on Earth—When?
- World Order or Chaos—Which?
- Where are the Dead?
- Hell—the Truth.
- Will there be Wars forever?

## KINGDOM CARDS.

Cards have been returned during the past four weeks from:—  
Birkenhead, Brynmawr, Blaenavon, Belfast, Cheltenham, Clacton, Croydon, Castleton, Cullercoats, Dundee, Exeter, Ealing, Eastbourne, Frinton, Greenock, Gosport, Guildford, Ipswich, Littlehampton, Llanelly, Leamington, Leigh, Liverpool, Manchester, Newport (Mon.), Newport (I.O.W.), Newcastle, Pengam, Redhill, Rugby, Southall, Swindon, Southsea, Shotton, Shaftesbury, Tunbridge Wells, Warrington, Wisbech, Warwick, Woodbridge.

## BIBLE STUDENTS BOOKROOM

For the friends' convenience, the Committee holds a stock of all publications issued by:—

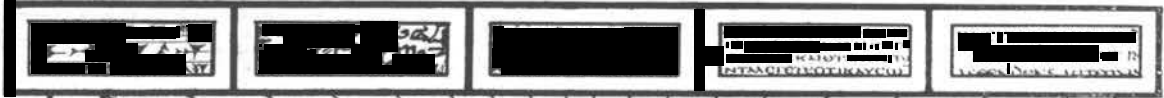
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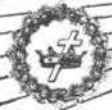
BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE  
24 Darwin Road, Welling, KENT

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



# BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



יהוה ה' אלהינו יהוה אחד יהוה אחד יהוה אחד	Blessed are ye when men curse persecute you and shall falsly say of you, for ye shall be glad for me	All battays thabe craalte mountayne and byll tapde fo is croked thabe made str	ye seed of Abram his servan Jacob his chosen the Lo R is our God: his ju	And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.
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Vol. 16 No. 2

FEBRUARY, 1939

THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

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## THE NEW HYMNBOOK READY SOON.

### THE "BIBLE STUDENTS' HYMNAL."

Within a few weeks the new Hymnbook, to be known as the "Bible Students Hymnal," will be ready for distribution. The Committee have been working on this project for a considerable time, and feel that the new publication will fill a long-felt need.

The new book retains all hymns appearing in "Hymns of Dawn" with the exception of five which it was agreed are best omitted. It also includes the hymns which were added at the time of publication of "Christian Hymns," and the addition of about seventy other carefully chosen choice hymns completes a selection which it is confidently expected will aid the brethren to "sing praises with understanding."

There are 462 hymns altogether, whilst at the end of the book there appears an index of suggested tunes, useful to those to whom some of the hymns are new; and a topical "subject" index to aid in the selection of hymns for special occasions. The "Hymns of Dawn" and "Christian Hymns" numbers both appear above each hymn so that the book can be used, where necessary, in conjunction with those already in use.

The type chosen is clear, and larger than that in the present books, the space between lines being wide so that the hymns will be easy to read.

Two styles of binding will be available: limp cloth and stiff cloth boards.

The price has been fixed to just cover cost of production, as follows:—

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Many friends and classes have already placed their orders for the books when ready. There is no need for these friends to repeat their wishes—the books will be despatched as soon as available. It will be appreciated, however, if friends who have not yet indicated their wishes would do so at an early date, since the project has involved the Committee in a relatively heavy expense and it will be a help to other activities if part of this expense can be recovered at an early date.

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 2. "THE GLORY OF THE CELESTIAL."

*"There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another." (I Cor. 15; 40).*

An outstanding achievement in Christian thought during the last hundred years has been a deeper understanding of the spiritual world and the difference between human and spirit nature. In past ages, when men were groping their way to an understanding of the higher things of life, it was to be expected that even the deepest of thinkers could only visualise that spiritual world as a replica, although a less tangible replica, of this material one; its inhabitants as glorified human beings with more or less substantial bodies. Even to-day the same view is held by many. Since Scriptural teaching concerning the Second Advent is so closely knit with a true appreciation of the nature of that spiritual realm which has as its centre the throne of God Himself, it becomes necessary to have a clear understanding of the distinction between human and spiritual beings.

In the text quoted above, and throughout a large part of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul draws a clear distinction between the natural and the spiritual (using the term "natural" in its primary sense of **material**, tangible to the five senses) and makes it plain that the spiritual nature is of a different order not discernible by those five senses. Although a real and continuing state of existence, its inhabitants acknowledging their Creator and fulfilling their ordained place in creation, it remains a world not perceived or visualised by the mind of man. The analogies of human experience are inadequate to describe the nature or the glory of that order which is so far above the human. Hence Paul, who was "conveyed away to the third heaven," and heard "indescribable things, which it is not possible for a man to relate" (II Cor. 12; 2-4 **Diaglott**) gaining just one glimpse of the glories of that world, found human words and earthly analogies insufficient to convey to other men the impression produced upon his own mind and memory. Likewise upon the

occasion when Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus (I Cor. 15; 8) he received an impression of the resurrected Christ which could not be detected by the natural eyesight, and under any other circumstances could not have been appreciated by Paul until he in his turn had been born into the spiritual world, in the First Resurrection (Rev. 20; 6). Hence his exclamation "He was seen of me also, AS OF ONE BORN OUT OF DUE TIME."

Now it is "this same Jesus," the resurrected Lord, in all the glory and with all the attributes of His spiritual nature, who returns to this earth at the time appointed. If the "Watchers" are not to be taken unawares at the time of His coming—and the Scripture assures us that they will not—it is essential that there be a clear appreciation of the principles which will govern the manner of His return. The example of two thousand years ago, when He came to His own, and His own received Him not, because they **KNEW NOT** the time of their visitation, stands ever before us—a warning.

That our Lord Jesus Christ, before the days of His flesh, was the most honoured member of the spiritual world—the Logos, or right hand of the Father Himself—is clearly understood. That He laid aside the glory which He had with the Father before this material order of things existed (John 17; 5) and became **MAN**, "for the suffering of death" (Heb. 2; 9) is an integral feature of the Christian faith. That upon the third day in that tomb in Joseph of Arimathea's garden, he rose again "in the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7; 16) to the full glory of spiritual being (Eph. 1; 20) having no part nor lot further in the flesh which He had given for the life of the world (John 6; 51) is the basis upon which the doctrine of the "Ransom for All" (I Tim. 2; 5-6) is built. It is clear therefore, that our Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth, not as a man as in the "days of his flesh" but as a spiritual being. The question is then immediately suggested "What is a spirit?"

Paul's hypothetical disputant comes to mind at once "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" (I Cor. 15;

35). A glance back along the centuries will suffice to show how inextricably mixed are man's ideas concerning bodies of flesh and spiritual bodies. It is only to be expected that in the early days of mankind when the worship of "gods many and lords many," of sticks and stones and idols of gold and silver was the accepted thing, man's conception of a spiritual being was almost completely anthropomorphic (pictured in the form of human beings and material things). The dead were buried with food and drink and implements beside them, for their use in the other world. The Sumerians in the days of Abraham sent numbers of slaves to their doom upon the death of the reigning monarch to serve him in the after life. The Egyptians embalmed their dead so that the body was available for use again on the day of resurrection. Even Moses, conversing with God upon the Mount, pleaded that he might for one moment gaze upon the face of the Almighty.

This primitive inability to visualise the world of the spirit without such material appendages finds its counterpart to-day in the belief that the "rapture of the saints" will comprise a glorifying of the human body with the eternal retention of what is in all its essentials the present physical frame. Similarly the returning Lord is looked for in purely material guise, the body laid in the tomb outside Jerusalem enduring to all eternity as the "Lord from heaven," Who is now and for all time the Head over all things both in heaven and on earth.

Our Lord's own words to Nicodemus convey a depth of meaning to the observant which, rightly received, banish for ever all such crudities of thought.

*"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit." (John 3; 8).*

Those who are accounted worthy to attain "that world, and that resurrection from the dead" are like the wind, which is invisible, powerful, but comprehended only by the effects of its presence, and this understanding receives startling confirmation when the lesson of our Lord's conversations with His disciples after His resurrection is considered.

His recorded "appearances" number about eleven, but in only one instance, that of the manifestation to Thomas, did He appear in His pre-Crucifixion likeness. Mary, at the tomb, saw a gardener. The disciples, on the

way to Emmaus, saw a stranger. On the shore of the sea of Galilee they failed to recognise the unknown friend until the miraculous draught of fishes was taken. This One Who appeared and disappeared at will, assumed various forms and features, found locked and bolted doors no hindrance to his passing, was very evidently not the "MAN Christ Jesus" they had known.

What then is more reasonable to expect than that He Who, in the days of His flesh and by Divine power, manipulated the constituents of matter to produce wine where formerly there had been water, or by its exercise so controlled the forces of Nature that the storm on the lake ceased at His Word, should not, after being "clothed upon" with His spiritual body, call on the same power to create upon each occasion a form of human lineaments which should be the medium of his communication with those whose senses could only be receptive to material things. The one satisfactory explanation, not only of Christ's appearances after His resurrection, but of all the recorded appearances of celestial visitants throughout Old Testament history, is that in every case the gap between spiritual communication and human reception was bridged by this quasi-material expedient; a necessity because it is not possible for spiritual beings to be perceived or comprehended by human senses.

After Pentecost there came a change. No longer do messengers from above appear to men in human garb as the three men sought Abraham. The coming of that Holy Spirit which at Pentecost introduced a new influence bearing the Divine Revelation to men upon earth rendered the older methods of communication unnecessary and superfluous.

To those who have come "into Christ" by complete self-surrender and consecration to Him, the power of the Holy Spirit conveys an understanding of spiritual truth and through that an appreciation of the spiritual world which can be given in no other way. No longer can such "appearances" convey real assurance in a day when modern science and magic is well able to reproduce similar phenomena. The deeper knowledge that comes from constant spiritual communion with God by prayer and Divine guidance overshadows by far those material aids to faith which were given to the disciples in the time of their need. The physical appearing of Christ as a human beings—as even the noblest and most imposing of human beings—would surely constitute a

very poor anti-climax to the stirring events which in all the world around us have been heralds of His coming.

Logically, then, the whole conception of Christ's Second Advent is changed. The sign of His presence is no longer a visible appearance in the skies with attendant angels and the sound of trumpets. The watchfulness inculcated upon those disciples who would be witnesses of His return is not a physical watchfulness which keeps the eye upon the clouds and the ear strained to catch the voice heard from Heaven. The whole technique of "watching" is revolutionised. Not now does the instructed Christian expect to see his Lord by physical sight, but in a deeper and truer manner he will realise the fact of His presence by a spiritual insight and understanding of the Scriptural evidences relating to the time and circumstances of His coming. He will "see" Him through the obvious fulfilment of the Scriptures in relation to contemporary events and the motion of forces which result in the destruction of this present order of things and the establishment of God's Kingdom in its place.

This realisation will imply a diligent study of Bible prophecy in the light of current events. It implies a clear understanding of the **purpose** as well as the **nature** of His coming before any attempt to recognise the **time** can be made. It implies a deep spiritual watchfulness if the full meaning of our Master's own words "Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour" is to be appreciated. But once there is a firm grasp of this essential truth that Christ at His Second Advent must of necessity be invisible and uncomprehended by mortal eyes, the way is paved for full acceptance of the New Testament teaching that Christ's Advent is to cover that whole period of time which in the Divine Plan has been set apart for the recovery of mankind from sin and death. He comes, not to pass sentence upon a multitude of trembling sinners and carry a few elect ones away to heavenly glory, but to wind up the very unsatisfactory state of affairs now existing in what Paul calls "this present evil world;" to establish upon its ruins a new and better order of things "wherein dwelleth righteousness" and to so deal with all mankind, the risen dead as well as the contemporary living, by wise and merciful administration, that all men may come to know God as they have never known Him before.

It is to this unostentatious aspect of Christ's

return that the angels made reference when they said

*"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1; 11).*

Away from the haunts of men; invisible to the busy life of the city; upon the eastern slopes of Bethany it was that the Son of Man took His leave of earth. None perceived His going, save the faithful few who watched. Similarly none perceive His return save the few Christian disciples whose spiritual senses are continually exercised to discern the evidence of His unseen presence. He went away a glorious spiritual being, for his humanity had been given at Calvary for the life of the world. The physical form which the disciples' eyes followed until a cloud received it out of their sight was but a materialised body which manifested "the Lord—that Spirit" to men whose natural eyes were unable to perceive the presence of a heavenly being. When He "appeared in the presence of God for us" His manhood was left behind for ever—and He was in very truth glorified with the Father with that glory which He had with Him before the world was. (John 17; 5). Likewise He who returns is the Lord from Heaven, the spiritual being, a man no longer.

It was afterwards that the masses knew of His resurrection and ascension—proclaimed in the streets and squares of the city by men upon whom rested the power of the Holy Spirit. So will it be again. It is after the first consciousness of His Second Presence has dawned upon those who are watching, that the realisation of this stupendous event and all that it implies will come to mankind at large.

That material form ascended before the disciples' eyes visibly for a few hundred feet at most, and it was when it disappeared into the cloud and the disciples could see no more, that Jesus Christ, who for thirty-three years had dwelt among men in the flesh, partaking in every respect of the nature of this material world, passed out of this realm of time and space into that eternity which knows not either, "from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

*The third article in this series will appear next month under the sub-title "Dawn," and will deal with the early signs of Christ's presence.*

## LIFE—THE GLORY OF CREATION

"Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth."

The wonderful diversity of God's handiwork is nowhere better exemplified than in the manifestations of life which are apparent on so many different planes of material existence. From the simplest forms of living cells, through every ramification of the two organic worlds—the vegetable and the animal—up to that marvellous organism which is a human being, life displays its many-sided aspects to the serious minded student of Divine creation. The secrets of organic structure of men and mammals, or of the growth and development of plants and trees, are well known to men, but the mystery of life itself, from whence it comes, how it passes through successive generations, is not known at all. It still remains true as in the days of David that the spirit and power of life is held by the Almighty. (Psalm 104; 29-30).

It is a natural but a grave mistake which men often make to assume that life can only exist in a material organism—a plant or an animal. Christians at least know full well that outside the range of human sense there exists a spiritual world of living personalities, who, adapted to that world as human beings are to this, fulfil their appointed place in creation. The Bible constantly stresses the fundamental distinction between the material and the spiritual, the principle of life being the only thing which these two orders of creation have in common.

Life can be manifested through a non-sentient organism (i.e. one not having any consciousness of existence) of which plants and trees, the individual cells which collectively go to make up a human body, and bacilli and bacteria are examples. All these things come into being, live their life cycle through and die, without having any knowledge or consciousness of the fact.

Life is also manifest through sentient organisms; those having the faculty of being conscious of their own existence. The lowliest of these, insects and shell fish, commence a scale at the top of which are the more intelligent animals such as dogs and horses; and at the crown of earthly creation is man. But the story does not end here, for just as man in his

powers and capabilities stands immeasurably above the understanding or perception of, say, an earthworm; so there are intelligent beings in the spiritual world—"angels"—who are just as much above man in knowledge and ability.

There are thus three general grades of sentient beings. These are:—

First, the purely physical, uncontrolled by any power of reflection, anticipation or reason. *Instinct is the driving force which impels the actions of such creatures, and no kind of moral responsibility can be imposed upon them. The entire brute creation, from the tiniest insect to the most intelligent animal that is known, belongs to this class. Their lives are spent in seeking sustenance for the physical organism and in the perpetuation of their kind, and when at length Nature's purpose is achieved death comes easily and naturally and the dust returns to earth as it was. (Eccl. 12; 7).*

Secondly, and still belonging to this material world, there is that form of life which is called "psychical" a word which denotes union of the purely physical organism with a mind and intellect having powers of thought and reflection, able to appreciate abstract qualities such as love, hate; justice, injustice; etc. Man is the only creature having this power. The mind of man is able to reason concerning unknown things from the basis of things that are known, and so alone among the creatures of earth is able to bring its resources and the powers of Nature under control.

The whole of our information upon the third order of sentient life, the spiritual, is derived from the Bible, supported by evidence drawn from two sources—first, the personal testimony of those who have been "born again" by "baptism into Christ's death" (Rom. 6; 4) and are thus able to discern spiritual things (1 Cor. 2; 14-15) and secondly, the external evidence afforded by phenomena associated with spiritualism and witchcraft throughout the ages. The combined testimony of these witnesses is to the reality of the spiritual order of creation, and that the powers and potentialities appertaining thereto are immeasurably greater than those which are given to mankind.

God is a Spirit (John 4; 24) and before the material universe came into being He had already created the spiritual world and its inhabitants. So far from angels or spirit beings being the souls of dead men ascended to the heavens, the Biblical presentation is that the angels were created and existed long before the human race (Job 38; 7) and that when in due time God created man (Gen. 2; 7) it was an entirely new form of life.

The material creation will always endure; for the earth abideth for ever (Isa. 66; 22). It is the Divine Plan that just as the spiritual realm is peopled by a happy and harmonious community living in complete harmony with the Giver of all good, so too will the earth to all eternity be populated by a restored and undying multitude of human beings living in full accord with Divine Law and in harmony with their environment. Death will be a thing of the past, and resurrection will have restored from the grave, the death-state, all who have lived in earth's past ages, and who by means of their whole-hearted adoption of the principles of righteousness will be accounted worthy of everlasting life upon earth. Man will thus remain a human being to all eternity, the perfect balance and interdependence of physical organism with mind and intellect continuing to sustain him in his proud position as the glory of material creation.

To this general plan there is one exception. The New Testament reveals that in furtherance of certain elements in the Divine purposes, particularly that of the world's reconciliation in the new Age now dawning, an opportunity to become "footstep followers" of the Lord Jesus Christ is extended to believers in Him, and as a result of complete and life-long devotion to His message and cause, and desire for association with Him in His future work, to become actually and in fact transformed from human conditions to spiritual conditions; to lay down human life in actual death as do all human beings, but instead of re-appearing upon earth when the dead are restored, to be raised in the full glory of spiritual existence to the spiritual world. This is a translation from the psychical form of life to the spiritual form and involves a definite change of nature. (Phil. 3; 21).

The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15th chapter makes this distinction very clear, and stresses the fact of these two worlds being fundamentally distinct and that the passage from one to the other is limited only to the class

described above, the "Church of Christ" and that it is effected by such a "change." It was thus that the pre-existent Son of God—the Word, or Logos—(John 1; 1) laid aside the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (John 17; 5) and became MAN—a human being—and after thirty-three and a half years upon earth amongst men was "put to death flesh, but made alive spirit", dying as a human being upon the cross; by the power of the Father being raised again on the third day to full glory of spiritual life.

This outline of the subject can be well supported by the Scriptures, and demonstrates two facts which need to be clearly established in the mind if a coherent understanding of the Divine Plan for humanity and a true understanding of the riddle of existence is to be achieved. These salient points are:—

First; Charles Darwin's theory regarding the evolution of mankind from a lower order of life is untenable, when the fact of man's psychical nature is remembered. No matter how plausible the arguments for evolution based upon biological similarities, there is no means by which the unreasoning brute is able to develop those subtle qualities of mind which constitute man peculiar amongst all earthly creatures. With the creation of man the Almighty introduced something entirely new into His universe. (Gen. 1; 26-27).

Secondly; the clear line of demarcation between human and spiritual natures revealed by the Scriptures demonstrates the falsity of Platonic teaching regarding the immortality of the soul, a doctrine which, although held almost universally amongst Christian people, is not taught in the Scriptures. It is true that a certain class taken from amongst humankind will attain to the spiritual world, but the manner of their attainment will not be the setting free at death of an inner "soul;" but a definite change of nature, from human to spiritual, at the First Resurrection. (1 Cor. 15; 51-54).

Life must therefore be manifest through a suitable organism — whether material or spiritual does not affect the fact—and death is the absence of life. The future life promised in God's Plan to "whosoever will" (Rev. 22; 17) comes about, not as a result of the soul leaving the body and continuing to live on in some intangible fashion, but by means of a resurrection from the dead; and this is the consistent teaching of the New Testament. (Acts 17; 31 and 24; 15).

## THE AUTHORITY OF DIVINE TRUTH.

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind" John 9: 39.

Divine truth comes to us with all the authority of its Divine Author. With a gentle dignity consistent with its noble character it urges its claims upon the reason, the judgment and the conscience of men, and then leaves them as free moral agents, to accept or reject its claims. Its true messengers also come with the same moral force of inherent worth, rather than with noisy demonstrations or "lying wonders," such as are used by the powers of darkness to attract idle curiosity into the snares of Satan. They come imbued with the spirit of the authoritative message they bear—the spirit of holiness and truth.

Thus our Lord Jesus, the great chief Messenger of the Divine covenant, was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners; the prophets were holy men who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit and the apostles were holy men chosen of God and charged with the Divine testimony. So also all of those called of God to preach the good tidings have this anointing of the Holy Spirit of God (Isa. 61: 1-3 ; Luke 4; 16-21) as their necessary preparation for this service; and without this anointing they are but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, having no commission from God to declare His Truth. To any who, without the Divine anointing, presumptuously take upon themselves to handle the testimonies of God, attempting to expound them to others: "God saith, 'What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee!'" (Psa. 50: 16, 17). Only those who have the anointing of the Spirit of Truth have any commission from God to preach the truth to others. And indeed only such can do it; for others, not being willing to admit its full sway and authority in their own hearts, yet anxious to justify themselves before men, will pervert the truth, deceiving and being deceived, wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction.

Divine truth, flowing from the pure fountain of truth, God himself, Who is all light, and in Whom is no darkness at all (1 John 1: 5), coming to us through the appointed channel

of God's Word and declared by his faithful servants imbued with his spirit, comes with a moral and logical power proving its authority and enforcing it with an emphasis which carries warning with it and which plainly says, "Take heed how ye hear."—Luke 8: 18.

The message of Divine truth conveyed to us through our Lord Jesus and his holy apostles and prophets, and from time to time, as meet in due season, called to our attention by such members of the anointed body as God hath set in the Church to be pastors, teachers and even by the feeblers members of the body, are not therefore subjects for mere idle consideration and human speculation and dispute: they are not common themes for reckless handling with irreverent hands—they are the eternal principles of truth and righteousness. They are the oracles of God and the principles of his holy law by which every man must be judged as worthy or unworthy of eternal life. They come, with a quiet insistence, demanding our candid, serious, careful consideration of their claims upon us in view of the fact of a coming judgment in which these principles of truth and righteousness shall surely triumph and prove a savour of life unto life or of death unto death to men, according as they are obedient or disobedient to their authority.

It was to establish these principles of judgment, and to acquaint men with them, as well as to redeem them from the sentence of the first judgment of the race in Eden, that Jesus came into this world. (John 5: 24; 20: 30, 31). Yet this judgment, while it begins in a measure with every man as soon as he begins to comprehend the Divine testimony, is not, in the case of the world in general, to reach its final decision until the time appointed for the world's judgment, the Millennial Age; for at his first advent Jesus said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," the day of final reckoning, the Millennial or Judgment day. (John 12: 46-48).

In view of these considerations what folly it is for any man blindly to ignore or foolishly

tamper with and pervert or reject the authority of Divine truth! On the other hand how grateful to God we should be for his goodness in making known to us the principles of His law, the testimonies of His Word, by which we are to be judged. And how anxious we should be that our understanding of those principles of judgment should be clear and free from any bias of human prejudice which might blind our eyes to truths of such solemn import. As the Psalmist says, "The judgments of the Lord (expressed by His holy apostles and prophets) are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward." (Psa. 19: 9-11).

The above statement of our Lord was called out by the contrast presented in the conduct of the Pharisees and of the blind man to whom sight had been given. The miracle gave unmistakable evidence of Divine power manifested through Christ, and was a testimony to the truth of his claim to the Messiahship. The Pharisees, perceiving the logical deduction from the admission of the fact, and unwilling to admit the authority of a teacher greater than themselves, rejected even this undeniable testimony, and cast the man out of the synagogue because he confessed the truth.

In this miracle our Lord has clearly taught the great truth that God was with him, and that he was indeed all that he claimed to be—the fulfilment of the law and the prophets, the long promised Messiah. These Pharisees, though feeling the force of this testimony, nevertheless harboured so much envy and hatred in their hearts that it blinded them to the truth. But not so was it with the young man upon whose sightless eyes the miracle had been wrought. Envy, hatred and the spirit of rivalry were absent from his mind, and wonder and gratitude prompted him to reason out the logical deductions from this marvellous fact. In this course we observe the steps of obedient and increasing faith and the results so blessed and so different from those to which the course of the Pharisees led. The act of hopeful obedience (based doubtless upon what he had heard of Jesus previously), in following the simple directions to go and wash his clay-anointed eyes in the pool of Siloam, was rewarded by immediate sight, although the man had been born blind; this blessing, gratefully realised, increased faith; the testimony of

obedient, grateful faith, in the face of opposition, brought the reward of persecution; and persecution, accepted in preference to the approval of men upon terms of unrighteousness—of stifled conviction and ingratitude—brought the reward of the clearer revelation of Him who was the hope of Israel and the world. And not only so, but this realisation that Jesus was indeed the very Christ promised of God, expected for four thousand years, came to the formerly blind man with this additional element of joy, that he had been specially favoured and blessed by Him.

Here we see in strong contrast the spirit of obedience on the part of the young man who received sight, and the spirit of disobedience and rebellion on the part of the Pharisees. In the one case the authority of truth was despised and its light rejected, the darkness being preferred because their deeds were evil; while in the other its authority was received and appreciated and from its blessed testimony were drawn the precious lessons of faith, obedience, gratitude, humility, fortitude and loving reverence. Thus, the same truth which blinded one enlightened and blessed the other. And so truth is always, as Paul tells us, a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. It is only those who receive the truth into good and honest hearts who are rewarded with its blessed fruitage. (2 Cor. 2: 14-16).

Let every man, therefore, take heed how he hears the testimony of God; let him not be of those who receive it into a heart filled with selfishness or a spirit of vain glory or pride or irreverence or ingratitude; so that it may not have the blinding effect that it had upon the Pharisees, or the hardening effect it had upon them and upon Pharaoh, who thereby ten times precipitated upon himself and his people the plagues of Divine wrath, finally culminating in the destruction in the Red Sea. But with a pure heart, a good and honest heart, let us receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save our souls. (James 1: 21, 22).

It is well for all the Lord's people ever to bear in mind that the present age, the present life, is our judgment day. Let us see to it that we conduct ourselves with that prudence and godly sincerity so befitting so solemn and momentous a time, and also that we come to the consideration of the Divine testimony with that reverence and humility which ensure the enlightening, and guard against the blinding, effects. Well indeed would it be for the world

if they, too, would consider that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good;" and that "God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil;" and that "there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known." (Prov. 15; 3; Eccle. 12; 14; Luke 12; 2, 3).

This judgment in the case of the Lord's consecrated people culminates with the present life, and in the case of the world it will culminate

in the age to come. There is, however, a judgment of the world as nations (not as individuals) which culminates in the present age. Thus, for instance, there was the national judgment of Israel which condemned them to blindness and to an overthrow, as unworthy of the continued favour of God. So also upon the nations of Christendom, the judgment of God is also to blindness and to an overthrow in a great time of trouble. "Take heed how ye hear" the teachings of God's Word!

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### THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.

The image of Christ, drawn by the pencil of the Spirit, to which the Scripture directs our aim, is painted in such colours that it is impossible often to contemplate it without its irresistibly affecting the heart. As the bodily eye that has looked long at the sun retains a bright image of it, so the spiritual eye that gazes steadfastly on the face of Christ is filled with light. We carry this image with us wherever we go, and it blends with all our thoughts and actions. It never ceases to be a study to us, ever growing more bright and beautiful as we gaze upon it, revealing in contrast, more and more, every darkness of our own hearts. It is with us at conversion as it is in spring, when the sun melts the snow in the fields and on the mountain side; but upon the highest peaks, and in the deepest valleys, patches of it still remain. So the rays of the spiritual sun may penetrate our souls, and still there remains in each heart heights and depths where yet all is cold and hard. How much must yet be melted away, he is first aware who conscientiously yields himself up to the discip-

line of Scripture. The longer we contemplate Christ, the more do we discover how unlike him we are, how selfishness has penetrated our inmost nature, how poor we are in humanity, in love. When we enter this school of discipline, it does not seem so. This beholding ourselves in the image of Christ has the peculiarity, that whilst we more and more discover the darkness in us, upon us all the while unconscious, it is pouring its light. Paul has expressed this in a particularly rich passage in his letter to the Corinthians. He says: "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." A wonderfully rich saying indeed. Just as when we behold ourselves in a metallic mirror, he would say, it spreads over us its own effulgence; so we Christians, looking with unveiled face at Christ, as into the mirror of humanity, are adorned with his light, made partakers of His Spirit, changed as from glory to glory, into the same resplendent image.

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### UNDER A SHADOW.

There are very few who are not at some time brought under the shadow of false accusation. The natural way to meet it is by denial and self-defense. But that is not the New Testament way. There is a better, surer, higher way. It is to give the false accusation a plain, simple, square denial, and then leave the life and the truth to do the rest. It is not my business to take care of my reputation; it is all I can do to take care of my character. If that is clean and pure and luminous, the light that is in me will shine on and out, and

by and by will pierce the clouds and dispel them.

Do not run after accusers; do not trouble yourself about false accusations. Only be sure to make them false; then leave the falsehood to die. Go on with your life work; and accept the position in which false accusation, and consequent scandal and reproach, place you, only as a new opportunity to bear witness to the truth and the life by your own manifest and glorious possession of them.—Lyman Abbott.

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### WHO IS MY MOTHER? AND WHO ARE MY BRETHREN?

It is well for those who have entered into the new relationship of spiritual sons of God to consider carefully and frequently the changed relationship into which it has brought us. Our most intimate relationships are no longer those of earthly origin. Our interests, hopes, and aims are now bound up with those of the heavenly family; and as we come to realise this more fully, our affections reach out after the family of God and our communion one with another should be such as to deepen and broaden that love one for another.

The above expression of our Lord showed how he regarded the heavenly relationship. When one said unto him: "Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee," he answered, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother." (Matt. 12: 47-50.)

As New Creatures, we are spiritual sons of God, soon to be joined in heirship with His dear Son; we are the espoused virgin who, forsaking all earthly ties, is to be joined in marriage to her Heavenly Bridegroom, and with joy we are now making all possible preparation for the great event. When this new condition is fully entered upon, we shall no longer be husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, etc., with those on the earthly plane; for we shall be "kings and priests unto God," prepared to rule and to bless all the families of the earth, every member of which will then be as dear to us as to God. Our love to our former dear ones will be no less than now. Our love will be greatly intensified, though not bounded by the former narrow limits of blood relationship.

\* \* \*

By whom was David taught to aim the dreadful blow,  
When he Goliath fought, and laid the Hittite low?  
No sword or spear the stripling took,  
But chose a pebble from the brook.  
'Twas Israel's God and King who sent him to the fight,  
Who gave him strength to sling and skill to aim aright.  
Ye feeble saints, your strength endures  
Because young David's God is yours.

(Cowper).

### A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

New mercies, new blessings, new light on thy way;  
New courage, new hope and new strength for thy day;  
New notes of thanksgiving, new chords of delight,  
New songs in the morning, new songs in the night.  
New wine in thy chalice, new altars to raise;  
New fruit for thy Master, new garments of praise,  
New gifts from His treasures, new smiles from His face,  
New streams from the fountain of infinite grace.  
New stars for thy crown, and new tokens of love;  
New gleams of the glory that waits thee above.  
New light of His countenance, radiant and dear!  
All this be thy joy in the happy New Year.

\* \* \*

The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. (2 Cor. 9. 7).  
Not merely as respects money matters is this true, but in respect of all our little offerings and sacrifices to Him and for His cause. If we would be pleasing to the Lord and grow in His favour and in nearness to Him, we must bring our hearts more and more into the condition that He approves, that He loves, viz., heartiness, cheerfulness, promptness in every service we may render. The trouble with many Christians is that they have not thoroughly learned what a great privilege we of this Gospel age enjoy, in being permitted to present our little sacrifices and self-denials to the Lord, under the assurance that our imperfect works shall be acceptable, through Christ, to God.

### PRAYER.

Some one has remarked that as the sharpening of scythes in harvest time does not mean lost time and energy, so also time spent in prayer is not lost as respects the affairs of life. Unquestionably the best men and women in the world are those who pray, and pray regularly; who bow the knee as did Daniel. Unquestionably the moments thus taken from earthly affairs are well spent and bring more than commensurate blessings upon the worshipper and all with which he has to do. Unquestionably it is impossible to live a consecrated life in neglect of prayer. What would Daniel have been without his praying time? How would his faith in God have persisted in that heathen land? How would his loyalty to principle have maintained itself in the midst of corruption had it not been for his communion with his maker? To the Christian this privilege is still further enhanced by a realisation that "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous," in whose all-prevailing name we may approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace, and obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. (Heb. 4: 16).

### LOOKING FORWARD.

The world to-day presents a sad picture of nations drilled and regimented by their rulers into blind and unreasoning obedience. Upon a great part of the earth's surface freedom to write and speak independently of the national regime is denied. Men and women are growing up and living their lives under no code of ethics save that which is approved and inculcated by the State. Since the tendency in such cases is for the State to repudiate and disown Christianity, the threat to Christian influence and teaching appears, upon the surface, to be more serious than at any time since the days of Diocletian.

That is why the hearts of many Christian leaders are failing them for fear. We who know the glorious outcome of this distressing period do not share that fear, for all these events confirm our belief that the government of man by man has all but run its course—that the Times of the Gentiles have expired and that the Messianic Kingdom is at hand. Yet there is a factor in this situation which demands close attention. The peoples who are now being deprived of their liberty to think and worship will be among the first to come under the righteous administration of the coming Age, for restitution commences with the living nations. They are those to whom the laws of God will first go forth from Zion; and they will be totally unprepared to receive those laws, or to understand even the fundamental standards of a society founded upon love and equity. The words of that old hymn "O'er heathen lands afar, thick darkness broodeth yet" remain as true, or truer, than ever; but added to this is now the terrible darkness which is spreading over reputedly civilised peoples in Europe and elsewhere and intensifying the drastic nature of that great change which will commence when He shall "speak peace to the nations."

It is then that trained workers—a "people for a purpose"—will be needed. We know that in that day when the disciples of Christ, changed into His likeness, commence the spiritual administration of earth's affairs, there will be men upon earth who are able and eager to engage in the work of instructing humanity. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews mentions by name some who will be prominent in that day as "princes in all the earth" (Psa. 45; 16). But how shall they serve, except they receive from on high that infallible direction which

comes from a thorough knowledge of the needs of humanity? And how shall those who are then on high, joined to their Lord in the "glory of the celestial," be able to give that direction unless they themselves have first come to a clear heart appreciation of the laws of God? And that heart appreciation must be gained now. "Now is the acceptable time," says Paul, "now is the day of salvation." He beseeches his readers that they "receive not the grace of God in vain." How evident it is that we, Christian "Watchers" in a world which is rapidly throwing off all allegiance to the King of Kings and blotting His very Name out of its memory, should learn to stand fast in the knowledge of Truth which is ours. How needful that we hold tenaciously to the heavenly vision which alone has the power to make us "able ministers of the New Covenant," that when at length the day of reconstruction commences, we shall fulfil our allotted place in the direction of earth's affairs.

### JEHOVAH.

"The Ever-existing one, our All-in-All."—  
1. Cor. 15; 28.

"Jehovah, our God, is the great Emperor of the whole universe, and his wisdom, power, goodness and benevolence are abundantly equal to all the responsibilities of so exalted an office. The human mind staggers in its efforts to comprehend the mental resources of a Being who is able to assume and to bear such responsibility. Think for a moment of the MEMORY that never fails; of the JUDGMENT that never errs; of the WISDOM that plans for eternity without the possibility of failure for ages to come; of the POWER and SKILL that can harness even every opposing element, animate and inanimate, and make them all work together for the accomplishment of His grand designs; of the TIRELESS VIGILANCE which never ceases nor seeks relief from the pressing cares of universal dominion—whose eye never sleeps, whose ear is ever open; and who is ever cognizant of all the necessities, and active in all the interests, of His broad domains."

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Drop Thy still dews of quietness,  
Bid all our strivings cease,  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
And let our ordered lives confess,  
The beauty of Thy peace.

## WRITINGS OF ANCIENT TIMES

An explanation of the "B.S.M." cover design.

The "Bible Students' Monthly" cover design is a reminder that the Word of God which speaks with such authority to Christians to day has been written by a variety of men, at various times, and in different languages throughout the world's history. It has been copied, translated and reproduced in many ancient languages as well as, in these last days, every modern one under heaven. Abraham, the father of the faithful, the one who gave his name in the first place to a great nation and after that to a spiritual seed, and who will yet come forth to administer justice and judgment in the Millennial Age, undoubtedly had some part in the recording and preservation of the Word of God; and there can be no doubt that as a well-educated citizen of Ur of the Chaldees he was a capable writer of the cuneiform script of his day. The top left hand panel in our cover design reproduces the style of this writing; and many of the early records of Genesis as well as certain other parts of the Old Testament must have been originally inscribed on clay tablets in this manner. The account of Abraham's purchase of the field and cave of Machpelah in Genesis 23 is an example of the legal documents used for the conveyance of land in his day. Such tablets are now in the British Museum, inscribed in very similar terms. The cuneiform writing was still in use in Babylonia in the days of Daniel and Cyrus, and there can be little doubt that the famous "decree of Cyrus" was recorded in the same script, and that the "book" which Seraiah cast into the Euphrates (Jer. 51: 63) was a cuneiform tablet.

Joseph in Egypt, becoming learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and particularly in the learning of their priesthood (Acts 7: 22, Gen. 41: 50) would be familiar with a different type of writing, the Hieratic, used in the very earliest days of that nation. In all probability those portions of the Old Testament for which Joseph and, later on, Moses were responsible were written in a style such as this, shown in the second top panel. In later centuries these early records were copied in various forms of the Hebrew language, a typical example of which is shown in the third panel, the Greek, Latin and other translations from which our modern versions come having been translated from these Hebrew originals.

In more recent times the Old Testament was rendered into Greek and the New Testament added. The fourth panel gives a small section of the Alexandrian manuscript, which dates from the year A.D. 500. The similarity of the Latin alphabet, of two centuries later, as shown by the fifth panel, is noticeable, and the gradual development of modern alphabets can be traced. With the growth of Christianity in Europe the Greek Bible was translated into Latin, and at length the labours of noble and earnest Christians bore fruit in the first English Bibles.

The earliest Anglo-Saxon versions appeared about the year 1,000 and one of these is pictured in the left-hand bottom panel. There is very little likeness to modern English characters in this example, but the first printed Bible, that of William Tindale, in A.D. 1534, and which is shown next, can be seen to be a portion of the Sermon on the Mount. Very soon afterwards, between 1568 and 1572, the "Bishop's Bible" became the first Bible in general use and the kind of type which our ancestors in the time of Queen Elizabeth were accustomed to read, appears in the third panel. In 1611, the renowned "Authorised Version" of King James I was published and a sample of the first "Oxford" Bible of 1675 is shown in the fourth panel. Now in the twentieth century we are able to rejoice in the use of evenly printed Bibles as shown in the final panel and bring to bear upon our researches concordances and helps such as our forefathers never even dreamed could be made possible.

It is a sobering thought to reflect that many of the great men whose lives, recorded in the Word of Truth, are an inspiration and stimulus to us, could read and write only with difficulty. Laboriously inscribing strange symbols on soft clay, or treasuring some carefully copied scroll or papyrus, they were nevertheless able to "speak and write" as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. We who live to-day hold in our hands the accumulated writings of four thousand years, preserved and translated for our edification. We stand at the very portals of that day of which these men dreamed. Surely we do well to regard with humility and thankfulness the wonderful providence which has preserved the living Word of God through all these changes of language and script and brought it into our own homes and our own meetings, where we can rejoice in our possession of the "Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

## THE LAND OF TO-MORROW

The problem of evil will be solved in that day when Christ reigns, and sin, disease and death will be abolished for ever.

"I would not have a millennium without Christ, but rather Christ without a millenium. The believer's safety is in Christ, the believer's heaven is in Christ, and wherever Christ is, in the firmament above or in the earth below, it matters not—there I desire to be, and there perfect happiness will be. But I believe it will be upon earth. I believe that we shall enjoy a felicity and a glory and a peace on this orb, renovated and restored, which poet's imagination never dreamed of, and which painter's pencil never attempted to embody. I believe that the groans of this wearied world shall cease. I believe that the *miserere* that has risen a perpetual *minor* from its inhabitants shall be stilled for ever. I believe that it shall cease to be an aceldama of the living or a charnal house of the dead. I believe that the simoom shall no more sweep its soil; that the lightning's flash shall no more rend its trees. I believe that the earth shall put off its ashen garments, and doff its raiment of sackcloth; and creation cast aside from its eyes the dark shroud of sorrow that has dimmed them; and we shall see amid the glorious Apocalypse, the sun that shall rise to set no more. "Come, Lord Jesus, even so, come quickly!" I believe that our poets shall lay aside their mourning garments, and put on their priestly robes; and philosophy shall be the handmaid ministering at the altar of the Gospel; and all literature, and all science, and all knowledge, shall become instinct with glorious inspiration, and shall blend their voices in deep-toned and perpetual harmony, "Blessing, glory, and honour, and thanksgiving unto God, and to the Lamb who was slain, for ever and ever."

(*Rev. John Cumming, 1848.*)

\* \* \*

The sword of truth, already sharpened, is to smite every evil system and custom—civil, social and ecclesiastical. Nay, more, we can see that the smiting is commenced: freedom of thought, and human rights, civil and religious, long lost sight of under kings and emperors, popes, synods, councils, traditions and creeds, are being appreciated and asserted as never before. The internal conflict is already fomenting: it will ere long break forth as a

consuming fire, and human systems, and errors, which for centuries have fettered truth and oppressed the groaning creation, must melt before it. Yes, truth—and widespread and increasing knowledge of it—is the sword which is perplexing and wounding the heads over many countries. (Psa. 110: 6.) Yet in this trouble what a blessing is disguised: It will prepare mankind for a fuller appreciation of righteousness and truth, under the reign of the King of Righteousness.

As men shall eventually come to realize that justice is laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet (Isa. 28: 17), they will also learn that the strict rules of justice alone can secure the blessings which all desire. And, thoroughly disheartened with their own ways and the miserable fruitage of selfishness, they will welcome and gladly submit to the righteous authority which takes the control; and thus, as it is written, "The desire of all nations shall come"—the Kingdom of God, under the absolute and unlimited control of Jehovah's Anointed.

(*"The Time is at Hand."*)

\* \* \*

In the daily rush to workshop and office the teeming streets are full of faces anxious, care-worn and bearing the marks of daily stress. For many men and women the gaining of a livelihood is a continual source of worry and apprehension. How different when the righteous administration of Messiah's Kingdom ensures to every man an adequate share of the necessities and luxuries of life; when daily occupations become a pleasure instead of drudgery; when the resources of science are harnessed to serve the welfare of the race. The morning sun will shine down upon multitudes betaking themselves to daily tasks with the radiant happiness of unquestioned security and peace to inspire their minds and hands. Praise to God, the Creator and Giver of all good, will resound in the habitations of men and roll back from field and forest. Haste and hurry will be known no more; in calm leisure and with painstaking care men will pursue their chosen work, and in a world of universal brotherhood the call to labour for the good of all will meet with enthusiastic response.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ANONYMOUS.

Sincere appreciation is expressed in recognition of three anonymous donations of 10s., 10s., and £1, received recently, for the furtherance of the work.

## THE "PEOPLES' PAPER."

This little paper is published by the Australian brethren and besides being devoted to news of the activities of our friends in that continent, also contains words of exhortation and exposition which are much appreciated by those who, in this country, read the periodical regularly as well as those for whom it is primarily intended. The subscription price is 2s. 6d. per year, and the Committee will gladly receive remittances and enter subscriptions for friends in this country. Free sample copies will be sent upon request at any time.

## EASTER CONVENTION.

The friends at Warrington advise that the usual General Convention is being arranged for the Easter Holiday. Requests for full details and also for accommodation should be addressed to Brother D. Stanley, 42 Euclid Avenue, Chester Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Lancs. An immersion service is being planned and it will be much appreciated if friends desiring to participate will inform Bro. Stanley in good time, in order that a decision respecting this part of the arrangements may be arrived at. This immersion service will probably be held on Easter Sunday.

## WHITSUN DISCUSSIONS.

Classes and brethren intending to put down suggestions for discussion at the Whitsun Convention are requested to forward same to the Secretary of the Committee by February 15th next. Friends are reminded that practicable and constructive proposals only should be put forward in order that the available time may be used to the best advantage.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

The Committee will be glad to assist local groups in the arrangement of public meetings by the provision of suitable speakers, free literature and suggestions concerning advertising and conduct of Meetings. Please write in the first instance to Brother A. Batcheller, 134 Clements Road, London, E.6.

Charts of the "Divine Plan," 5 feet by 2½ feet and 12 feet by 6 feet can be obtained on loan without charge, for use at Chart Talks and Public Meetings.

## GONE FROM US.

Brother F. Cleland, Secretary of the friends of Belfast, passed beyond the veil just before the old year ended. The brethren in Northern Ireland will miss his presence among them but rest in confidence that his "labours have not been in vain in the Lord."

## KINGDOM CARDS.

Cards have been returned during the past four weeks from:—  
Belfast, Birkenhead, Darlington, Ealing, Engis (Belgium), Forest Hill, Guildford, Ipswich, Isle of Wight, Kings Lynn, Leicester, Leigh, Littlehampton, Newcastle, Pontnewynydd, Portsmouth, Queens Ferry, Shaftesbury, Southsea, Swinton, Warrington, Welling.

## OVERSEAS REMITTANCES.

On behalf of our overseas correspondents, we would remind the friends that British postal orders are not valid in America and have to be sent back to England to be exchanged. An "International Money Order" is necessary if subscriptions are sent direct; and it is usually more convenient for all concerned if subscriptions are renewed through the Committee.

## LOCAL GATHERINGS.

The Committee desires to encourage periodic local gatherings by every means within its power, and is always ready to consider requests for assistance in cases where the friends are unable to shoulder the entire burden themselves. It is suggested that friends planning such gatherings advise the Committee of the proposed date so that possible clashes with other gatherings in the same neighbourhood may be avoided in time—this action will often save disappointment to the promoters. All correspondence in connection with these arrangements should be addressed to Brother C. R. H. Smith, 21 Werter Road, London, S.W.15.

## FREE LITERATURE.

Leaflets for judicious distribution are supplied free upon request, the titles at present available being as follows:—

Peace on Earth—When?  
World Order or Chaos—Which?  
Where are the Dead?  
Hell—the Truth.  
Will there be Wars forever?

### THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES

A book with a message which never grows old.  
A vindication of the Divine character, affording a complete answer to the age-old question:—

**WHY DOES GOD PERMIT EVIL?**

Circulation to date over 5½ million copies.  
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Library size, dark blue cloth	...	Post free	2/6
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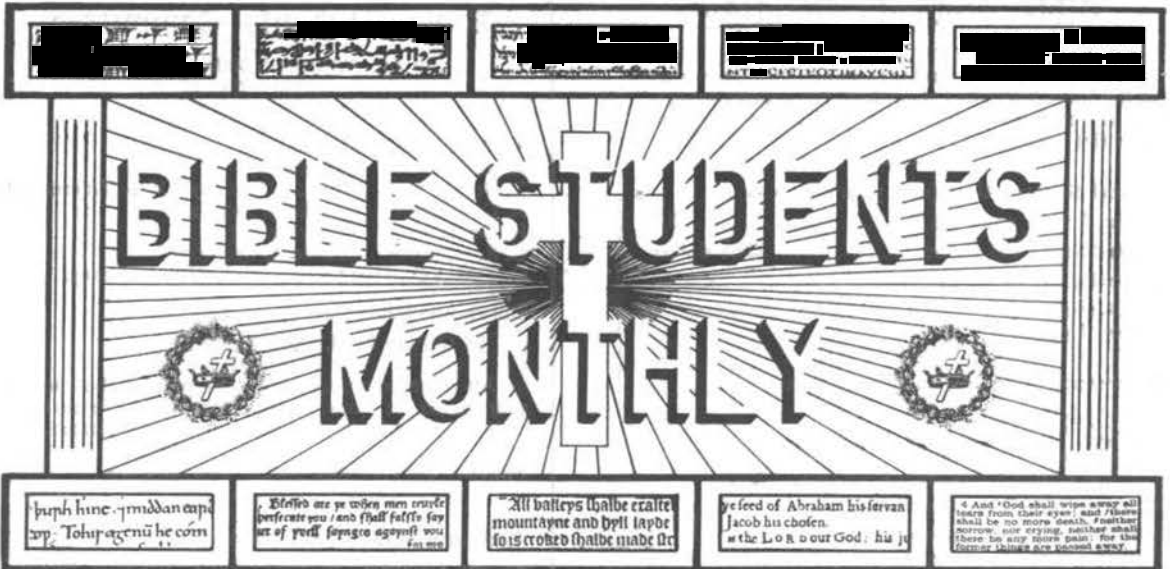
### SOME INTERESTING BOOKLETS

	Post free	Each	6 for
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Christ's Return, 34 pp. ... ..	} 2½d.	1/1	
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Do the Dead Know Anything? 32 pp....	} 3d.	1/3	
God—and Reason, 128 pp. ... ..			
The Day of Jehovah, 64 pp. ... ..	} 3d.	1/3	
What is Man? 61 pp. ... ..			
Hope Beyond the Grave, 123 pp. ... ..	} 5d.	2/3	
God's Covenants, 48 pp. ... ..			
A New Dictator—the only Hope, 19 pp.	5d.	2/3	
The Truth about Hell ... ..	6d.	2/9	
Plan of God in Brief, 98 pp. ... ..	7d.	3/-	
Pilate's Report, 32 pp., Illus. ... ..	7d.	3/-	
Some of the Parables, 90 pp., Illus. ... ..	10d.	4/-	
Zionism in Prophecy, 64 pp. ... ..	10d.	4/6	
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*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



Vol. 16 No. 3

MARCH, 1939

THREEPENCE

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\* \* \* \* \*

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 3. "DAWN."

*"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." Matthew 24; 27.*

Few texts have been more discussed than this when the Second Advent is being considered, and there are few which are more generally misunderstood. A brilliant comparison and contrast drawn by our Lord has been in large measure miscomprehended by reason of an all too common failing, that of taking an isolated text of Scripture and endeavouring to interpret it without any reference to its immediate context. As soon as the connection of these words with those uttered by Jesus in the same breath is appreciated the force and meaning of this passage becomes luminous.

This twenty fourth chapter of Matthew is of course historic. It records the detailed reply given by Jesus to His disciples in response to their earnest question as to **when** the Kingdom should come and by **what sign** they would discern the fact of His return to earth and the imminent end of the Age. To explain such all-important matters, closely interwoven as they were with a spiritual world of which those disciples knew nothing, was no easy task, and it became necessary for our Lord to select carefully chosen material analogies to make His meaning plain.

Passing over the long catalogue of intervening events, "wars and rumours of wars," "the abomination of desolation," "this gospel, preached for a witness" and so on, the twenty-sixth verse arrests the inquirer with a rather abrupt transition of thought.

*"Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth. Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. FOR AS the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; SO shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."*

Language could not be more plain. Two possible manifestations of His coming are rejected as inaccurate conceptions. The true

manner of that event is pictured in the form of a third and totally dissimilar metaphor. The symbol of the desert is a false one. The symbol of the secret chambers is likewise defective. That of the lightning is a true illustration; and here is the **sign** for which the disciples asked.

A careful examination of this passage then should reveal the foundation upon which every Christian's expectation should be based. What spiritual truth lies behind the symbols of the desert, the secret chamber, and the lightning?

"Behold, he is in the desert." Those words must have fallen with a familiar ring upon the disciples' ears. Not so many years previously some of them had themselves been followers of John the Baptist, a prophet preaching in the desert: one of whom it was said "There went out to him (to the wilderness) Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region about Jordan." (Matt. 3; 3-5). Jesus Himself referred to John in asking His listeners, "What went ye out **into the wilderness** for to see? . . . A prophet? Yea . . . and more than a prophet." (Luke 7; 24-26).

Not for John the busy life of the city, where his lone figure might easily be lost in the heedless crowds. Not for him a ministry in some quiet village, where a few immediate neighbours alone would listen to his impassioned words. John spent his life in a desert place and yet amidst a blaze of publicity enhanced all the more by the fact that men streamed from all quarters to hear and see this singular and never-to-be-forgotten figure.

So was it with the seers of Israel. Elijah, who gripped the nation's imagination when he destroyed the priests of Baal; Moses, than whom there arose not a greater in Israel; (Deut. 34; 10) others who, rising early and calling betimes, **voices crying in the wilderness** (Isa. 40; 3) becoming influential figures in the national life, were prophets of the desert—known of all men, seen of all men, their very presence so obvious a fact that whether the people would hear or whether they would forbear, they could never blind themselves to the truth that a prophet stood before them.

"Behold, he is in the secret chambers." A weak translation is responsible for hiding, at first, the allusion made here. The Greek word **tamieion** rendered "secret chambers" describes an inner room or storehouse which in every Eastern dwelling held the family treasures as well as stores and provisions. It became therefore a synonym for a private place, the place exclusive and secret to the family of the house, into which strangers could never intrude. The same word is used for "storehouse" and "closet" in the following scriptures:

*Matt. 6; 6* "When thou prayest, enter into thy CLOSET."

*Luke 12; 3.* That which ye have spoken . . . in CLOSETS shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

*Luke 12; 24.* "Consider the ravens . . . which have neither STOREHOUSE nor barn."

Upon comparing this statement with the preceding one, our Lord's meaning is clear. In the understanding that His coming was not to be a publicly advertised and appreciated spectacle ("in the desert") the disciples were not to react to the opposite extreme and look for nothing more than a private revelation to a favoured few in the secrecy of the family circle. For many centuries had Israel held to their claim of being the one nation selected and set apart for God's blessings, and not even the Samaritans were admitted into the fellowship of the chosen people. (John 4; 9). They claimed Messiah was to be for the Jew, and the Jew alone, and all without were treated as outsiders, dogs. The tremendous struggle which took place in the minds of Apostles as well as other believers before they could accept the transcendent truth that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts 10; 34-35) is well known to all readers of the New Testament.

The majority of Christians have progressed very little along this line. Even to-day there lingers in many quarters the idea that Jesus will appear for His own, but for nobody else. The conception of His coming, not only to take His Church to Himself, but also—in due time after that great event—to reveal Himself to all the world for their blessing and salvation, has not taken hold of many minds. The narrow-minded bigotry which has so well expressed itself in the old doggerel

"God bless me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife,  
Us four and no more."

lingers still and blinds the minds of some to a full conception of the immortal truth that is enshrined in the succeeding verse.

His coming is not in the open place of public view and universal knowledge, neither is it in the inner sanctuary of a chosen family, where no one outside will ever know anything about it. That event is to be discerned in a manner combining in a truly marvellous way the "coming as a thief" to His own and yet in such a fashion that "every eye shall see Him" when the time of His full manifestation shall have come; for

*"As the 'Astrape' emerges from the east and shines to the west; so will be the presence of the Son of Man."* (Matt. 24; 27 Diaglott).

The most soul-stirring conception of His Second Advent which Christ could possibly have given his disciples is that which is pictured in this metaphor of the radiance of dawn emerging from the east and flooding the world with light. Dawn in Palestine is not the same thing as dawn in the European countries and it is obvious that our Lord's allusion was based upon the reality with which his disciples were familiar. The ability to visualise an Eastern dawn is necessary if the full force of these words is to be appreciated.

The sun comes up suddenly, and a few minutes suffices to transform the velvety blackness of the tropical night into the full brilliance of a Syrian day. It is for this reason that very few inhabitants of the land actually witness the sun's rising, for their sleep is broken only by its dazzling beams as they encircle the earth. There is no long and gradual dawn as in more temperate countries. The first sign of approaching day is a greyness in the eastern sky, a greyness for which—in Jerusalem at least—both city watchmen and the priests in the Temple were duly waiting and watching—the watchmen, because it indicated the end of their period of service; and the priests, because as soon as light had flooded the land it was their duty to offer the morning sacrifice. Hence the constant Scriptural association of the coming of day with the "watchers," and the meaning of that cryptic message, "Watchman, what of the night? . . . The morning cometh, BUT IT IS YET DARK" (Isa. 21; 11-12, French version). Within a few minutes the greyness is streaked with shafts of pink, and then, so rapidly as to almost bewilder the unaccustomed observer, a glorious effulgence of golden light spreads fan-wise from the east and moves visibly across the sky, turning the clouds in

its path to pink and white and bathing the entire land in a wonderful rosy glow. It was at this time that the watching priest, stationed in a pinnacle in the Temple, cried out in a loud voice that the light was come and had overspread the land, and his companions below immediately commenced the time-honoured ritual of the morning sacrifice.

Within a few minutes the full blaze of day is pouring down upon a people quickly arising from sleep and betaking themselves to their accustomed tasks.

It is this emergence of light from the east followed quickly by the sun itself to which reference is made in Malachi 4; 2 where the promise is that the "Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings"—the great fan of glory spreading over the sky as the sun rises being not inaptly likened to the pinions of some great celestial creature. And our Lord's own allusion to the "astrape" emerging from the east and sweeping the sky to the west is undoubtedly a reference to that same phenomenon which his disciples, early risers as they must always have been and accustomed to remaining awake all night, were thoroughly accustomed to witness.

In this connection it needs to be realised that the Greek *astrape*, rendered "lightning" in this verse; and its derivatives, refer to any form of brilliant light or radiance. Thus we have:—

Luke 24; 4 "Two men stood by them in shining garments."

Luke 11; 36 "As when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light."

Luke 9; 29 "His raiment was white and glistening."

Matt. 28; 3 "His countenance was like lightning."

Luke 10; 18 "I beheld Satan as lightning fall."

Acts 9; 3 "There shined round about him a light from heaven."

Acts 22; 6 "There shone from heaven a great light round about me."

whilst other occurrences in which the word is associated with thunder and can properly be applied to the vivid glare of lightning are found in Rev. 4; 5, 8; 5, 11; 19 and 16; 18.

It is from the parallel account in Luke's gospel that the full implication of this as a time when the fact of Christ's presence is to dawn upon the minds of men is found.

"For AS the lightning, (ASTRAPE) that

lighteneth (illuminates) out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; SO shall also the Son of Man be IN HIS DAY." (Luke 17; 24).

Here then is a plain intimation that this metaphor predicates a period of time—the day of the Son of Man—likened to a natural day in so far as the analogy of dawn, meridian, and sunset, are concerned. It becomes easy to appreciate why the translators of the Revised Version, as well as such students as Robert Young, Joseph Bryant Rotherham, Dr. Wilson in the "Emphatic Diaglott," and more recently the translators of the "Concordant" version, all concur in rendering the Greek word '*parousia*,' which is translated "coming" in the Authorised Version, by the English word "presence." It is the use of the word "coming" which has beclouded thought on the subject. Whilst men held the conception of a catastrophic arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ which would be the signal for a twenty-four hour day of judgment and the dissolution of all things terrestrial, there could be no other meaning than the traditional one applied to the word "parousia." When the real object of our Lord's return is seen, and the necessity for a comparatively lengthy period of time for the accomplishment of the things associated with His return is appreciated, the true meaning can be applied to the word with a full understanding of its significance.\* In this connection the following abbreviated extract from the appendix to J. B. Rotherham's translation of the New Testament will be read with interest.

"In this edition the word "*parousia*" is uniformly rendered "presence." The difficulty expressed in the notes to the second edition of this N.T. in the way of so yielding to this weight of evidence as to render "*Parousia*" always by presence lay in the seeming incongruity of regarding "presence" as an event which would happen at a particular time and which would fall into rank as one of a series of events. The translator still feels the force of this objection, but is withdrawn from

\*For the convenience of the student, a full list of every verse in the New Testament where '*parousia*' appears is given here, and in nearly every case it will be observed instantly that "presence" is the obvious implication.

Matt. 24; 3, 27, 37, 39, 1. Cor. 15; 23, 16; 17, 2. Cor. 7; 6, 7. Phil. 1; 26, 1. Thes. 2; 19, 3; 13, 4; 15, 5; 23, 2. Thess. 2; 1, 8, 9. Jas. 5; 7, 8, 2, Pet; 1; 16, 3; 4, 12. 1. John 2; 28.

taking his stand upon it any longer by the reflection that after all, the difficulty may be imaginary. The parousia . . . may, in fine, be both a PERIOD, more or less extended, during which certain things shall happen; and an EVENT coming on and passing away as one of a series of Divine interpositions. Christ is raised as a first fruit—that is one event. He returns and vouchsafes his "presence," during which he raises his own—that is another event, however large and prolonged; and finally comes another cluster of events constituting the end. Hence, after all, "presence" may be the most widely and permanently satisfying translation of the looked-for "parousia" of the Son of Man.

The commencement of His presence, then, the earliest time at which it can be said that the long-promised Second Advent has become an accomplished fact, is to be discerned by the dawning of a spiritual illumination in the minds of the "Watchers"—the early-risers—an appreciation, not only of the object and manner of the Second Advent, but also of the outward signs, in the affairs both of the Church and the world, which betoken that the "DAY of the Son of Man" has actually begun.

As if to stress this truth, Jesus ended this remarkable statement with a fourth metaphor, equally arresting in its strangeness.

*"For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."* (Matt. 24; 28.)

Travellers in Palestine have often remarked on the keenness of sight which characterises the several species of eagle and vulture which formerly abounded, and are still to be found, in the country. Vivid descriptions have been written of occasions when a beast of burden has fallen by the wayside, and although a second previously the sky has been clear in every direction, the animal has hardly become still when far in the heavens appears a black speck—then another, and another—birds of prey travelling with incredible speed to the victim their marvellous power of vision has revealed to them. Thus in drawing attention to that predominant characteristic of the eagle which stamped it out above all other denizens of the air, our Lord inculcated a lesson which must be indelibly impressed upon the mind if Christ's presence in its early stages is to be discerned.

*"WATCH therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."* (Matt. 24; 42.)

As the eagles can see, as it were by supernatural sight, their prey afar off and come,

first in ones and twos, and then in greater numbers to the centre of attraction, so must the disciples of Christ, watching for His coming, expect to see the evidences with a sight which is superior to the natural, and come quickly in concert with others who also have seen. Hence the constant exhortation to watchfulness—not a continual gazing into the physical heavens and an anxious scanning of every cloud that drifts across the sky, lest it be the one which shall cleave asunder to reveal the returning Lord with His attendant angels. Nothing so material as that. The call is to spiritual watchfulness, that a clear understanding of the manner of Christ's manifestation may pave the way to a full and complete acceptance of the reality of His presence when that fact is revealed.

That many are to be oblivious to His presence is clearly indicated in the likening of the day of the Son of Man to the day of Noah and the day of Lot. In each case the similarity lay in the ignorance of mankind at large to the fact that there stood one among them whom they knew not.

*"For, just as the days of Noah, SO will be the presence of the Son of Man; For as they were in those days that were before the flood, feeding and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage—until the day Noah entered into the Ark; and they observed not, until the flood came and took away all together, so will be the presence of the Son of Man."* (Matt. 24; 37—39—Rotherham.)

With each of these comparisons there is repeated the exhortation to WATCH. The allusion is taken from the function of watchmen upon the city walls, alert to report every new and unusual occurrence before the city dwellers could possibly have become aware of such. The watchmen first saw the dawn, they hailed the approach of deliverers when the city was besieged, they became in every respect the symbol of the nation's watching and waiting on the things of God and communion with Heaven. Hence we have in the glowing words of Isaiah:

*"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace, day nor night."* (Isaiah 62; 6.)

*"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him (the watchman) that . . . sayeth unto Zion 'Thy God reigneth.'" (Isaiah 52; 7.)*

*"Thy watchmen . . . shall see, eye to eye, the Lord returning to Zion."* (Isaiah 52; 8—Margolis.)

The Second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is manifested, then, as the dawn; a gradual realisation of the fact of His presence discerned at first only by those who are spiritually minded and able to appreciate fully the outward evidences which witness to this truth. That appreciation grows stronger until a time comes when, as in a moment, the realisation of His presence penetrates to a sleeping world and awakens all men to "look upon Him whom they have pierced," and to "mourn for Him" (Zech. 12; 10) as the sunlight of His presence floods the world. But that belongs to the time of meridian day, and not to early dawn.

As the light thus sweeps over the world and men realise and accept the fact that a new power has taken control of earth's affairs, resplendent in the heavens will be seen that "Sun of righteousness" which brings life and healing to the nations. "For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under his feet," "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I. Cor. 15; 25, 26.) It is then that Christ the King presents the restored and perfected human race, in possession of a reconstructed and beautified earth, to the Eternal Father, that God may be all in all. (I. Cor. 15; 28.)

The Messianic reign runs its allotted

course and comes to its close like the "orb of day" which, setting in a blaze of glory over the Western sea is so startlingly reminiscent of those prophetic words of old "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2; 14.) The key to this whole sublime picture lies in the word "presence." The coming of the Lord, no longer a momentary nor even a twenty-four hour event, but a period during which all the varied phases of His Second Advent find their place and reach their consummation, will conclude with a very real fulfilment of the words spoken to Zechariah "At evening time it shall be light." (Zech. 14; 7.)

The metaphor is a true one. The radiance which emerges from the east is to shine even unto the west before it has fitly completed its picture of the day of Christ. And in that glorious sunset of the end of Christ's **parousia** restored humanity will enter upon an eternity of "ages of glory" spent in exploring to the farthest limit the wonderful potentialities of sinless manhood.

*The fourth article in this series will appear next month under the sub-title "The Voice of the Archangel," and will describe the coming of the Lord for His saints.*

## ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL

The King of kings, and lord of lords . . . dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.

The conflict between monotheism and polytheism—belief in one God or in a number of gods—has existed from very early times. Thanks to our ever increasing knowledge of ancient history, the fact that mankind was originally monotheistic is now well established, and the Biblical description of a gradual degeneration from this purity of worship to various forms of idolatry is well confirmed.

The Israelites held tenaciously to their belief in one personal God as the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. The striking words of Moses in Deut. 6: 4 "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is One—Jehovah" finds no parallel until the days of Mohammed, who, like Moses, challenged the polytheistic idolatry of his time with a similar declaration. Jews and Moslems alike from the beginning have held rigidly to this fundamental of their respective faiths.

The Old Testament consistently represents the Creator as the one Supreme Being of

whom came all life and everything that exists. It follows that there was once a time when God was alone; when no other living creature existed with whom the Almighty could hold communion. Of that time the Bible does not speak; the first recorded event in creation's history being the coming into existence of the first begotten Son of God.

The Bible is definite in its teaching that our Lord Jesus Christ was the "beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3: 14) or in the words of Col. 1: 15, the "first born of all creation" (**Greek**). God Himself existed "from everlasting" (Psa. 90: 2) having no beginning; for He Himself is the Great First Cause. Jesus Christ, the first and noblest of the Father's works of creation, came into existence by the creative power of the Father; a mighty spiritual being, the Son of God in very truth, but in identity and personality entirely separate and distinct from that Father to whom

He owed the gift of life.

This is where the opening words of John's Gospel are so eloquent. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without him was not anything made that was made." The first few words very generally have been used to support the theory of an identity of **person** between the Father and the Son in order to buttress the pagan idea of a trinity of gods; a belief which crept into the Church during the third century. Taking into consideration the many plain statements of Scripture speaking of the relationship between the Father and the Son, it is clear that John's words are intended to tell us that "in the beginning" (the beginning of material creation, perhaps; or of God's dealings with man) "the Word" (**Gr. Logos**—the King's word or spokesman) was **with God** and was Himself a mighty one or "God," through whom all subsequent works of creation were carried into effect. This is confirmed by Paul, who in 1 Cor. 8: 6, declares "To us there is **one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord Jesus Christ; by whom are all things**" offering this teaching in contrast to the polytheistic beliefs which he had just condemned (vs 1—5). Likewise the stress laid upon the fact that Jesus is the "only begotten Son" (first-begotten son) of the Father, in John 3: 16, Heb. 1: 6, 1 John 4: 9, John 1: 14, 18 and 3: 18, confirms the same truth. That glorious spiritual being by means of whom the world came into existence, laid aside the glory He had with the Father in the ages of the past (John 17: 5) and came to earth as a man, suffering death and rising to the Father's right hand "in the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7: 16.).

This, the original Apostolic teaching, was understood by the primitive Church, but during the second and third centuries an increasing tendency to the adoption of pagan beliefs and practices culminated in what became known as the "Arian controversy." Arius, Bishop of Alexandria, stood for the teaching of Paul and the Apostles, stressing the separateness of identity of the Father and the Son: whilst Athanasius, another dignitary of the same Church, demanded that the doctrine of a trinity of Gods be adopted from Alexandrian paganism. The three-fold God is a familiar feature of Eastern religions and in order to reconcile these ideas, so thoroughly familiar to pagan converts to Christianity, the conception

of a Triune God consisting of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, was advanced. The Holy Spirit in the New Testament is the power and influence of God exerted in the minds and lives of believers; but in order to complete the Trinity the idea of personality was attached, and thus the Holy Spirit became the third person of that Trinity.

The controversy came to a head at the first Ecumenical Council of Nicea (June 17, A.D. 325), when the Emperor Constantine, at that time still unbaptised, presided over a conference of the Bishops of Christendom, called to decide this question.

The three hundred and eighteen bishops present were left in no doubt as to the Emperor's personal wishes in the matter, and under threat of banishment only two bishops—Thomas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais—were found ready to support Arius. Athanasius and the Trinity having won the day, Arius was excommunicated and banished, and his books were burnt.

From this time forward the doctrine was incorporated in the creeds, and has remained the orthodox view even although there have at all times been some who have retained a clear understanding of the New Testament teaching. Only one passage in the Bible declares that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are "One"—viz. 1 John 5: 7, and this is agreed by all competent authorities to be an interpolation added about the fifth century. The majority of translations, including the Revised Version, Rotherham, Young, Twentieth Century, Weymouth, Diaglott, Moffatt, Ferrar Fenton and the Concordant, omit the passage on this account.

The statement of Jesus in John 10: 30 "I and my Father are one" is sometimes adduced as a testimony from our Lord's own lips; but students will observe upon reading the context that Jesus is referring to one-ness of spirit and purpose. In John 17: 21 He extends the thought by praying concerning his disciples "I will . . . that they may be one, as we are" Doctor Weymouth points out that the word "one" in John 10: 30 is in the neuter gender instead of the usual masculine, thus indicating that the oneness referred to is oneness of nature and not of personality.

Orthodox belief is needlessly encumbered with this pagan conception of the Trinity. "To us" says Paul in his forceful, confident fashion, "there is **ONE God. . . and ONE Lord Jesus Christ**" "to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever." (1. Peter 4: 11.)

## STEADFAST — IN SERVICE ABOUNDING

"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" 1 Cor., 15, 58

These are virtually the closing words to the Corinthians. It is noticeable how frequently Paul refers to them as his brethren; and recalling that he often reprovved them, one may question why he consistently so addressed them.

The early verses of chapter 1 describe their advantages in Christ:—their riches; their security; their prospects in the day of Christ; and to crown all, the faithfulness of that God who called them. There we find that their blessings are the same as Paul's, and this is why they are brethren! But immediately following this introduction comes Paul's correction for their failings. (Verse 10.) It is clear from chapter 3 that Paul wants to speak to them of higher things, but they are not yet in a fitting heart condition, and there are practices in the ecclesia unworthy of their standing in Christ—practices, which, if continued, will prevent them being steadfast and unmoveable.

Another and particular reason why Paul addresses them as brethren is seen in chapter 9, verses 1 and 2. The Corinthian ecclesia was founded as the result of Paul's eighteen months' ministry there. He had just left Athens, and on arriving at Corinth he went—as usual—to the synagogue. A handful of Jews accepted his message, but the synagogue as a whole rejected him, thus incurring his rejection of them. Then the Lord spoke to him in a vision and caused him to prolong his stay in Corinth; for the Lord said "I have much people in this city." The story of his ministry there is recorded in Acts 18. Note those encouraging words from the Lord in verses 9 and 10! Are they not, in effect, the same as Paul exhorts these brethren in 1 Corinthians 15: 58? Thus, the charge from the Lord which prolonged his stay in Corinth, he, in other words, passes on to them!

And there is compensation in all this for Paul. If, by his exhortation, these brethren become steadfast, Paul will know that his labour is not in vain in the Lord; and hearing that his work is prospering, he will himself be impelled to further steadfastness. This is another reason why they are brethren—the loyalty of one is an incentive to the other, for they are all members of one body.

It is in this epistle that Paul gives the figure of the body, which teaches, among other

things, that the Church exists on a mutual basis. Exploring the Corinthian field we might think it unprofitable ground to till and plant; but Paul, encouraged by the vision, puts into effect his own admonition of 1 Cor: 12: 22/23 and gives more honour to those members which seem to be more feeble.

Now let us regard the text as an admonition to ourselves to-day. The exhortation may be divided into two parts which seem at variance with each other. The first part urges "immovability," whereas the second urges "activity." Again, the former concerns the work "within," yet the latter speaks of the work "without." Upon which part, if either, do the Scriptures lay most stress? Some seem to halve the text by stressing that portion which they themselves think to be the Divine Will. Some appear steadfast, but they do not serve! Others appear very active, but they are not concerned about their standing. Let us be true to the text by giving equal weight to each portion of the admonition. We can with propriety follow the Apostle himself as an example of steadfastness with activity.

Let us consider how steadfastness arises. Its obvious basis is faith. They are steadfast who are convinced that their standing in Christ is solely of grace. They know themselves to be sons of God, not by acquirement, but by adoption. They believe that they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (an amazing truth!); and they believe that God has predestined the eventual state of these He foreknew; and that therefore in due time He called and justified them; and they believe that in the day of Christ, God will complete His purpose in them by glorifying them. Thus they see that all things are working together for their good; and resting in their sonship and prospects they become steadfast, unmoveable.

Referring to our text with these thoughts in mind, we see that the first half of the verse speaks of SONSHIP and the other tells of SERVICE. Sons and servants! Let us ask ourselves a few questions to find our true position. To the query—are we sons or servants, some cautiously will answer "both"; so let us ask further. **Do we say**—"if I serve well I shall be made a son"? No amount of service will secure us sonship, for it is a gift, not a reward.

**Do we say**—"if I serve well I shall prove I am a son"? This is hardly correct. Faithful service will only prove that we are good servants—no more. **Do we say**—"I know that I am a son, and therefore I serve"? This is a far better affirmation.

We can now read our text—"Be ye steadfast, unmoveable (because ye are sons), always abounding in the work of the Lord (as servants)".

The Holy Spirit has caused the words to be written in the right order—sonship first, followed by grateful service. They who are steadfast in their sonship make the best servants, because they serve through gratitude for grace received and not for reward for services rendered.

The two parts of our text are to be found coupled together elsewhere. For example—Phil. 1: 27. Paul is trusting to hear, of the *Philippian brethren, the same two facts*—"that they stand" and "that they strive". Here again are these two points of Christian life—fixity, yet activity; the work **within** and the work **without**. And again we may ask ourselves which is the more important—to stand or to strive? All will agree it is imperative that we **stand fast**, but are we equally as ardent in **striving** for the faith of the gospel. It is so easy nowadays to say that as God will surely accomplish all his purposes very shortly, there is no need to strive for the gospel. If we think so we are partial and are not giving equal weight to each part of the admonition. It is providential that Paul was set for the defence of the gospel and actually strove for the faith. If he had failed in this part of his ministry where would have been Philippi or Corinth? To Paul the work of the Lord is the **outside** declaration of the faith; yet while urging it he did not forget the **inside** position of steadfastness. He preached the word and did not make

the plausible plea that it would be useless to preach in Corinth because of their Grecian practices. And later he was rewarded by finding that his labour was not in vain in the Lord.

Also in Phil. 2: 15/16. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation" (our standing), "among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (our service). And then, if this is done, Paul will rejoice in the day of Christ, knowing that he did not run in vain and that his labour was not in vain in the Lord. And so we see in this and other texts that the two points of sonship and service, steadfastness and work, go hand in hand; and that Paul does not emphasize one phase at the expense of the other.

Let us think also of the import of Paul's second letter to Timothy, whom he wishes shall continue the spread of truth now that his departure is at hand. While exhorting Timothy to personal steadfastness he joins with that the exhortation to preach the word. Paul knows that by personal fortitude and steadfastness Timothy will be best equipped for evangelical work; and that by preaching the word he will impress upon his own mind Bible truths and so become more established and unmoveable.

Each half of these is valuable to the other, and it is one of the Christian's requirements to give equal adherence to each part—**sonship** and **service**. Some will contend that the work **within** is the more important; while others will affirm that **outside** work is God's will. We shall not underate either if we recall that each has its sphere in Christian life and each assists the growth of the other; and that it happens by Divine overruling that outside declaration encourages inward steadfastness, and that true steadfastness in sonship impels service.

## BIBLE STUDENTS BOOKSHELF

This column records books which are likely to be helpful to Bible Students, the class of reader to whom they will mostly appeal being indicated. Each book is provided with an index, unless otherwise stated.

**A LITTLE LIFE OF JESUS.** BASIL MATHEWS  
223 pages, illustrated photographs. 2/6, post 4d.  
Oxford University Press.

A story of the Lord's earthly life, very suitable for children, and remarkably free from allusions which Bible Students would consider unscriptural. Well produced and would make a useful birthday present.

**THE STONES CRYOUT.** T. W. FAWTHROP  
326 pages 6/- post 6d. Marshall, Morgan & Scott

A collection of short sketches describing varied discoveries in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Palestine and also Rome, illuminating the Scriptures. Several chapters devoted to the manuscripts of the Bible will be of interest to the student, whilst the remainder of the book will be interesting to all readers. Well illustrated.

**THRILLING VOICES OF THE PAST.** T. CHRISTIE INNES  
150 pages 2/6 post 4d. Pickering & Inglis

A short compendium covering much the same ground as the book previously described, but intended to give a general idea of the more important discoveries. Interest is heightened by the inclusion of a number of photographs. Not sufficiently detailed for the student. No index.

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### IN THEE I TRUST.

Only for thee, Lord, would I live, while here below ;  
It is my great delight, thy love to show ;  
Use me, then, first as thou seest best—  
Not mine to choose, but mine to trust and rest.

Only to thee would I resign my will, 'tis all  
I have to give ; and, Lord, it seems so small  
A thing to offer unto thee  
Who didst lay down thy life for me.

Only to thee, my Lord, I'd come when trials press  
Assured that thou alone canst comfort best ;  
My deepest griefs, I need not to thee tell,  
Thou understandest all, dear Lord, so well !

'Tis only thou canst send the peace which soothes my pain,  
That bids my weeping cease, and sunshine follow rain,  
My every fear remove and doubt dispel—  
I rest on thee, and know that all is well.

\* \* \*

### The Father Himself Loveth You

John 16 : 27.)

What a deep interest our Father takes in each of His children; truly it is a personal and peculiar attachment to each member of His family. Do we not lose much by forgetting this? Even in human things we are apt to overlook it. We call the feeling which the Father entertains to each of His children, love, and well we call it so, but this is not all. There is a difference in the love He bears to His eldest and His youngest born, a difference in the case of each, called forth by the peculiar character of each. It is this minute and special love which is so precious. Were it not for this we should feel as if we had only a part of our Father's heart, as if we had not the whole; but realising this we feel as if we had His whole heart, and yet our having the whole did not rob our brothers and sisters of any. It is with the family as with the sun in the firmament; it is the property of all and yet each has the whole of it. Even so with Jehovah, our Heavenly Father; His is a special, peculiar, personal love, just as if He loved no other but had the whole of His heart to spare for us. His is a minute and watchful care, bending over each, day and night, as if He had no other to care for. How sweet to think that each of us is the special object of such personal attachment, the peculiar object of such unwearied vigilance.

### The Ephesian Love. (Rev. 2 : 4.)

Our first love, which the Lord so much desires is the love of hearts warmed and kindled by the impulses of ardent affection and zeal toward Christ, as the "chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely" One. Love to God and Jesus is the root of all true devotion and gives perfection to faith and fulfilment to all law. The heart that glows at the mention of the Father's name and the Saviour's name, at the story of God's love, of Jesus's life death, triumph and return, that looks to Him as the Lord of its affections and the chief joy of its life, is most truly in tune with God, in harmony with righteousness and holiness and on it the favour of the Lord is most unmistakably set. Such a heart is bound and drawn by the sweet constraints of living gratitude to an untiring devotion and obedience and is contented only to lean, like John, upon his loving breast, or to sit, like Mary, at his feet and thrills with delight in the contemplation of seeing him as he is and being with him for ever. The primal source of all defective saintship, and of all which the Divine Judge censures, is the waning of the first love. When the fires burn low, the cold and frost set in, and all the fair graces are spoiled and withered, and death and desolation destroy the bloom of life. When first love is gone, all loss becomes possible, but where Ephesus love is strong, all graces thrive in its warmth. Let us be alive in our love to God and in affection to Jesus, that he may never need to say the fateful words, "Thou hast lost . . ."

\* \* \*

In time of trouble say :

FIRST: He brought me here—It is by His will I am in this strait place ; in that I will rest.

NEXT: He will keep me in His Love, and give me grace in this trial to behave as his child.

THEN: He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons He means me to learn, and working in me the grace He intends for me.

LAST: In His good time He can bring me out again, how and when, He knows.

Say:—I am here—by God's appointment—In God's keeping—Under His training—For His time.

## HIS MEMORIAL

"O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts,  
perform thy vows." Nah. 1, 15

The Apostle's admonition to "keep the feast" comes home to all the brethren with special solemnity at this season of the year. With sincerity of heart and quiet joy the friends will gather together to memorialise four great matters:

First—the death of our Lord as the Pass-over Lamb.

Second—Our relationship to or participation with the sufferings of Christ, the death of Christ, as followers in His steps and sharers in His cup.

Third—we celebrate incidentally and prospectively the great deliverance which will soon follow the passing over of the present night time. The deliverance will affect first of all those passed over—the Church—the Little Flock and the Great Company, the antitypes of the priesthood and the Levitical host or tribe. The deliverance of these will come in the morning, the resurrection morning, the Millennial morning.

Fourth—we also incidentally commemorate the great "feast of fat things" (Isaiah 25; 6) which will follow the passing over of the Church, when the passed-over ones shall be associated with their Lord, in His heavenly kingdom as the great antitypical Prophet, Priest, Judge, Mediator and King over all the earth, to bless and uplift the human family through the merit of the precious blood.

These different points should be kept in memory, separate and distinct from each other if we would have the greatest blessing from the Memorial.

Looking unto Jesus as "the Lamb of God," we behold His spotlessness, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." We behold how "he was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth." (Acts 8; 32.) By speaking the word He could have resisted those who were intent upon His destruction. He assures us that no man took His life from Him; He laid it down Himself, voluntarily. He laid it down not in obedience to the Father's law, for justice could not demand sacrifice, but in accordance with the Father's Will, saying, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy Law is written in my heart."

From this standpoint the Christian believer can rejoice greatly that the Redeemer spared not Himself, but freely delivered Himself up with the foreknowledge that in the Divine purpose the effect of His sacrifice would redound first for the blessing of His followers and subsequently for the blessing of all the people. Hence in partaking of the broken unleavened bread we memorialise the purity, the sinlessness of Him who gave Himself to be in God's due time the ransom price for all mankind. From this standpoint we realize that His shed blood signified that His death was necessary in order that our condemned humanity might be restored to life without infracting the Divine Law. Our hearts should here pause to appreciate not only the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also the love of the Father, who designed the programme, and the justice of God thus exemplified, and the wisdom of God in making the arrangement, and the faith to grasp the power of God as it will ultimately be manifested in the full carrying out of all the glorious purposes and promises which we memorialise.

The second point is scarcely less important to us than is the first. The first blessing from the Redeemer's sacrifice has been offered during this Gospel Age to such as have the hearing ear and the appreciative heart. This blessing is most astounding. It purposes a still further favour to such of mankind as turn from sin and accept by faith the grace of God in Christ, and present their bodies living sacrifices, in full consecration, vowing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. To all such during this Gospel age and until the completion of the elect number, the Redeemer will make their sacrifices acceptable in God's sight, to the intent that they may share with Him in the begetting of the Holy Spirit now and in birth to the spirit plane in the resurrection. Thus as His glorified members they may be associated with Him in His Millennial kingdom, when He shall act as "Mediator between God and men." The word men here includes all not begotten of the Holy Spirit to be new creatures on the spirit plane.

Our partaking of the bread symbolically represents our appropriating the fleshly perfection of the man Jesus. We partake of His perfections by faith, and not actually. He gives

us, not restitution to human perfection, but merely an imputation of His righteousness, His perfection, as covering in the Divine sight the blemishes and imperfections of our fleshly bodies, which we have tendered to God as living sacrifices. When as our great Advocate the Redeemer imputes to our offering the merit of His sacrifice, the Father accepts the same and begets the sacrificer to the new nature as a member of the body of Christ; and since we have the treasure of the new creature in the earthly, fleshly vessel, the Father's acceptance of us includes our justified flesh and all of its interests. It is only those who have thus partaken of the merit of Christ, and whose sacrifice God has accepted, who are directed in conformity to their covenant of sacrifice to drink of our Lord's cup and to be immersed daily into His death.

The cup is not ours, but our Lord's. The life or sacrifice symbolized by the blood is not ours, but our Redeemer's. We are merely given the privilege of drinking it, partaking of it. The blood of Jesus could have sealed the New Covenant between God and Israel, and on behalf of all mankind through Israel by the New Covenant, without being offered to us at all. The offering to us of the privilege of participation in the Cup of Christ's suffering and death is therefore not to indicate that it was insufficient nor to mean that we could add anything to it. The offer illustrates the grace of God—that He is willing to receive us and to make us joint-heirs with our Lord and Saviour, if we have His spirit.

The spirit which actuated Jesus was one of devotion to the Heavenly Father's will to the smallest detail and even unto death. Exactly this spirit must be in all those whom the Father will now accept as members of the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ, His Church in the heavenly glory. Hence our Redeemer emphasised the matter distinctly, saying that all who would sit with Him in His throne must drink of His cup of self-denial, self-sacrifice, and be immersed into His death. This is exactly what Paul points out to us; namely, that our Lord is the true Bread, the true Loaf, which came down from heaven, and

that we are invited to be portions of the one Loaf and ultimately will be accepted by Him according to the Father's plan and thus become members with our Lord in the larger Loaf, the multitudinous Christ. Hence, as Paul suggests, when we break this bread together as a memorial not only do we symbolise our Lord's broken body, but in a larger sense we symbolise the breaking of the Church and our breaking or dying as members of that Church. "The loaf which we break, is it not the communion (the common union or participation) of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one loaf, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one loaf."—1. Corinthians 10; 16, 17.

To us the cup of the fruit of the vine means the sacrificed life of our Lord. But, additionally, it reminds us that in becoming His disciples we accepted His invitation to share His cup. To us this means faithfulness in self-sacrifice as the Lord's representatives, even unto death. "The cup of blessing which we bless (for which we give thanks as the greatest imaginable favour of God bestowed upon us), is it not the communion (the general union, the fellowship) of the body of Christ?" Does it not represent our Lord's sacrifice and our share with Him in His sacrifice, by His invitation and in harmony with the Father's pre-arranged plan, in which He foreknew us with Jesus from before the foundation of the world?

Oh, what a depth of meaning attaches to the communion cup from this standpoint! Oh, what heart-searching should go on with the accepting of it! How evident it is that this communion cup represents not merely the turning from sin, not merely believing in Jesus, not merely preference for right over wrong, but chiefly the presentation of believers' bodies as living sacrifices to God—sacrifices considered holy because of the imputation of Jesus' merit, sacrifices which God has accepted, begetting the offerer to the new nature as a new creature—Romans 12: 1.

Let us then each year appreciate this glorious memorial more and more in its expression of "love divine, all love excelling" whose breadth and length, and height and depth, surpass all human comprehension.

They do the least who talk the most,  
Whose good designs are all their boast;  
Let words be few.

They do the most whose lives possess  
The sterling stamp of righteousness;  
For deeds are true.

It is, indeed, very generally supposed that the souls of good men, as soon as they are discharged from the body, go directly to heaven; but this opinion has not the least foundation in the oracles of God.  
—John Wesley.

Distinguish the dispensations and you will discern the Scriptures.  
—Augustine.

## THE LAND OF TO-MORROW

The problem of evil will be solved in that day when Christ reigns, and sin, disease and death will be abolished for ever.

God never obliterates His own creations. The dissolving fires of which Peter speaks are for "the perdition of ungodly man," and not for the utter depopulation and destruction of the whole world. They may consume cities, destroy armies and effect some important meteorological and geological changes; but men and nations will survive them and still continue to live in the flesh. The earth is to be renovated and restored from its present depression and dilapidation, and thus become "the new earth" of which the Bible speaks. It is to pass through a "regeneration" analogous to that through which a man must pass to see the kingdom of God; but there will be a continuity of its elements and existence, just as a regenerated man is constitutionally the same being that he was before his renewal. It will not be another earth, but the same earth under another condition of things. It is now labouring under the curse; but then the curse will have been lifted off and all its wounds healed. At present, it is hardly habitable—no one being able to live in it longer than a few brief years; but then men shall dwell in it forever without knowing what death is. It is now the home of rebellion, injustice and guilt; it will then be THE HOME OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

It is now under the domination of Satan; it will then come under the blessed rule of the Prince of Peace. Such, at any rate, is the hope set before us in the Word of God, and this I hold to be "the world to come" of which the text speaks. It cannot be anything else. It cannot be what is commonly called heaven, for the word *oikoumene* cannot apply to heaven. It is everywhere else used exclusively with reference to our world. Neither can it be the present gospel dispensation, as some have thought, for that began long before this epistle was written and could not, therefore, have been spoken of by Paul as yet "to come." We are consequently compelled to understand it to mean our own habitable world in its Millennial glory. And as the prophecies concerning the Messiah's eternal kingship are here referred to as having their fulfilment in the subjection of the Millennial world to his dominion, we are furnished with another powerful argument of Scripture in favour of the doctrine of Christ's personal reign as a great Prince in the world.

Indeed, the Bible is so full of this subject and its inspired writers are so constantly and enthusiastically alluding to it that I am amazed to find so many pious and Bible-loving people entirely losing sight of it. Ever and anon the Scriptures return to it as THE GREAT AND ANIMATING HOPE of the Church in all her adversities and depressions, and it does seem to me that we are depriving ourselves of much true Christian comfort by the manner in which we have been neglecting and thrusting aside that glorious doctrine. My present object is to show, from the Scriptures, and by just inferences from them, what sort of a world this "world to come" is, and to describe, as far as I can, what we are to look for when once this earth has been fully subjected to that Divine King whose throne is for ever and ever, and the sceptre of whose kingdom is the sceptre of righteousness.

Rev. J. A. Seiss, D.D.

When Satan no longer has power to deceive men and to put good for evil and evil for good; when the eyes of their understanding have been opened to see and appreciate "the true Light,"—until "every man that cometh into the world" has been thus enlightened (John 1; 9; 1. Tim. 2: 6); when the knowledge of the Lord fills the whole earth as the waters cover the depths of the sea (all covered, but some more deeply than others); when there shall no longer be necessity to teach, every man his neighbour, saying, "Know the Lord," because all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31; 34); when the Lord's kingdom shall have come and his will is done on earth as it is done in heaven—instead of the message of the Gospel being limited to a few, all will know the plan of God; and the evidences of its truth will be so clear and convincing that none will have excuse for disbelief; for the conditions will be such that doubt would be more difficult than is belief at present. Nevertheless a personal acceptance of "the way" (Christ) and of the conditions of the New Covenant will be required of each individual thus enlightened.

(C. T. Russell).

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ANONYMOUS.

Sincere appreciation is expressed in recognition of three anonymous donations of 10s., 10s., and £1, received recently, for the furtherance of the work.

## THE "PEOPLES' PAPER."

This little paper is published by the Australian brethren and besides being devoted to news of the activities of our friends in that continent, also contains words of exhortation and exposition which are much appreciated by those who, in this country, read the periodical regularly as well as those for whom it is primarily intended. The subscription price is 2s. 6d. per year, and the Committee will gladly receive remittances and enter subscriptions for friends in this country. Free sample copies will be sent upon request at any time.

## EASTER CONVENTION.

The friends at Warrington advise that the usual General Convention is being arranged for the Easter Holiday. Requests for full details and also for accommodation should be addressed to Brother D. Stanley, 42 Euclid Avenue, Chester Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Lancs. An immersion service is being planned and it will be much appreciated if friends desiring to participate will inform Bro. Stanley in good time, in order that a decision respecting this part of the arrangements may be arrived at. This immersion service will probably be held on Easter Sunday.

## WHITSUN DISCUSSIONS.

Classes and brethren intending to put down suggestions for discussion at the Whitsun Convention are requested to forward same to the Secretary of the Committee by February 15th next. Friends are reminded that practicable and constructive proposals only should be put forward in order that the available time may be used to the best advantage.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS.

The Committee will be glad to assist local groups in the arrangement of public meetings by the provision of suitable speakers, free literature and suggestions concerning advertising and conduct of Meetings. Please write in the first instance to Brother A. Batcheller, 134 Clements Road, London, E.6.

Charts of the "Divine Plan," 5 feet by 2½ feet and 12 feet by 6 feet can be obtained on loan without charge, for use at Chart Talks and Public Meetings.

## GONE FROM US.

Brother F. Cleland, Secretary of the friends of Belfast, passed beyond the veil just before the old year ended. The brethren in Northern Ireland will miss his presence among them but rest in confidence that his "labours have not been in vain in the Lord."

## KINGDOM CARDS.

Cards have been returned during the past four weeks from:—  
Belfast, Birkenhead, Darlington, Ealing, Engis (Belgium), Forest Hill, Guildford, Ipswich, Isle of Wight, Kings Lynn, Leicester, Leigh, Littlehampton, Newcastle, Pontnewynydd, Portsmouth, Queens Ferry, Shaftesbury, Southsea, Swinton, Warrington, Welling.

## OVERSEAS REMITTANCES.

On behalf of our overseas correspondents, we would remind the friends that British postal orders are not valid in America and have to be sent back to England to be exchanged. An "International Money Order" is necessary if subscriptions are sent direct; and it is usually more convenient for all concerned if subscriptions are renewed through the Committee.

## LOCAL GATHERINGS.

The Committee desires to encourage periodic local gatherings by every means within its power, and is always ready to consider requests for assistance in cases where the friends are unable to shoulder the entire burden themselves. It is suggested that friends planning such gatherings advise the Committee of the proposed date so that possible clashes with other gatherings in the same neighbourhood may be avoided in time—this action will often save disappointment to the promoters. All correspondence in connection with these arrangements should be addressed to Brother C. R. H. Smith, 21 Werter Road, London, S.W.15.

## FREE LITERATURE.

Leaflets for judicious distribution are supplied free upon request, the titles at present available being as follows:—

Peace on Earth—When?  
World Order or Chaos—Which?  
Where are the Dead?  
Hell—the Truth.  
Will there be Wars forever?

### THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES

A book with a message which never grows old.  
A vindication of the Divine character, affording a complete answer to the age-old question:—

**WHY DOES GOD PERMIT EVIL?**

Circulation to date over 5½ million copies.  
350 pages—with chart.

Available from the Bible Students' Committee in the following editions:

Library size, dark blue cloth	...	Post free	2/6
Pocket size, dark blue cloth	...	"	1/3
Abridged edition, 98 pp., paper	...	"	6d.
Publishers' remainder, old edition, dark red cloth (while stock lasts)	...	"	1/-

### SOME INTERESTING BOOKLETS

	Post free	Each	6 for
"Song of our Syrian Guest" ... ..			
Christ's Return, 34 pp. ... ..	} 2½d.	1/1	
Scriptures on Hell, Death, Spiritism, 26 pp. ... ..			
Do the Dead Know Anything? 32 pp....	} 3d.	1/3	
God—and Reason, 128 pp. ... ..			
The Day of Jehovah, 64 pp. ... ..			
What is Man? 61 pp. ... ..	} 3d.	1/3	
Hope Beyond the Grave, 123 pp. ... ..			
God's Covenants, 48 pp. ... ..	} 5d.	2/3	
A New Dictator—the only Hope, 19 pp.			
The Truth about Hell ... ..	} 6d.	2/9	
Plan of God in Brief, 98 pp. ... ..			
Pilate's Report, 32 pp., Illus. ... ..	} 7d.	3/-	
Some of the Parables, 90 pp., Illus. ... ..			
Zionism in Prophecy, 64 pp. ... ..	} 10d.	4/-	
Evolutionists at the Crossroads, 126 pp.			

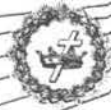
Obtainable from Bible Students' Committee.

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



# BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



<p>הַיְהוָה הֵינִי. יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי.          I am the Lord. The Lord our fathers.</p>	<p>Blessed are ye when men curse          persecute you (and shall fully say          ye of youll sayings against you)          For men</p>	<p>All holtes that be eralte          mountayne and hylt layde          to is croked that be made str</p>	<p>ye ferd of Abraham his fervean          Jacob his chosen.          in the Lo R. our God. his j</p>	<p>And God shall wipe away all          teare from their eyes; and there          shall be no more death, neither          sorrow, nor crying, neither shall          there be any more pain; for the          former things are passed away.</p>
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Vol. 16 No. 4

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THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

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## THE NEW HYMNBOOK.

Various unforeseen delays have conspired to hinder the production of the new hymnbook at the time expected, and it is regretted that it will not be available for Easter. We hope, however, to be able to despatch it very shortly thereafter.

\* \* \* \* \*

Due to the large type chosen the expense has been rather greater than was anticipated and the price will therefore be somewhat higher than was announced in the February B.S.M. We are confident, however, that the book will meet with general approval; no pains having been spared to make the style and print suitable for those whose eyes are no longer so good as at one time.

\* \* \* \* \*

The new book retains all hymns appearing in "Hymns of Dawn" with the exception of five which it was agreed are best omitted. It also includes the hymns which were added at the time of publication of "Christian Hymns," and the addition of about seventy other carefully chosen choice hymns completes a selection which it is confidently expected will aid the brethren to "sing praises with understanding."

There are 462 hymns altogether, whilst at the end of the book there appears an index of suggested tunes, useful to those to whom some of the hymns are new; and a topical "subject" index to aid in the selection of hymns for special occasions. The "Hymns of Dawn" and "Christian Hymns" numbers both appear above each hymn so that the book can be used, where necessary, in conjunction with those already in use.

\* \* \* \* \*

The new hymns include a number which have become favourites at recent convention gatherings, such as:

- "Blessed assurance, Jesus is Mine."
- "There's one above all earthly friends (I know He's Mine)."
- "Praise to our King who is coming to reign (when Jesus is King)."
- "Let music of sweet praise."

\* \* \* \* \*

There are also a number of old and well-tried classics, including:

- "Will your anchor hold in the storms of life."
- "Jesus, Saviour, pilot me."
- "Listen to the voice celestial, ye whose eyes with weeping fail."
- "In the secret of His presence."

\* \* \* \* \*

The imminence of that long-expected Kingdom which is to bring peace to the nations has led to the inclusion of a few more good "Kingdom" hymns, two of which are the well-known ones:—

- "Thy kingdom come, O God."
- "These things shall be, a loftier race."

\* \* \* \* \*

With the use of this book the friends will be able to give a new impetus to their meetings and continue in greater measure than ever before to "sing praises with understanding."

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 4. "THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL."

*"The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (I Thess. 4; 16).*

In symbolic language the writers of the New Testament speak of three distinct aspects of the Second Coming. These aspects each view a different phase of the work which our Lord is to accomplish at His Advent, and each employs a different set of symbols to describe the characteristics of that work. Each of these phases is worked out upon this earth as the stage, not necessarily simultaneously, but together constituting the characteristic events of the Day of His Presence.

A brief survey of the position will show that Christ returns, first, to reveal Himself to His own; to resurrect the "dead in Christ" who have slept in death until this time and to "change" the living ones from earthly to heavenly conditions. With this must be associated those Scriptural references to a "harvest" of the Age, in which the "children of the Kingdom" are gathered into the garner. (I Thess 4; 14-17; I Cor. 15; 52; Matt 13; 37-43).

The second aspect is that which pictures Christ as coming in judgment to wind up the affairs of this Age and establish His own Kingdom upon the ruins of Gentile dominion. To this must be joined the vivid story of the fall of great Babylon, the call to God's people to "come out of her" and the reaping of the vine of the earth and treading of the winepress. (Rev. 14; 18-20, Rev. 18; 1-5, Joel 3; 9-17).

The third is of brighter hue and speaks of Christ's manifestation to all mankind for blessing—a time when there is to be universal mourning for past blindness but a wholesale repentance and turning to the Saviour of mankind. This can have its fulfilment only at a time when the light of Christ's presence has begun to reach all men and every eye is turned toward Him.

The first subject to examine, therefore, is obviously that which most closely concerns the Church of Christ. In harmony with this the

Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonian Christians on this subject, left on record for all time a vivid description of the manner in which the Lord at His return would be manifested to "them that look for Him." (Hebrews 9; 28).

That the passage in Thessalonians is a metaphor admits of no doubt. To expect our glorious Lord to announce His arrival by a literal shout as He cleaves the atmosphere in His descent is the height of absurdity. It remains, therefore, to probe Paul's words and understand the meaning of the allusions he makes.

"The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout." This clearly speaks of the actual point of time at which our Lord's Presence becomes an accomplished fact. It is to be signalled by a "shout." The Greek word is an unusual one, "**Keleusma**," used nowhere else in the New Testament and evidently deliberately selected by Paul to convey a meaning which could not be conveyed in any other way. In New Testament days sea-going vessels (galleys) were propelled by rowers, sometimes as many as three or four hundred men being thus employed in a single ship; and to ensure that these men pulled in unison, an overseer known as the "**Keleustes**" stood in a commanding position on the ship and gave at regular intervals, in unison with the rowing, a cry which was called the "**keleusma**." This call urged the men to sustained effort, directed their work, and so became a shout of combined authority, direction and encouragement.

Nothing less than this is in the mind of Paul. He describes the descent of Christ to direct and supervise a work, to take authority over that work, and to encourage to great effort. To use a more modern illustration, He takes up His position as the captain on the bridge, and proceeds to direct the first great work of His Presence.

What that work involves may be discerned from an examination of related Scripture. Rev. 14; 14-16 speaks of one like unto the Son of Man coming to earth upon a white cloud, crowned with a golden crown and

wielding a sharp sickle. A cry is made that the harvest of the earth is ripe and ready to be reaped. Scriptural analogy points unerringly to the parable of the wheat field in Matt. 13; 24-30. The inspired explanation of that parable given by Jesus in verses 37-43 of the same chapter states without any possibility of misunderstanding that the field is the world, the good seed are the children of the Kingdom, and the tares are the children of the Evil One. Both are to grow together until the harvest. When the harvest is come, the Chief Reaper will say to his servants "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." There is to be no attempt at separation until the Lord of the harvest is present, with His sickle, and gives the word. The harvest is definitely stated in the same parable to be the "end of the Age"—the same period for which the disciples in Matthew Twenty-four desired to know the signs.

The harvest, then, takes its place as one of the events comprising the end of the Age, and requiring a definite span of time for its accomplishment. It is clear also that the harvest commences with the presence of the Chief Reaper, He, as it were, leading by cutting the first ripe wheat. Much in this reminds one of the solitary phrase in I Thessalonians, "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." The in-gathering of the children of the Kingdom pictured by ripened wheat will surely commence with those who have already "rested from their labours."

This "keleusma" will obviously not be a literal shout heard by the literal ears. It is spiritually discerned, and its evidence will be the manifest fact that a work is proceeding in the Christian world which corresponds to the parable of the harvest of wheat and tares, supported by such evidence of the declining power of the "kingdoms of this world" as to justify the assumption that the end of the Age is at hand. It will be of such a nature as to induce great encouragement to the "Watchers" and an incentive to great activity on behalf of the "gospel of the Kingdom." (Matt. 24; 14). It must definitely imply direction and oversight of a work in Christendom which has not been done previously, and it must be closely associated with all that the Scriptures reveal concerning the condition of the Church of Christ upon earth—to whom alone the "shout" can be audible—in the closing years of their experience.

The "shout," therefore, should be understood as indicating that the time of our Lord's return is marked by a recognition that the Harvest of the Age is commencing and that the final separation between wheat and tares is in progress. As a positive "sign" to the Watchers who are living during that period this "shout" is one of conviction as well as encouragement, and constitutes one very definite outward evidence of the "parousia."

Because the detailed interpretation of this Harvest period involves a consideration of present day events, the implications arising from the foregoing can be more properly presented in Chapter 8, where evidence is adduced to show that the "keleusma" has already been heard and acted upon by many faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second allusion describing this eventful time is Paul's reference to "the voice of the archangel."

Judaistic tradition knew seven archangels: Uriel, Raphael, Raquel, Michael, Saraquel, Gabriel, and Remiel. They were considered to be the special commissioners of God to watch over His creation and to each was allotted a specific duty. The archangel to whom was entrusted the protection and defence of the people of Israel was Michael, and here the Scripture becomes luminous when the various references to Michael, the only archangel mentioned in the Bible as such, are remembered. In the book of Daniel Michael is the spiritual prince of Israel. In Revelation he is shown in symbol as leading the forces of Heaven, while Jude mentions an occasion upon which he contended with the devil over the body of Moses. To Paul's readers, then, the expression in Thessalonians could bear one meaning only—the voice of the archangel indicated that the prince of Israel, the protector of God's people, the One who should "stand up" at the Time of the End (Dan. 12; 1) was in the act of arriving. The traditional conception of Michael the archangel as the prince of Israel, finds its reality in Christ, the great protector who comes to save His own.

Since the voice of the archangel cannot be a literal voice sounding upon the air and perceived by the natural ears, it follows that, like the "shout," the discernment of this voice is a spiritual matter. Those who by an understanding of the "signs of the times" perceive that the call has gone forth to "come out of her, my people" (Rev. 18; 2) and to engage in the reaping work of this Gospel

Age harvest are the ones who have heard the voice of the archangel.

To this time must belong the primary fulfilment of Revelation 18; 1. A mighty angel comes down from Heaven and the earth is lightened with His glory. The message goes forth "Babylon is fallen" and although the examination of this passage must be left to a succeeding chapter it can be noted in passing that God's people—the true church of Christ—are bidden to separate themselves from Babylon before the full force of Divine retribution comes upon the ill-fated city. It is not difficult to see in this a parallel to the separation of wheat and tares in the parable, and to discern, therefore, that the call to "come out of her" is still another feature of the commencement of Christ's presence. A consideration of supreme importance is that the call does not imply merely a physical separation from earthly institutions which have run their course and are ready to vanish away, but a separation from that spirit and practice of Antichrist which has revealed itself in every man-made system throughout the Age—a gathering together in "spirit and in truth" of those who are sincere disciples of Christ.

The "coming out" from Babylon is a continuous process, each consecrated child of God separating from associates who manifest the "tare" characteristics as fast as those characteristics appear. It may mean a succession of separations, yet the watchword for all those who would share in the "harvest" work and be "changed" when their work is done must ever be "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." (Isa. 52; 11).

The voice of the archangel, then, is the summons to become separate from every phase of those systems which the returning Lord is about to destroy; to realise that the "standing up of Michael" involves judgment and destruction upon all that is in opposition to the incoming Kingdom; and to grasp the transcendent truth that a deliverance mightier by far than anything which the world has ever before known is about to come—first to the Church, those who "look for Him"—and then to the world, to all men in every place who, now sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death (Psa. 107; 10) are to have a great light shine upon them.

The third signal given by Paul in his metaphor is the "trump of God." This idea of a mighty trumpet heralding the wonderful events which close this Age and usher in the

future day of blessing is very prominent in the New Testament. To a people such as the Jews, familiarised in their ancient history with the use of the trumpet to announce a going forth to war, and also to herald the feast days, and the year of Jubilee when the land had rest and all men were restored to their inheritance, this must have been a very apt symbol. The last trumpet, the one which announces and declares Christ the coming King, which informs all men of the greater Jubilee, "Times of Restitution . . . spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3; 21); and sounds a signal for the Battle of the great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16; 14) is indeed a momentous one. Like the other symbols, it is not a literal trumpet blast such as Israel heard at Sinai (Heb. 12; 19) but its spiritual counterpart; a clear and definite proclamation making known throughout the world that the Time of the End has come, that the Lord is descending from Heaven to set up His Kingdom, and that the good tidings for all people are about to be declared in very truth. The fulfilment of this symbol must certainly be looked for in such a world-wide proclamation, commencing with the realisation and declaration that the Harvest of the Age has commenced and continuing with increasing enlightenment and diligence in testifying to the Kingdom on the part of those who have themselves heard this trumpet. The revelation of Truth concerning Christ's mission and the Divine Plan, once commenced in this fashion, will continue and extend until in the full glory of the Millennial Kingdom it shall become true that "all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them." (Jer. 31; 34). Hence the trump of God commences to sound at the time of the Lord's descent from Heaven, and continues so to sound until all men have heard its message. During the whole period of the *parousia* its notes will penetrate to the minds of men with "good tidings of good." (Isa. 52; 7-8).

Now it should be noted that with the sounding of this trumpet certain events are associated. Paul in I Cor. 15; 52 declares that:—

*"The trumpet shall sound,  
And the dead shall be raised incorruptible  
And we shall be changed."*

and again in I Thess. 4; 16-17.

*"The Lord shall descend from heaven with  
the trump of God*

*And the dead in Christ shall rise first.*

*Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."*

Taken together, these Scriptures indicate that while the "last trump" is sounding, there will be a resurrection of the dead in Christ and a change from earthly to spiritual conditions for those who, being Christ's, are still "alive and remain" at the time of His Presence.

The close association of these words with the act of descending from Heaven justifies the general view that the dead in Christ, or, as they are sometimes termed, the "sleeping saints," are resurrected, as the first work carried out by our returned Lord. This resurrection is not to human form and environment, but is to spiritual nature and into the spiritual world; a clothing upon with "our house which is from Heaven" (II Cor. 5; 2). That those thus raised are brought into personal association with the Lord Christ is evident; it is thus that Paul's own wish "for the returning and being with Christ" (Phil. 1; 23 **Diaglott**) becomes a reality. There is no assumption that those thus raised commence their reign with Christ until Christ Himself has established His Kingdom and begun to reign; it being already admitted that Christ returns to earth for the purpose of "taking His great power" (Rev. 11; 17) that He may "in due time" commence His reign. The beginning of the presence is definitely a period during which earth's previous rulers are being removed from their positions and the announcement of the new Kingdom promulgated. It is sufficient, therefore, at the moment to appreciate that the "risen saints" will from the time of their resurrection "be with Christ."

Were the Second Advent but the work of a moment, this primary raising of the sleeping ones would involve an immediate and simultaneous "change" of all the remaining members of Christ's church on earth, and the instant cessation of His work among the saints of this Age. This is the belief held by many Christians, especially by those accepting the twenty-four hour catastrophic view of the ending of this world, and within these limits is perfectly logical. It fails, however, to take into proper account the "Gospel Age" "harvest," the call to "Come out of Babylon," and the three-fold character of the Second

Advent previously referred to. Once it is appreciated that the "Presence" occupies a certain period of time during which various events occur relative to the winding up of earth's affairs and the introduction of the new Kingdom, it is easier to understand that a possibility exists for some of the "saints" to continue living during this period of time whilst the events of the presence of Christ are proceeding. This gives a wider and a more significant meaning to Paul's words "**We which are alive and remain.**" The dead in Christ are to rise first. Then we which are alive and remain are to be changed. There is no necessity for that change to be simultaneous—provided that all who become Christ's do in fact experience their change before the day comes when, resplendent in Heavenly glory "the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13; 43).

The position of those who, being Christ's are still living during the early days of His presence, is considered in greater detail in chapter 6. There is sometimes a failure to realise that the resurrection of the Church and that of the world stand related to each other, and that light can be shed upon this much-discussed matter by considering the whole position regarding the resurrection of the dead.

These statements in Thessalonians, then, should be interpreted as symbols expressive of that spiritual discernment upon the part of Christ's disciples which enables them at the time of His Advent to realise the fact. He comes to encourage, to direct His work, to proclaim His coming Kingdom, and to gather into their spiritual home all who have become members of His Body—the "Bride of Christ." By the close of this "Harvest" period the "General Assembly and Church of the First-born" (Heb. 12; 23) will have become a reality, and with the casting out of those Gentile powers which oppose the new Kingdom, the stage will be set for that stupendous scene when

**"All the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."**

*The fifth article in this series will appear next month under the sub-title "In flaming fire," and will speak of that aspect of the Lord's coming which relates to His judgments upon the kingdoms of this world.*

## PRINCES IN ALL THE EARTH.

These all—obtained a good report through faith. (Heb. 11, 39)

Among Bible Students generally the expression "Ancient Worthies" has come into general use as a description applied to those men and women who are called by many Christian systems the "Old Testament Saints." The pages of Scripture reveal quite plainly that from the very dawn of history up to the First Advent there were always those who gave their lives to a sincere and intelligent devotion to the revealed Will of God, and in consequence came to a clear knowledge of His laws and some understanding of His plans. The work of character-development which thus continued through the years in the case of such men and women trained and fitted them, as no other course could have done, for the work of instruction and rulership which awaits them at the dawn of the coming Millennial Age.

The belief that these "Ancient Worthies" are to be the visible rulers of mankind, and the administrators of Divine Law, can be shown to rest upon a sound foundation. Two converging lines of thought lead to this conclusion.

In the first place, there is an obvious necessity for some such ruling class when the Kingdom of God is established upon earth. Jesus Christ and His Church will be spiritual beings, dwelling on the spiritual plane; and the administration of affairs upon earth will require some who can fitly convey the Divine laws to all men and superintend the activities of men upon earth. Such a body of "princes" will have many duties and they must certainly be men and women whose own personal loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness is beyond question.

In the second place, the loyalty and harmony with God of such a class must have been demonstrated before their recovery from the sleep of death and induction into this important office. Hence their first earthly life, like that of the Christian Church, must be the testing and training time. There exists a clear analogy between New Testament days and those of the Old Testament in this connection. Just as the disciples of Christ during this Gospel Age are being "made perfect" for their future work by the "things which they endured" so must the followers of God in past

ages have been similarly prepared for their future work by like endurance. The ultimate moral standards of Divine law must be attained in both cases—the same complete devotion to God and the same inflexible determination to stand for righteousness—only the ultimate end is different. To one, service in the celestial world; to the other, service in the terrestrial. And for the terrestrial no less truly than in the celestial, none will be adjudged by the Father of all as fitted for that work unless they have developed those qualities of heart and mind which alone will enable them to be impartial and effective rulers in a world which is to be organized on lines of equity and love.

The first indication of God's purpose with regard to these "Ancient Worthies" is given at the hand of Isaiah. He says (1; 26) "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning." "A king shall reign in righteousness, and PRINCES shall rule in judgment." (Isa. 32.1). The connection in which these promises occur show them to relate to the time of Israel's final re-gathering and conversion; therefore in the dawn of the Millennial Age. So far the promise is merely that Israel is to have rulers who will rule in righteousness. A remarkable passage in the 66th chapter of Isaiah, however, indicates that at this same time there is to be a work of conversion carried on amongst all nations. After speaking of that final catastrophe which will befall the unbelieving re-gathered nation, the prophet declares (vs. 19-21) "And I will send **THOSE THAT ESCAPE** of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud . . . to the isles afar off . . . and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles . . . and I will also take of them for priests and for Levites."

The reference is clearly to those who escape the judgments coming upon their unbelieving brethren, and it is not difficult to see in this passage a description of the missionary zeal of restored Israel, under their new leaders, sending forth the "law of the Lord from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2; 1-4).

A further indication of the presence of the Ancient Worthies and their assumption of control at this time is given by our Lord, who, in

speaking to the rulers of Israel in His own day, declared "Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out." (Luke 13; 28) "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. 8; 11). Here is a plain declaration that the seats of authority will in "that day" be taken from the present unworthy holders and given to the patriarchs of old—and, what is more remarkable, to others not specified by name but who shall come from all parts, to take their share in the rulership of the Kingdom. This is the first hint, afterward confirmed by other Scriptures, that membership of this "Ancient Worthy" class is not confined exclusively to Israelites, of the natural seed of Abraham.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is well known as a record of the outstanding achievements of certain ones who are evidently to be included in this company. The last two verses of the chapter are clear in their import, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." The promise is defined earlier in the same chapter (verses 13-19) as being the realisation of God's expressed intention that Abraham and his seed should inherit the land and be a means of blessing to all. That promise has never yet been fulfilled, and in these two verses the writer to the Hebrews makes plain that until that "better thing—for us" has become a reality the promise waits. With the gathering of the last "feet members" into the "General Assembly of the Church of the Firstborn" it will become possible for God's promise to the Ancient Worthies to have its glorious fulfilment in their awakening to positions of power in the new Kingdom.

Hebrews eleven mentions some of the Ancient Worthies by name; but from verse 32 it is clear that the list is not exhaustive. Many there must be whose names have not been recorded but have nevertheless attained to the standard which God has set and so are accounted worthy. This chapter also indicates that some, not of the seed of Abraham, have proven themselves worthy of this honour. Abel, Enoch, and Noah are mentioned, and they are men who all lived before their famous descendant. Rahab of Jericho was a Cana-

anite—and who can doubt that such characters as Caleb the Kenezite, Ruth the Moabitess, Job the Arabian, and perhaps Melchizedek the Canaanite King-priest of Salem manifested just those attributes of heart and mind which will entitle them to a share in this great privilege. Joshua the stalwart warrior, Elijah who converted a nation, Josiah the good king, Nehemiah the patriot, Daniel the Babylonian statesman—how true it is that the time fails to tell of these heroes of faith, Hebrew and Gentile, who had this testimony, that they pleased God. If Barak, the leader in Israel who defeated the Canaanite host under Sisera, is accorded a place, (Hebrews 11; 32) then certainly there will be one for Deborah, the mother in Israel, whose faith and exhortation encouraged Barak to go forth and conquer. (Judges 4). And surely John the Baptist, herald of the Messiah, will also have part in voicing the greater call which in that day will go out from Jerusalem "Repent—for the Kingdom of Heaven has come."

Some have been inclined to question the inclusion of Samson in the list of Hebrews II. It should be realised that all of these historic figures lived under vastly different social conditions, customs and laws than do Christians to-day. The brief records of the Old Testament do not stop to explain conventions and practices which, whilst often seemingly strange and even repugnant when judged by present-day standards, were viewed in quite a different light in the days in which they occurred. The life stories of all the great heroes of the Old Testament include the record of incidents which illustrate this fact. What is of supreme importance in the life of Samson is that, in a very troublous and difficult period he "judged Israel twenty years." (Judges 15; 20) and although nothing whatever is told us of his life during that time, it is evident that he had the sterling qualities of a national leader to have achieved twenty years of rulership under such conditions. When to this fact is added his known loyalty to, and faith in, the God of Israel, it is not surprising that the writer to the Hebrews should class him among those fitted to eventually become "princes in all the earth."

These men and women, then, will appear again upon earth at the time of Israel's greatest need and the establishment of God's Kingdom in power. Zech. 12; 6 is quite definite on this point, "In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among

the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right-hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem." There is a reference here to that final cataclysm in the extreme end of the Gospel Age, known as "Jacob's trouble," and the promised interposition of God to deliver Israel from their enemies; and from this verse it seems clear that the Ancient Worthies will be present and already recognised as "governors in Judah." It may well be, therefore, that such a signal evidence of Divine power as will be demonstrated by the destruction of the hosts of Gog and Magog (Ezek. 38 and 39. Zech 13). will prepare men's minds for acceptance of these men as the "sent of God" and so open the way for that full recognition of the Kingdom which is due to immediately follow that destruction.

By that time the Church of this Age will have been "changed" to spiritual conditions; for the raising of these Ancient Worthies from the sleep of death, being a continuance of resurrection work already commenced and completed in the case of the Church, who are to be "first-fruits," must logically wait until the last member of the Church has "gone home." Nothing less than this is the teaching of Heb. 11; 39-40, and in addition such a conclusion illuminates another obscure Scripture, Psa. 45; 16, where, following a pen-picture of the union between Bridegroom and Bride, the Psalmist breaks out with "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." These who once were "the fathers" (Acts 13; 32, Rom. 15; 8) now come forth from the grave as "children" of the Christ; having received life from Him Who gave Himself that they "might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10; 10).

These men will return from the grave perfect in body and perfect in mind. Their trial will be still to come, for in common with all men they will be subject to the provisions of the New Covenant and will be under the great Mediator until the end of the Age. The great difference will be that whereas the instruction and training of mankind in general will be then just beginning, with the Ancient Worthies it will be already in the past, and it will only remain for them to demonstrate their heart loyalty to the principles of righteousness during the time

which must yet elapse before they can stand, with all men, before God and receive the reward of keeping His perfect law.

This mental and physical perfection does not imply that they have been formally adjudged by the Father as worthy of everlasting life. It does mean that, their minds and hearts being in absolute tune with their Creator, they are set completely apart from the remainder of mankind who will then have to commence that process of character-development which the Ancient Worthies achieved in past centuries.

This view is supported by Hebrews 12; 23, in which, after speaking of the vast array of spectators who stand and behold the stirring events of this transition period—the Church of the First-born, the innumerable company of angels, Jesus the Mediator, etc., etc., there occurs an expression which can only refer to the Ancient Worthies—"The spirits of just men made perfect." The Church has already been mentioned, the world cannot be described as "just men," and so the conclusion is obvious. The word here rendered "perfect" is *teleioo*, and has the significance of "making complete." It is used in this sense in John 17; 23 "that they may be made perfect in one," Jas. 2; 22 "By works was faith made perfect" and Heb. 11; 40 "They without us shall not be made perfect." It appears to be clear that these men will come forth, individually and collectively, complete, ready and fitted for their work of service.

Thus restored to the earth and granted the inestimable blessing of perfect human nature, they will stand before mankind as living examples for their emulation. The standards of the Kingdom will be proclaimed and exemplified by them, and men and women will gradually progress along the Highway of Holiness and become more and more conformed to these physical "copy-likenesses" which are set before their eyes.

The superiority of the High Calling of this Gospel Age to that destiny which awaits the Ancient Worthies is indicated by one cryptic remark made by our Lord. "Among men that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist—notwithstanding he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11; 11). Because one is the glory of the celestial, and the other the glory of the terrestrial (1. Cor. 15; 40) it must always be

true that men like John the Baptist, "princes in all the earth," will look to the spiritual Church of Christ for instruction and enlightenment. The spiritual will always be greater than the natural.

There will be no "princes" after the Millennial Age when its work of reconciliation has closed, for all the world will then have learned to live together in a brotherhood which brooks no such distinctions of rank and

authority, and every man will be a king in his own right. Yet these heroes of faith, dwelling to all eternity amongst those whom they have been privileged to lead back to God, will assuredly be honoured as faithful warriors who, in the days when the world was young, first "set to their seal that God is true" and so became an example and inspiration to all who in after days "turned from dead works to serve the living God."

## THE LAND OF TO-MORROW

The problem of evil will be solved in that day when Christ reigns, and sin, disease and death will be abolished for ever.

When Christ's kingdom has come, it will indeed be "the desire of all nations." It will be just what all men need. At first it will rule with a rod of iron, dashing the now tottering kingdoms of this world in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2; 9), breaking up every civil, social and religious system of tyranny and oppression, putting down all authority and power opposed to it, humbling the proud and high-minded, and finally, teaching all the world to be still and know that the Lord's Anointed has taken the dominion. (Psalm 46: 10). Then the blessings of its peaceful reign will begin to be experienced. Truth and equity will be established on a sure and permanent footing; "justice will be laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet" (Isa. 28; 17), and the great restitution work will progress grandly to its glorious consummation. There will be sweeping moral reforms, great educational and philanthropic enterprises, wonderful faith-cures from every disease and deformity, mental and physical. There will be awakenings also from death, and a grand re-organisation of society under the new order of the Kingdom of God. And all the world's bitter experience during the six thousand years past will prove a valuable lesson, on the exceeding sinfulness of sin; helping them to appreciate the new rule of righteousness, and to live in everlasting conformity to the perfect will of God, and thus to accept God's gift of everlasting life, designed for all who will receive it on His conditions of love and loyalty and obedience to Him.

C.T.R.

\* \* \*

International politics shall no longer vex the world with war, for the Lord Christ will rule, "even in the midst of his enemies," and "all dominions shall serve and obey him." The problems of government shall then be

solved. Oppression, ignorance, want and crime shall cease, for "the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and shall possess the kingdom for ever." No less than this is the glorious prospect, given us alike by Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, and John the prophet-evangelist, of that millennial time when Jehovah shall fully accomplish the sending forth of Messiah's "strong staff out of Zion." Almost all students of the prophetic word agree in believing that the indications of its glad approach are thickening around us. The shadows of evening are falling fast upon the day of this dispensation.

*Rev. Jas. Neil, M.A. (1874).*

Now let us step about fifty years farther into the Millennial age, and take a view. The blessings of peace and wise government by perfect rulers, in whose hearts selfishness has no place, have wrought wonders: they have really transformed the world; the people are happy, industrious and contented; the idle rich are gone, the unemployed poor are gone, "walking delegates" and breeders of discontent are gone; Love and Wisdom and Justice and Power are in control, under the name of the Kingdom of God. Education is general; for, under the new order, wastes are saved and all have an abundance, and that with fewer hours of labour; besides, now wisdom is general, and saves woeful waste, while yielding increased comfort. Aside from climatic changes, the wisdom of perfect rulers is causing the earth to yield great increase in quantity as well as in quality of food. Machinery now is marvellous and the results benefit all the people. Health is good, proportionately, as people obey the laws of the kingdom; and none now die except the wilfully perverse, who resist all the beneficent arrangements provided for their welfare, now and everlastingly.

C.T.R.

## THE QUIET TIME



### "Vox Populi, Vox Dei."

Alas, poor fallen human nature! How little it is to be relied upon! How untruthful is the proverb, "Vox populi, vox Dei"—"The voice of the people is the voice of God." If we could suppose the world filled with perfect men and women, in the image and likeness of God, and actuated by the spirit of holiness, then, indeed, we could suppose that the voice of the multitude would be the voice of God. But the very reverse is not infrequently the case; the voice of the people is often the voice of the demons who are deluding them, as the Apostle intimates, saying, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."

In accord with this thought, that the judgment of the world is not to be depended upon under present conditions, is our Lord's suggestion to all of us, "Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, (blind, still servants of sin, in fellowship instead of opposition to the principles of selfishness now prevailing) the world would love its own. But now ye are not of the world, for I have chosen you out of the world, that you should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruitage should be perpetual." To us, then, the voice of Jesus is the voice of God, and we His sheep hear His voice and follow Him.

### A CASKET OF GEMS.

Whatever to-morrow brings will bring God, and whatever it takes away, it will not take His love.

\* \* \*

All unseen the Master walketh  
By the toiling servant's side.

The reward of one duty is the power to fulfil another.

\* \* \*

Little is much if God be in it.

\* \* \*

All our desires to Thee are known  
Thy help is ever near  
O first prepare our hearts to pray  
And then accept our prayer.

\* \* \*

Lowly work ceases to be menial when it is wrought in love,

\* \* \*

Never mind a stumble while climbing up life's hill  
It shows you're making progress, no one falls while sitting still

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### "I WILL NEVER, NEVER LET GO YOUR HAND: I WILL NEVER, NEVER FORSAKE YOU."

(Heb. 13, 5) Weymouth

"Dear Lord, the way seems very dark,  
I cannot see."

"Yes, child, I know, but I will be thy light—  
Come, follow Me!"

"Dear Lord, so lonely is this way—  
Where are my friends?"

"My child, dost thou forget how far from me  
Their pathway tends?"

"Dear Master, I am growing weak,  
I scarce can stand."

"O, foolish child, trust not in thine own strength,  
Come, take my hand;

For I have trod this way before,  
So dark to thee.

I know each step, its weariness and pain,  
Wilt trust in me?"

"Yea, Lord, though friendless, lonely, dark,  
This way may be,

I will be strong. Beloved Guide, lead on,  
I follow thee!"

### "I Will Give You Rest." (Matt. 11, 28)

Do you walk the streets with seeing eyes?  
Do you scan the faces of those you meet?  
Do you see care written large on every countenance, the wrinkled brow, the furtive look, the gripping teeth, the pursing lips, the hurried walk? What does it all mean? Tension, really hyper-tension; life's fitful fever, speed, hurry, getting there! Some to attain money and honour, others to hold their jobs.

That lack of ease—dis-ease, can invade our other world too. The fight within, without, may be so grim that we cannot relax. It keys us up too much, like a string tuned up above pitch, and we get spiritual wrinkles, gripping teeth and pursing lips. We cannot rest, we cannot break the tension, we must be doing.

Nerve doctors say there is a knack in releasing this condition that might be likened to an overwound spring. It is nothing more than reclining, and letting the limbs fall as dead; the arms, legs, body, and head, until the chair carries the weight. It is not a matter of doing something to break the tension, it is not doing; that is all, but when it comes about it is rest, refreshing rest. So with the tired, over-tense spirit, when it is allowed to become "dead" in Jesus. "I will give you rest."

## GOD'S SCALE OF VALUES

Who hath . . . meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure. (Isa. 40, 12)

In our daily lives, whatever our vocation may be, we are all governed by a scale of values. Deeds and words are comparable with other deeds and words; we judge an action by its results. We adopt one course of conduct in preference to another course and invest it with inherent value.

When we become children of God a change takes place. The process is not changed, but the ideal, the standard, is altered. Things which seemed important have lost their importance; things which seemed unattractive have assumed an irresistibility. We have accepted a different scale of values.

Four instances in the New Testament demonstrate how necessary it is for a man to take the Divine viewpoint if he is to receive the full blessing of God. He must look at things from the highest viewpoint and accept God's standard to guide his life.

The four instances are:—

- (1) **The one thing lacking.**
- (2) **The one thing known.**
- (3) **The one thing needful.**
- (4) **"This one thing I do."**

The first is described in Mark 10: 17-22. This young man had high ideals but he did not feel sure of the eternal life promised to those who kept the law, and because he could not feel sure of living eternally, he thought it must be on account of something he had not done. He was perplexed; could this new teacher help him? It was in this frame of mind that he came to Jesus asking, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" and received the reply, "If thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments." Having been trying to do this, he naturally asked, "What lack I then?" Jesus knew he had been trying; He knew why he was not satisfied, and He gave him the remedy, "ONE THING THOU LACKEST." If you would have a mind at rest, go and sell all you have and give to the poor and follow me; lay aside your wealth and take your place with my followers; exchange the friendship of the world for mine. This was the supreme moment in the young man's life, but the answer was unexpected. He found that he valued his wealth above all other things, and

above the peace of mind which Jesus promised. In his failure, he went away grieved, but he left behind One who was grieved too. We are privileged to see what he did not see, that Jesus was asking only what the law asked; he had not realised what was meant by loving the Lord with all his heart, soul and strength. He had made wealth his god and loved it more than the Lord, therefore he was not worthy of that life to which he aspired.

This test is still being applied to-day. The real consecration demands all. If, when we made a consecration, we withheld something, we shall be lacking when the test comes, and will fail like this young man. We cannot serve two masters, having the smile of the world and the smile of the Lord too. Jesus set a standard which must be maintained when He said, "He that forsaketh not father and mother cannot be my disciple."

The second instance is in John 9: 25. This chapter tells the story of a man who had been blind and to whom Jesus had restored sight. Having anointed the man's eyes, He said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." The man said to his questioners, "I went, and washed, and I received my sight." This man's gratitude constrained him to become a disciple. It was no good trying to tell him he was dreaming; he knew that he once was blind and that he could now see. Jesus had come to relieve spiritual blindness, but he could only do that to those who realised their need. The Pharisees who questioned the man who was healed, said "We know this man is a sinner," for Satan had blinded their eyes. The man's reply was "Whether He be a sinner I know not—ONE THING I KNOW, whereas I was blind, now I see," and he revelled in his new found light.

We came into the light because we felt we were blind and needed healing, and so we have been brought out of darkness into the knowledge of God's dear Son. A realisation of something missing—a conviction of sin,—must precede cleansing. That these Pharisees did not know they were spiritually blind is revealed by verse 40, "Are we blind also?" But the corresponding truth is revealed by the Psalmist in Psa. 32: 1-2 "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered." It is only when man

does not cover his own sin that God covers it.

The third instance is Luke 10: 38-42. **THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.** Mary is one who is known as having chosen that part. to get the idea of what Jesus meant we must compare Martha and Mary. Martha thought of the dignity of her house; there was so much to see to, Jesus was such a distinguished guest. Martha's words to Jesus (verse 40) were a direct reproof; but perceive how gently He answered, in so many words, "You lack a sense of proportion! you have not a proper scale of values. I have come into your house, not because of any need of mine you can supply, but for your sake. I have meat to eat that you know not of, and if you had known that, you would have come to me as Mary has done. It is better to partake of my spiritual food than to busy yourself getting a meal for me." This lesson we can easily apply to life's experiences. The question should be; if we want to entertain the Master, what would He prefer above everything else? But do not let us search our own supplies as Martha did, drawing on our own reserves, without consulting His wishes. Let us first of all find out what He wants us to do. Many have made this mistake in the past, and many do so to-day; they fret and fume to work out what they think would be to the honour and glory of God, and they find, and will find, that their work is not approved. There was so much to do that Martha had no time to sit at the Master's feet. Many have tried to convert the world and spent money and energy and life to do that, to prepare a kingdom for Jesus, to prepare a feast of fat things for Him; forgetting that the Lord is going to do all these things Himself in His own due time.

**THE ONE THING NEEDFUL** to-day is the Lord's approval, and to have this we must adopt His standard of values,—but how difficult this is to-day; the non-essentials are so large, they obscure the more important things. How should we apportion the proper time for providing the things needful, and engage ourselves in witnessing to the Lord and His kingdom? Have we divided our time in such a way as to win the Lord's approval, or have we missed the one thing needful? Are we using the time we are able to give to the study of God's Word to the best advantage? Are we day by day trying to live more closely to the pattern of

the Master or are we spending our time in more or less fruitless discussions? We need the Heavenly wisdom in this matter of reading and studying His Word with a view to our best development, for that is the one thing needful. God is guiding his people through His Word; there is in it encouragement in trial, guidance in doubt, promises of help and protection in the dark days of disappointment, difficulty and despair. The food is there on our table, Divinely provided truth! Do not get so busy about other things as to neglect to eat what the Lord has provided, for doing this we shall be starved.

The fourth instance is Phil. 3: 13. **THIS ONE THING I DO.** Paul had a busy life in the service of the Truth. He was always an ardent follower of God with a zeal which makes us admire him. He could, no doubt, have made a great name for himself, but towards the end of his career he looked backward, reviewed all his advantages and said "I count all things as loss because of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord." Why had he taken upon himself a life of privation and suffering? He had seen Jesus, and that made all the difference! Before the glory of the Heavenly vision all other objects of attraction faded. He turned from his own efforts after that righteousness which was by the Law, to avail himself of that righteousness which is in Christ Jesus. He had a vision of the glorified Christ and learned that only by identifying himself with the death of Christ could he take part in the First Resurrection. It was the moving force in his life from the day he saw Jesus in the way and not all the experiences he suffered could efface the impression made upon him or dim the supreme hope of being found "in Him" at the last. He must witness to Jew and Gentile and open blinded eyes and turn men from darkness to light. To know the Divine Will was to do it; to have a vision of the Holy One and witness for Him was sufficient explanation of his having been apprehended of Christ Jesus.

We have been likewise apprehended of Christ Jesus for a similar work of witnessing, to tell forth the way of consecration. Paul longed for the kingdom to be set up; and so do we, but we are much nearer the kingdom than he was. Faithfulness to the call even to the end is the only way. Paul realised that although he had preached to others he might himself become a castaway if he

proved unfaithful. (Phil. 3: 12-13) "Not that I have already attained, but THIS ONE THING I DO." He was willing to give himself for Him who had laid hold on him and bound him to His service with the cords of love. Only so could he be found in Him at last and attain that honour, glory and immortality which is the reward of faithfulness.

We can now summarise our findings in these four instances.

(1) **The young man who could not make the great renunciation.** He failed to appreciate heavenly values, and he lacked the one thing necessary; but how good it is to know that he will come back again and ask the same question, "what must I do to have eternal life?" He will remember the last time when he refused the Master's way of life and chose his own way. "There is a way that seemeth good unto a man but the end thereof is death." He found it so. It would be a matter of surprise for him to again refuse when the offer of life was made to him.

(2) **The young man who rejoiced in his new light.** He would not be long in the society of Jesus before he learned more of the

Master's scale of values, unlike the Scribes who, blinded by their own pride, were in their pride of heart made ready tools for Satan. They adopted his methods, and, as the Lord Himself called them, were thereby the children of Satan.

(3) **Martha**, who, though she loved Jesus dearly, made sad blunders in the value she put on things, setting too great a store on minor things and neglecting the greater. Surely she took the Master's reproof to heart and learned a great lesson.

(4) **Paul**, who put all earthly wealth, glory and honour on one scale, and found it immeasurably outweighed by the peace of God which passeth all understanding, the love which passeth knowledge, and the fellowship of Jesus. He looked not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen, things lasting and eternal.

Thus does it become possible to recognise the things that matter and prove ourselves worthy of being called and termed co-labourers with God. Let us endeavour more and more to see things as He sees them and adopt God's Scale of Values.

### GETTING READY TO MOVE.

The premises were old and dilapidated. It was toward the end of a long lease. When the lease fell in, the house would be demolished. For long years it had been the home of an old devoted couple. The little rooms knew their secrets—the very walls understood their confidences. It was the shell into which they returned with all their troubles. But now the end was near, for the very bricks had become porous, and the mortar scarce held the courses together. Would it hold together till the lease was run? Would a little patching here and repairing there keep it up till the day should come that was to be its last. Anxious thoughts these, for those to whom it had been "home, sweet home." Even the few furnishings partook of the general decay, not only because of age and usage, but because of the "must" which pervaded everything. Ought they to buy a bit of new carpet to replace that worn-out one; Or paint up the doors and windows? . . . just to make it last!

The world is like that to-day. It is old and dilapidated. Its lease is running out,—it has to come down, the site has to be cleared.

We have lived in it so long, and shared our confidences and joys together within its walls. Does it seem heartless to speak of its demolition? Could it not be made "homelike" still, if we put a patch on this leaking roof, or a coat of paint on that shabby door? A League of democratic nations here, or a "pact" of "Great Powers" there?

So say the old statesmen of our day!

The old house is not worth it, brethren! Far better the land-owner should make it "new." What is the moral of this little story, happening a hundred-fold every day of our lives.

Don't waste your time and substance on this old world's institutions! Get ready to move! Be ready to pack any day!

"I want to touch lightly the things of this earth,

Esteeming them only of trifling worth!"

"For we know that if our earthly house of this dwelling-place be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

II Cor. 5: 1.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GONE FROM US.

From Sunderland comes this intimation:—

"Passed out from our midst on 6th February, dear Sister E. Theoderson, into a greater and more peaceful security awaiting the hopeful Day. Was greatly beloved by all who knew her personally."

## WHITSUN CONVENTION

Preparations are being completed for the Whitsun Convention at Leicester. Friends desiring accommodation, which can be had at very reasonable rates, are requested to write to Brother R. Thurman, 79 Stafford Street, Leicester, as soon as possible, giving details of requirements and maximum price it is desired to pay. All sessions of the Convention will be held in the Little Theatre.

## DONCASTER "HOME-GATHERING"

A one-day gathering is arranged for Sunday, 23rd April, at Doncaster, in the Y.W.C.A. Hall, Cleveland Street. Meetings will commence at 10.45 a.m. and continue through the day, the speakers being Bros. A. Boyce (Dewsbury); W. R. Mc Nerlen (Sheffield); and Sidney Smith (Manchester). The evening session is to be devoted to a public meeting and the friends are anticipating a profitable time of fellowship and service. The usual catering arrangements will be available.

## MELBOURNE CONVENTION

A number of the addresses given at the Christmas Convention in Melbourne (Australia), an account of which appears on this page, are now appearing in the "People's Paper," the magazine which circulates among the Australian brethren. Sample copies will be sent gladly upon request to us, and we will also be pleased to receive subscriptions upon behalf of the Berean Bible Institute, for any who wish to take the paper regularly, at 2s. 6d. per year.

## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Nominations for the forthcoming election are invited, to be in the hands of Brother G. A. Ford, "Cranbrook," 13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds., by April 28th. Classes normally co-operating in the Committee's activities have already received nomination forms and other classes or individuals desiring to make nominations are requested to apply to the Office for a form.

## "CHRISTIANITY AND WAR"

A new edition of this concise little 16-page booklet is now available, and friends may obtain a copy free of charge upon request addressed to Brother C. Hicks, 102 Cotswold Gardens, London, E.6. This treatise is of more than passing interest at the present time.

## A SPECIAL OFFER

The bookroom has available a quantity of new copies of the "Divine Plan of the Ages" bound in red cloth (the "Society" edition) and while stocks last these are offered at the following exceptionally low prices, attractive to those who wish to replenish their stock for loaning purposes, or for giving to friends. When this stock is cleared it will never be possible to obtain the "Divine Plan" at such a cheap rate again.

Parcel of 4 copies.....	2/6	post free
" " 8 " .....	4/9	" "
" " 20 " .....	10/6	" "

## NEW BOOKLET

A new booklet of 32 pages "The Coming World Dictator," published by the Dawn, is now available in stock, and will be sent at prices as follows:

One copy .....	1½d.	post free
6 copies .....	7d.	" "
25 " .....	2/3d.	" "

## A NEW OPPORTUNITY OF SERVICE

A recent suggestion in connection with our service to blind friends has been acted upon, and in consequence brief tracts printed in Braille are now available for judicious use. These tracts bear a short message and an invitation to the recipient to avail himself, or herself, of the Braille Library facilities. They can be used in any way the friends think wise—either being handed to blind friends, to blind people met casually in the street, sent by post or forwarded to local blind institutions, etc. These leaflets will be sent free to brethren who will make good use of them. Please apply to the Braille Librarian, Brother S. A. Couling, 42 Fareham Avenue, Rugby.

Letters of appreciation received from blind readers indicate very touchingly how the message appeals to many so afflicted. A gospel which speaks of a day when "the eyes of the blind shall be opened" is one that surely needs preaching to such, and the friends are encouraged to look around them for opportunities of extending the circle of Braille readers and so taking part in a privilege which has been already amply blessed.

## CONVENTION AT MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

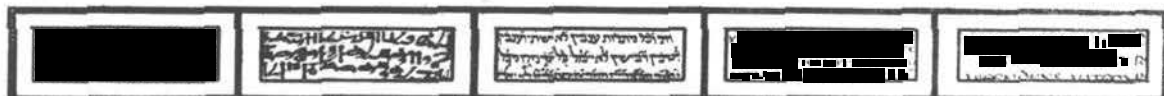
It is with much gratitude and praise to the Lord that another annual Convention arranged by the Melbourne Class over the Christmas holiday period is reported at this time. The Lord truly blessed the assemblies collectively and each member individually who sought to worship Him in spirit and in truth. The presence of visiting brethren once again added greatly to the encouragement received and it was a pleasure for the local friends to welcome more from distant parts than for years past. The zeal and sacrifice on the part of those coming long distances and their love and loyalty to the truth were all contributing factors in making the Convention such a profitable time.

Each day, following the opening praise and prayer and a short address, a Bible Study engaged the attention of the assembly with much benefit to all present. The passages selected for these studies were: Psalm 23, so well known as the Shepherd Psalm, and expressive of that devotion and confidence which all the Lord's people should have in the "Great Shepherd of the sheep" as they traverse "the valley of the shadow." 1 Thess. 4: 13-18, bringing out many important truths connected with the harvest of this age—the "present truth" concerning the first or chief resurrection which takes place over a period of time at the close of the Gospel Age. Psalm 45: 9-17 the plan of God for taking out the Bride of Christ being specially brought out, and the expressions used showing the beauty of character which must be developed by each one who will make up this jewel class; and finally the passage in Eph. 6: 10-18, a timely exhortation, showing how the Lord has made provision for all His people to be fully armed against all the conflicts of the Christian way. Each portion of the "armour of God" had an important lesson, and it was impressed that only as each member takes "the whole armour of God" shall he be able "to withstand in the evil day."

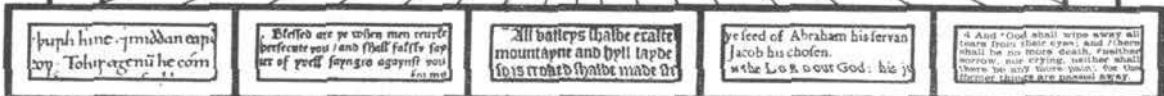
The addresses were of a high standard; the varied topics covering features of Christian truth:—"Meditation," "Self-Examination," "Children of Light," "The Power of the Spirit," "Christ Lifted Up," "Songs in the Night," "Effectual and Ineffectual Prayer," "Unity of the Spirit," "Right and Wrong Ways of Service," "The Life of Stephen," "Lessons in the School of Christ," and "If God be for us." On the morning of the third day of Convention a Baptismal Service was held, this service impressing again how solemn and yet how blessed is the narrow way of sacrifice, made possible by faith in the death of Christ and obedience to the Lord's call during this Gospel Age. (Psalm 116: 12-15.) The Fellowship Meetings, comprising Praise and Testimony and on the subject "The Joys of the Truth and our privileges in connection therewith," gave opportunity for personal testimonies, etc., and were very profitable, as also was the Question Meeting.

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



# BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY



Vol. 16 No. 5

MAY, 1939

THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

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\* \* \* \* \*

As an additional convenience to classes which adopt the new book, a quantity is to be held by the Committee and will be loaned to such classes on request, for Home Gatherings and similar occasions where the class supply is inadequate.

\* \* \* \* \*

The new book will be used at the Whitsun Convention. Copies will be available in the Hall. The Sunday evening song service is to be devoted to some of the new hymns.

\* \* \* \* \*

A selection of the added consecration hymns, taken at random:—

- No. 8 " All, all for Thee. Dear Saviour, let this watchword, Be Thine own keynote for my life this year."
- No. 14 " All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely give."
- No. 75 " Father, let me dedicate, All my days to Thee."
- No. 95 " God holds the key of all unknown, And I am glad."
- No. 281 " O Jesus I have promised, To serve Thee to the end."
- No. 365 " Sweet will of God, my refuge Thou, My safe abiding place."
- No. 450 " Ye servants of the Lord, Each in his office wait."

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 5. "IN FLAMING FIRE."

*"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." (11 Thess. 1; 9.).*

It is very clear that one of the objects for which our Lord returns to earth is the destroying of the "kingdoms of this world" together with every system and institution of man which stands in the way of the coming Kingdom. In this light should be understood the many passages which speak of Christ as coming in judgment and retribution, and which picture Him as a destroyer rather than a preserver.

There are certain differences in the symbolic statements regarding His coming for His church and His coming for the destruction of earth's systems. To the Church He comes as a Reaper, gathering to Himself all who are found ready for Him, and the signs of that coming are such as would appeal only to the watchful and the spiritually minded. This second aspect is of different stamp. The whole setting of the "catastrophic" scriptures implies an outwardly spectacular work; an evident epoch of destruction in the world of men and plain to all even although the power behind this destruction is not clearly discerned; and a final levelling of all the powers and kingdoms of the earth preparatory to the setting up of that which is to be the "desire of all nations"—the earthly Kingdom of God.

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians affords the key. To those who were expecting the Second Coming to take place in their own lifetime, Paul writes with instruction of the highest importance. That day shall not come, he says, until certain events have transpired, culminating in the development of a "Man of Sin" which, after the removal of the "hinderer" and coming to the full climax of its power, is to be "consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed with the bright shining of His presence." Leaving aside for the moment any question as to whether this event is past or future, let it be especially observed that it is the manifestation of the Lord's presence that completes the work of destroying this "Man of Sin." Moreover, that this is to be an indication to the "Watchers" that this presence is an accomplished fact. It would

have been easy for Paul to correct the Thessalonian Christians' error by reminding them that the evidence of the day of the Lord would be manifest in their beholding Him in visible form descending from the skies, were that the true manner of the Second Advent. The fact that Paul did not resort to that argument is a reasonably sure proof that no such manifestation attends the Lord's coming for His saints. Instead, they—and we through them—were bidden to watch for the destruction of the "Man of Sin" as a sign which would indicate His presence at the end of the Age.

Now the eighteenth chapter of Revelation speaks in deeply metaphorical language of just such an event as Paul describes in the Second Chapter of Second Thessalonians. A mighty angel descends from heaven and the earth is lightened with his glory. He makes an announcement "Babylon is fallen" and cries an invitation "Come out of her, my people" and while this cry that Babylon is fallen is apparently uttered before the event becomes an accomplished fact, the chapter goes on to describe the fulfilment of the dread sentence, the distress of kings and great ones, and finally the dramatic act of a millstone cast into the sea. "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise."

The picture is taken from the writings of Jeremiah and the vivid experiences of Israel in the days of Cyrus in 536 B.C. Babylon, the oppressing city, had fallen before the onslaught of a mighty deliverer, and with every epithet of opprobrium the great city was consigned to destruction whilst Israel were to go free and be restored to their own land. Here in the reality the mighty angel descends, lightening the earth with His glory, and proceeds to carry out the work of destroying what even men in their more lucid moments have called "Great Babylon."

There are many scriptures which speak prophetically of this same time when the greed and selfishness and sin of mankind has brought the world into its Armageddon, a time of trouble from which there can be no escape except by the coming of Messiah's Kingdom. Not all of these scriptures definitely identify this time as being contemporary with the day of Christ's

presence, and yet the few which do so identify these days are sufficiently detailed to show clearly that the early period of His Presence, beside being devoted to gathering His saints, is also devoted to this work of destruction. The fact that this time of trouble is the natural result of man's own course and conduct since his creation does not make any difference to the truth that a mightier hand than that of man is overruling these events for ultimate good.

It should be clear then that the Michael of Daniel 12, who stands up and gives the signal for a great time of trouble; the Son of Man of Daniel 7, who receives a kingdom at the passing away of all earthly kingdoms; the mighty angel of Revelation 18; and the rider on the white horse of Revelation 19, are all different symbolic representations of the same events described in Thessalonians as the revealing of the Lord Jesus from heaven in flaming fire, "taking vengeance on them that know not God." To these passages must be added the one in II Thess. 2, and from all these statements a comprehensive picture can be drawn:

That picture will be something like this.

The arrival of the Lord Himself from Heaven is co-incident with a time of judgment in which things not approved by God are to perish in a flaming fire of destruction. (II Thess. 1; 9). The consuming of the "Man of Sin," by the spirit of the Lord's mouth, will be already in progress, and the period immediately following His arrival will witness its destruction and complete passing away by the "manifestation of His presence." (II Thess. 2; 8). There will already have been a widespread proclamation and understanding of the "truth now due" on those features of the Divine Plan which had been previously hidden by Dark Age theology and this understanding will have helped to the consuming of Antichrist (the spirit of His mouth) and anticipate the expression in Revelation 18; 1, "The earth was lightened with His glory" as well as meet the requirements of those passages which demand an awakening of the Watchers, a trimming of lamps, and a going forth to meet the Bridegroom, **before** He has come. (Matthew 25; 1-13).

Next in order, at the arrival of the Lord from Heaven, comes the proclamation "Babylon is fallen. Come out of her, my people," this "coming out" corresponding with the separation of wheat and tares in the parable

and thus indicating that the call comes at the same time as the commencement of the Harvest. From the seventh chapter of Daniel it is discerned that the Son of Man is brought near before the Ancient of Days at a time when the judgment is set and the books are opened; and as a result the earthly powers represented by four great beasts are forcibly dispossessed and given to the burning flame; and the time comes for the saints to possess the kingdom. This forcible dispossession must obviously be a question of time and so for some while the period of His Presence will witness the steady breaking down and destruction of these systems. This is pictured very vividly in Joel 3; 1-17, Psa. 2; 1-12. Psa. 46; 1-11, etc.

The completion of the work of destruction is pictured in Rev. 19 where a new feature is introduced. The rider upon the white horse comes forth from Heaven and in the ensuing conflict those who have gathered for the final stand are utterly overthrown and consigned to the lake of fire.

Every opponent is now vanquished. The symbols include kings of the earth, mighty ones and chief captains, the beast-like powers which in this "present evil world" oppress and enslave humanity, and also the Antichrist or "Man of Sin" who "as God, sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God." All are gone, and the ground is cleared for the third and most spectacular of the aspects of Christ's presence.

Be it noted that in all these passages, **fire** is the symbol used to denote that utter destruction to which all these opponents of the Messianic kingdom are devoted. There is no suggestion anywhere that human beings are thus destroyed—the reference is consistently to the powers, the institutions, the systems of government which stand in the way of the "Rule of righteousness." All must go, before that "judgment in righteousness" (Acts 17; 31) which God has ordained, can begin.

Simultaneously with the harvest, then, this work of retribution proceeds. It has its commencement at the same time, the moment of our Lord's arrival, although the Harvest will be ended and the saints gathered to their Lord before the final scenes of this Day of Trouble have been enacted. From the time that the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven in flaming fire to the time that the rider on the white horse casts the bodies of the beast and the false prophet into the burning lake is

a period during which all the forces which have been at work for centuries leading up to this climax of the Age shall converge and meet in a fury of strife and destruction justifying to the full those solemn words which fell two

thousand years ago on the ear of the beloved disciple on Patmos.

**"And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."**

## THE RULE OF THE IRON ROD

"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth."  
(Psa. 46, 10)

A scripture very familiar to the Bible Student who looks for the coming reign of Christ is that one in the Second Psalm "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" and even the most gentle of disciples has felt a thrill run through his being as he pictures a day in which all opposition to the Kingdom of righteousness is relentlessly crushed. Many have solaced themselves in present distress by anticipation of a coming day in which the tables will be turned on those who set themselves against the Lord's Anointed, and the proud and mighty of this world are compelled to lick the dust at the feet of earth's rightful Sovereign.

A number of Scriptures, mostly in the Books of Psalms and Revelation, are habitually cited to buttress this idea of an all-powerful Dictator ruthlessly crushing all opposition and setting up His rule of absolute righteousness and justice by the exercise of brute force. The end is considered to justify the means, and the Scriptural assurance that as a result of the Millennial reign all humanity will come into heart harmony with the Divine law of selflessness and love is held to stamp the means employed with the hall-mark of Divine approval.

Yet the whole tenor of Christ's teaching discountenances the use of coercion or force. He Himself resolutely refused to employ any other agency but love. Even although He faced death, the death for which He had come into the world, He refused to call upon the twelve legions of angels to come to His aid, and trod the winepress alone. When in surprise and mystification Pilate queried "Thou art a King then?" Jesus uttered those memorable words which have resounded down the ages, "My kingdom is not of this world (*cosmos*) ELSE WOULD MY SERVANTS FIGHT." Not for Him the standards of kingship by which this world measures kings. And it was in the passive and yet overpowering force of love that

the early Church went forth conquering—and conquered.

But if the teaching of Christ at His First Advent definitely repudiated the use of force as a means of accomplishing the work of His Kingdom, how shall statements of so definite a nature as Psalm 2; 9 and Revelation 2; 27 be understood? Certain it is that as students of the Divine Word we can neither afford to ignore them nor to wrest them to mean the opposite of their plain implication. We can only approach them, armed first with a clear knowledge of the principles upon which Christ will deal with man in the future Age and then look at these Scriptures in the light of their local meaning—the significance they had for the Israelite who lived in the day in which they were uttered,—and so deduce that prophetic indication which is there given in the guise of a familiar reference to some everyday incident or custom.

It is generally agreed that the work of the Millennial Age is portrayed in miniature and in principle by the life of Jesus Christ, by His words, actions, miracles, and so on. It is equally definite that He preached the overcoming of hate by love, of greed by selflessness, of force by persuasion, of self-centredness by service for others. This then is the law of the Kingdom, and however the rule of the iron rod is to be understood it must in no sense do violation to the principles which underline the teaching of Jesus. In a very real sense it must represent fairly and accurately the law of the Kingdom of God on earth.

What then is this rod of iron?

The figure, like so many in the Psalms, is a pastoral one. The shepherds of David's day—as both before and after, in the unchanging East—went about their occupation provided with two implements, the pastoral staff and the iron club. The iron club was the shepherd's weapon of defence, not only for himself, but also for his sheep; for the Palestinian shepherd follows his calling under very different circum-

stances to those associated in our Western minds with the care of the flock. The pastures were often found in mountainous and desolate places, and whilst roving bands of robbers threatened danger to the shepherd, wild beasts such as hyenas, jackals, bears, leopards and lions were liable to attack the flock, and the safety of the defenceless sheep depended entirely upon the watchfulness and strength of the shepherd.

A number of scriptures attest the familiarity of Israel with the fact of wild beasts in their midst—as for example, I Sam. 17; 34-36. I Kings 13; 24, Jer. 5; 6; and to realise this aspect of the shepherd's work is to understand more clearly the import of our Lord's own words in John 10; 11-17 "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them and scattereth them."

The rod of iron (Hebrew—"Shebet") was the shepherd's iron club, his weapon of defence and his means of defending the sheep. But since in the ordinary course of events the shepherd's care for his sheep transcended all thought for himself, the iron club became in a very special sense associated with the protection of the flock from every kind of danger. This is borne out by the Scripture in a very remarkable manner. The quotation in Rev. 2; 27 "He shall rule them with a rod of iron" employs a Greek word (*poimaino*) which has the significance of "shepherding" in the sense of "feeding;" and the phrase would be more correctly translated "He shall shepherd them with the shepherd's club." In addition to its use for defence against robbers and wild beasts, the club was used for beating a way through jungle or undergrowth in the search for fresh pastures, and so its association with feeding as well as defence became obvious.

The same word is translated "feed" in John 21; 16 ("Feed my sheep") I Pet. 5; 2 ("Feed the flock of God") Rev. 7; 17 ("The Lamb which is in the midst of them shall feed them") and in several other instances. In the Old Testament the same allusion occurs in Micah 7; 14 "Feed thy people with thy rod," where "rod" again is translated from "shebet."

In the same connection also is the word of the Lord to the Israelites of Ezekiel's day "I will cause you to pass under the rod (shebet) and I will bring you into the bond of the

covenant" (Ezek. 20; 37). "He will smite the earth" says Isaiah, "with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked." (Isa. 11; 4). This "iron rod" is in very truth a means of sustenance and defence to those who are the "children of the Kingdom" and who stand in need of that which the Kingdom is designed to provide.

But what is the significance of that parallel expression in Psalm 2; 9 "He shall break them in pieces like a potter's vessel" and its companion text in Rev. 2; 27 "As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers." Another Eastern custom of every day is alluded to here. A very common occupation in the East was the making of "homrah," broken pottery reduced to very fine powder by constant grinding with heavy stones, and used in the manufacture of cement. The common use of earthenware vessels of all kinds rendered an abundant supply of broken pottery continually available, and with painstaking care the makers of "homrah" squatted upon the ground with a little pile of potsherds between their feet and rolled the heavy boulder to and fro until the fragments were reduced to the finest of fine dust. Not until then was the "homrah" ready for the next stage in the making of cement for use in lining their water cisterns and aqueducts, and for many other purposes.

Here then is afforded an eloquent picture of the disintegrating forces which break down and scatter not only the kingdoms of this world but all that is lifted up in defiance against Christ. The vivid picture drawn by Daniel when he expounded to King Nebuchadnezzar his dream of the great image is on the same line—the image broken to the ground and pulverised to dust by the "Stone" Kingdom—(Dan. 2; 34-35).

This disintegration is not of individuals, but of institutions, governments and organisations of man. "Everything that can be shaken will be shaken" says the writer to the Hebrews (12; 27) and every Bible Student is thoroughly familiar with the many lines of Scriptural reasoning which indicate that at the time when the reign of Christ begins it is the institutions of man which crash to destruction that every individual member of the human race may be given the opportunity of walking up the "Highway of Holiness" to perfection of life.

With this destruction of every man-made institution the individuals comprising them are set free to be built into that new and universal

organisation which is the New Jerusalem come down from heaven to earth—just as the broken potsherds were ground into dust in order that that same dust might be welded together in a new and indestructible cement that should endure forever. The broken potsherds, having outlived their usefulness and like a "garment, waxing old, ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8; 13) are converted into a new and imperishable structure which shall serve the needs of man for all time. Could there be in all the range of Scripture allegory a more perfect picture of that "Stone" Kingdom, which "shall break in pieces and devour all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

Thus the entire picture is one of the beneficent reign of Christ under which evil will be restrained and the "flock" defended from those wild beasts of iniquity and sin which would otherwise still lie in wait and dog their footsteps; and the willing ones led by the "green pastures and still waters" of the Twenty-third Psalm where they may in perfect confidence and security "obtain joy and salvation" whilst

"sorrow and sighing will flee away" (Isa. 35: 10). In the meantime the enlightening influences of this day will have played their part in bringing about that "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" (Dan 12: 1, Matt. 24: 21) in the course of which all the broken potsherds of human government will be reduced to the dust—and upon their ruins will arise the fair edifice of that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" for which Abraham looked so many long years ago (Heb. 11; 10.). The "iron rod" is a guarantee of Divine protection and sustenance to all mankind. The "breaking as a potter's vessel" predicts the final collapse of the power of man and the reconstruction work of the Millennial Age—founded upon love, peace, persuasion to good things, that the words of Isaiah so many centuries ago may at last come into a rich fulfilment—

**"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."**

## ALL THESE THINGS

"Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign . . ." (Matt. 24, 3)

These few words will be recognised as one of three questions addressed by the disciples to Jesus on the brow of Olivet. He was leaving Jerusalem for the last time, prior to His apprehension and death. These words were evidently spoken under considerable perplexity and wonderment, for the disciples for some days had seen amazing things happen and had heard strange words spoken. During their last journey up to Jerusalem—yea, even before they left Capernaum—Jesus had repeatedly told His disciples that He would be slain when they reached Jerusalem. This oft repeated statement made but little impression upon them, for they could not understand why He, whom they had acknowledged as Messiah, should die. Arriving at last at Bethany some days before the Passover feast, they found hospitality and shelter at the home of Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

It was noised about among the Jews that He had come up to the feast, and "much people of the Jews . . . came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead" (John 12: 9). On the following day Jesus rode into Jerusalem, presenting Himself, according to prophecy (Zech. 9: 9.), as her king. The enthused

country-people that were come to the feast welcomed Him gladly, bestrewing His pathway with clothing and palm branches, meanwhile shouting "Hosanna! blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." (John. 12: 13.). After hearing Jesus speak of his approaching death this would seem an experience hard to reconcile. If only He would now give the lead, how readily the poorer people would follow Him! And if the mass of the people accepted Him, the rulers would hardly dare to oppose! So, presumably, the disciples would argue.

Then followed those remarkable days of teaching and healing within the Temple precincts, during which even the children sang their Hosannas to the Son of David (Matt. 21: 14-15.). It seemed to the disciples, in spite of the growing jealousy and enmity of the rulers and Pharisees, that now the eventful hour for Jesus' triumph, and His national acceptance as Messiah, had surely come. While He thus taught and healed, however, "the chief priests and the Scribes, and the chief of the people sought to destroy Him, and could not find what they might do, for all the people were very attentive to hear Him" (Luke 19: 47-48.). To add more to their mystification

and bewilderment, the disciples, following in His triumphal journey, had seen Him weep as He looked over the city wherein the enthusiastic crowds awaited Him. They had heard Him say

*"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall leave not in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."* (Luke, 19: 42-44.)

How enigmatic it seemed that He should speak and act thus, when the multitudes welcomed Him so enthusiastically and would have gladly made Him King! After various altercations and disputations with the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees, came the day when Jesus publicly denounced those rulers and Pharisees. He had borne His testimony and called attention to the prophetic statement by the manner of His entry into Jerusalem, but the rulers rejected both His testimony and the Prophets. For such a terrible exposure, there could be no forgiveness for Him. Stung to fury by His terrible words, the rulers redoubled their energies to make away with Him speedily, if possible, before the approaching feast.

Knowing the black hatred which approached passion-point in their hearts, and also the intensity with which they were working, He said, more scathingly than before,

*"ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets! Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers!"* (Matt. 23: 31-32.)

Then to bring home upon them the guilt of their pre-meditated crime He says,

*"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation."* (Matt. 23: 34-36.)

Here was the announcement of stern, full-measured retribution for "All these things"—for the shedding of the blood of righteous men for whom vindication had slumbered long! Now judgment was to begin to fall—to fall upon "this generation"! Then fell from His lips that bitter lament—

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."* (Matt. 23: 37-39.)

Three things stand out in sharp prominence in this last utterance of Jesus.

**First, the sure and certain recompense for "all these things."**

**Second, "Ye shall not see me henceforth . . ."** (His mind carried forward from this day of rejection to His return in power and glory, after the long period of recompense was over).

**Third, "Ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."**

The Scripture which Jesus quoted (Psa. 118: 26.) was accepted as Messianic; and spoke of the Gates of Righteousness opening to admit the righteous man. It tells of the rejected "Stone" having become the Head of the Corner. Clearly these words describe the establishment of Messiah's kingdom in a "day which the Lord hath made." To that distant scene the mind of Jesus turned, finding comfort to Himself in the knowledge that the blood-stained hands of that generation would at long last be cleansed, and its long dire penalty would then be ended in their contrition and repentance.

To all these terrible and harrowing words the disciples had been silent listeners, and as Jesus left the Temple for the last time, they followed Him in great perplexity.

Down by the brook Kidron, then up the slopes of Olivet they had followed, probably in twos and threes, wondering, pondering, and questioning what it could all mean. Why had their Master spoken such terrible words against the rulers, when the people had shown such ready zeal to accept Him? Why was He making them—rulers and nations alike—

responsible for "all these things," instead of taking the opportunity at full tide, and riding into power on the will of the multitude?

A dreadful history of rebellion and slighted warnings and slain prophets lay behind that generation; their father's guilt was worthy of all censure, and retribution would have been just! Even the Pharisees allowed that, and swore that had they lived in their father's day, they would not have shared their father's sin. What words were these, then, that spake of dire recompense upon the children, for the evil deeds their sires had done? "ALL THESE THINGS"!

As they were moving away from the Temple courts, they heard those arresting words once more. Some among them called His attention to the size and beauty of the massive wrought stones in the Temple structure. It is scarcely to be thought that Jesus had not seen them before, or was in any way unaware of their beauty. But just a little while before, He had said "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." "Your house"!—what else could this mean to the disciples, than that very House they were leaving! "God's House" where dwelt His Holy Name! "left desolate"!—what Scriptures of evil portent might this not recall!

Almost as if in gentle remonstrance, as if the thing could never be, they point to the great stones, with the unspoken reproof in their minds, "Master, surely you could hardly mean that! why, who could pull these huge things apart? Besides, is not this the House of our God, and will He not preserve it from destroying hands?"

Swift and straight came the sharp and emphatic words, telling of doom, . . . "See you not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Again the all-comprehensive words—"ALL THESE THINGS"!

Because they realised they must accept His words, with all that they implied, they followed Him pensively from the doomed court-yards, over the brook, and up Olivet's slopes, till with Jesus seated upon its crest, and Jerusalem in full view, they ventured to ask Him more about "all these things." "Master, will you tell us when these things shall be? . . . and . . . and?" Thus the very words of their first disturbing query had been constructed for them,

by the Master's own lips, and it had been ringing in their ears all the way up the mountain side. First in His denunciation of the Pharisees, and again, as they were quitting the Temple, had they heard these fearful words—what wonder their own question took the same form? Yet again were they to hear them as their kindly Master, His own heart fraught with grief, spake words of explanation, and took infinite pains to make plain to them the things of which He spake. "When shall these things be," they asked, "This generation shall not pass till ALL THESE THINGS be fulfilled" is the reply. Those three words in this text, in their breadth, scope and application must be governed and defined by the two previous usages from the same lips, (Chap. 23: 36,—24: 2.).

Thus the words of the Lord definitely and unequivocally limit themselves to that stubborn and hard-hearted generation which crucified Jesus, stoned Stephen, and wrought havoc with the infant Church. Nothing in these words could make them think of any future generation, least of all a generation nineteen hundred years ahead on the stream of time. They would be under no illusion about that. It was their own kinsmen, their own city, their own Temple which was doomed,—and in their own generation too.

Do we ask "When did it commence"? . . . Not until the words of Jesus in Matt. 23: 34-35, had received fulfilment. Not until He had sent them "Prophets and wise men and scribes" and they had killed them, and thus filled up the measure of their father's guilt! Then after they had gone through the cities of Judea and of the Dispersion outside Judea, and had been rejected and persecuted like their Master—then, and then only did the retribution for "All these things" begin to fall,—well within the life-span of that generation.

But now comes a most important and interesting question. Did the fall and sack of Jerusalem exhaust the full measure of punishment due to fall upon that generation? Was full retribution for all the blood of prophets and righteous men made when the nation which slew them perished? It would scarcely seem so, if history be our guide. While thousands were slain, other thousands were sold into slavery, and led captive among the nations, and for nineteen hundred years their home-land has been trodden by alien feet!

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### HOW CAN I PRAY?

If I within my heart withhold  
 Forgiveness for another's wrong,  
 If with a spirit proud and cold  
 I face the erring human throng.  
 How can my prayer to heaven be  
 "Forgive my debts, forgive my debts?"  
 How can I lift my own heart's plea  
 "Forgive my debts?"

If I refuse to heed the call  
 Of God to paths I would not tread;  
 If yielding not to Him my all,  
 I choose the selfish way instead,  
 How can I pray with heart sincere,  
 "Thy will be done, Thy will be done?"  
 How can I pray with conscience clear,  
 "Thy will be done?"

### PRAYER.

In order to pray properly, the child of God should know what he may pray for. Otherwise he might be asking for the wrong things, such as God would never be pleased to give him. How may we know what things are proper to pray for? The Lord gives us an intimation along this line of what is proper. He says, If earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, how much more is the Heavenly Father pleased to give good gifts to His children. The things which earthly fathers give to their children are earthly things. The things which the Heavenly Father is pleased to give to His children are Heavenly things.

New Creatures should be persistent in their petitions to God. These may know what is proper to pray for by studying the words of Jesus and the apostles and prophets of old. The spirit-begotten ones may thus understand what are the rights and privileges of sons of God. To these the Heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. The Holy Spirit is the one thing which the New Creature needs.

### THE EXTRA.

'Tis not the duty of the day  
 The race you ought to run.  
 But just the thing you needn't do  
 That earns the great "Well done!"  
 The willingness for love to go  
 Beyond the single mile.  
 The measure pressed and running o'er  
 That wins the Master's smile.

Beatrice Cleland.

### BLAMELESS, NOT FAULTLESS.

No Christian is or can be faultless before the Lord. Blameless, all may and ought to be. The child that does its needlework faithfully is commended, though not a stitch is perfect. The child is blameless, but the work is not faultless. The Christian who lives up to his light and ability is blameless, but in God's sight faulty. He is not always conscious of his defects, his eyes are not as sharp as God's; his best efforts are like the needlework of the little girl, well done for her, but so defective in fact that every stitch must be removed and done again by a more skilful and experienced hand. Saints sometimes judge themselves perfect because they are not conscious of sin. They may be innocent, but surely not perfect. With more light and culture they would discern defects. Others of more experience observe them now, but they see them not, because not sufficiently educated or advanced in wisdom. Jesus keeps His trusting sheep blameless, and step by step leads them up to higher things, until finally He gives them His likeness in glory.

(Selected).

Men of thought, be up and stirring  
 Night and day,  
 There's a midnight blackness changing  
 Into gray.  
 Once the welcome light hath broken,  
 Who shall say  
 What the unimagined glories  
 Of the day.

### ACCEPTED.

"Accepted in the Beloved." Eph. 1:6.  
 "Perfect in Christ Jesus." Col. 1:28.  
 "Complete in Him" Col. 2:10.

Accepted, Perfect and Complete,  
 For God's inheritance made meet!  
 How true, how glorious, and how sweet!  
 In the Beloved—by the King  
 Accepted, though not anything  
 But forfeit lives we had to bring.  
 And Perfect in Jesus Christ made,  
 On Him our great transgressions laid,  
 We in His righteousness arrayed.  
 Complete in Him, our glorious Head,  
 With Jesus raised from the dead,  
 And by His mighty Spirit led!  
 O Blessed Lord, is this for me?  
 Then let my whole life henceforth be  
 One Alleluia—song to Thee!

(F. R. Havergal.)

## PATIENT ENDURANCE

"Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."  
(Heb. 10, 36)

*"Be patient therefore brethren unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it, until he receives the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (Jas. 5; 7-8).*

James 5; 1-6, is a summons to the rich on the earth to hear their coming judgments from Heaven, a call to halt their selfish aggression against fellow men who have become subordinate to the powers of this world. **"Go to now"** or as the Greek indicates **"Come now, listen!"** The permission of self-government and selfishness is always limited to Divine Will. God holds the reins of every power in the universe. As He did with Pharaoh, so did He with Israel, the Amalekites and others famed in Old Testament story. But in the New Testament the summons by James definitely marks a time in our day—at the end of the Gospel Age—when a warning comes to the rich and heedless, and with it there comes from our Heavenly Father a soothing portion for His own dear ones. **"Be ye patient therefore, brethren; the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."**

The Old Testament has its counterpart to this word of comfort in the exhortation of Psa. 50. **"Gather my saints together unto Me,"** immediately following that call to Heaven and earth to witness God's testimony against Israel which is the burden of this Psalm. Since the particular details of these evils declared by God through James mark the present time, the parallel exhortation to His people to be patient also relates to the present. Do we not realise this? How often in our reflection of present conditions prevailing do we not cry out in the words of the Prophet **"O that Thou wouldst rend the Heavens and come down,"** and when looking upon sorrow and distress, with no power to ease the sad conditions, we use the words of David **"Has God forgotten to be gracious?"** Yet as we turn our thoughts to our all-wise loving Father, with Abraham we declare in faith **"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"** With all these emotions and aspirations comes the great need of possessing our souls in patience, and to help us do this James exhorts us to observe in the prophets of past days an

example of suffering affliction and of patience. (verse 10).

**Patience is a grace which adorns every true Christian** and is necessary as an element of our character, to constitute us complete in Christ, in readiness for His revealing when He comes with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment upon all. (Jude 14-15). The world is very impatient, like a raging sea, tossed to and fro. No rest, no content and no resignation to the ruling forces of the world. (Luke 25; 26). These shall be signs for the powers of Heaven shall be shaken, and this reveals conditions upon earth to-day. James 5; 1-4 explains the cause — Selfishness arrogance, pride; whereas the true Church is patient, restful, resigned to God's will and power; and amidst this raging storm is in the condition so beautifully shown by Psa. 46. **"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed."**

**"There is a river."** It is the privilege of the Church to dwell by this river,—the Word of God. A calm, quiet flowing stream, an emblem of peace and rest, is this stream which makes glad the City of God. The streams or rivulets from this river are the issues of Light and Truth from God's Word, and what more satisfying or refreshing thought in relation to present conditions can there be than the knowledge of the Ransom sacrifice of Jesus for Adam and his posterity? When we quietly reason out the Plan of Redemption, the restoration of life, health and peace to all mankind, our hearts are comforted. The glorious resurrection, the returning from the Land of the enemy, the wonderful effect of good it will have on nations and men toward God; how His name and that of our Lord's will be honoured by all who love righteousness! What an incentive to patience for us is that glorious vision of the City of God, the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of the Most High! The church is here represented as the Holy, in the world but not of it, feasting upon the shewbread, (the Word of God), enjoying the light from the golden candlestick, offering incense upon the golden altar, casting their all (as sweet incense before God) into the golden censer. Surely the fruitage of such a life will

give peace and rest. God is in the midst of her. Whilst everything that can be shaken will be shaken, the Church with her faith in God, dwelling in the secret place in tranquility, is patiently waiting the consummation; and where this is one's experience, patience has a good foundation and enables one to bear affliction and calamity with calmness of mind, and to be unperturbed in unexpected trials. As in the case of Job, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away." "He knoweth the way that I take." Such a restfulness of faith is exhibited, that no experience however sudden or peculiar, can perturb the heart thus at rest with God. Consider James 3: 2, "If any man offend not in word or deed, the same is a perfect man." Surely this is Christ-like, for we read (1 Peter 2; 2.) that "When He was reviled, He reviled not again" and again He "endured contradiction of sinners against Himself."

The word **Patience** as commonly used, merely carries the thought of bearing with, for the time being; as a business man with his customers may be obliging, painstaking, cheerful, and pleasing even to the inconsiderate one. Such a one is termed a patient man. But the scriptural standard is higher than that. It is cheerfully, constantly **enduring**. **Patience is the power of endurance** as was shewn by David after being anointed by Samuel, and in his experience with King Saul who sought to slay him. David could have taken Saul's life, but he endured, by self constraint with-holding his hand, waiting in patience for God's due time. Psa. 40, declares "I waited patiently. In waiting I waited." He manifested patience in that he endured wrong without rebellion. Let us remember when in trials, that He will not suffer us to be tempted beyond that we are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10: 13).

The promise of Rev. 3. 10 is "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I also will keep thee from the hour of trial." The Philipian Church quietly retained their faith in God against a counterfeit representation of the Kingdom of God in the Judaism of their day. They patiently endured the wrong with full submission to the Will of God, who permitted this condition. We, too, should endure in hope and patience that all evil systems misrepresenting our Father will be destroyed in due time. But why this great need? The position to which we are called demands this. Jesus, our High Priest, was tested, tried,

needing patience, that He might be a faithful High Priest. Are not we called to be Priests of God, to the world of man-kind? The needs of this office require a compassionate, sympathetic helper to the ignorant and those out of the way, hence the need of patience.

**God is Patient.** Rom. 15. 5. "The God of Patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus." It is quite in order that those called to this position should not only manifest their inharmony with sin, but additionally that their general disposition should be one of thorough loyalty to the principles of love and patience. The importance of a cheerful, constant endurance in suffering on behalf of right (1 Pet. 2. 10) is affirmed by the Apostle in 2 Tim. 3: 10, and Titus 2: 2.

**Patience is a requisite all along our walk of faith.** We need it in our earliest trials, and as we proceed it should become stronger and stronger until it becomes a conscious element and possession (Heb. 10: 36). "For ye have need of patience that after ye have done the Will of God ye might receive the promise."

**How is Patience developed?** By the exercise of faith; by trial; by suspense of expected blessings; knowing that the trial of our faith worketh patience. Trials of being unjustly charged and misrepresented will bring to mind the story of Joseph in prison and the circumstances facing him there. No record of sourness or retaliation do we read, but just the reverse; a readiness to serve others and to ease their position. Think of Paul and Silas in prison, their feet in the stocks, their backs bleeding, their hopes dashed; yet at midnight they sang praises to God (Acts 6: 25). The great objective of our calling is character, and the experiences most suited to our temperament are the trials that await us. (Rom. 5: 3). Therefore patience is a fruitage and a product of trials when trials are rightly appreciated. (Heb. 12: 11). It is not mere quietism, but a strength in God in adhering to the principles of truth, purity, and righteousness. Think of Joseph before Potiphar's wife and his stand, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God." (Gen. 39: 9). If we would view our actions as for or against God, rather than merely against our neighbour, a stronger hand would check any violation of right and truth. James says "Let patience have her perfect work (come to completion) that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"; that you may be deficient in nothing; an offering without a blemish.

Being perfect (in your faith and its fruitage) even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.

Ephesians 5: 7. "That He (Jesus our Lord) might present to himself a glorious Church not having spot nor wrinkle or any such thing." Do not expect this grace to mature quickly. From its very nature it must be of slow growth, but with growth becomes stable, like the oak tree. Joseph manifested patience to a remarkable degree, and waited seventeen years before gratifying his desire to see his father. Not once was self effort made to do that apart from Divine Providence. What a lot of difficulties we find ourselves in through taking our affairs too readily into our own hands, and in running before the Lord. Through all the vicissitudes of life Joseph maintained his hold upon the promises of God by patiently enduring in cheerful constancy.

The need of Patient Endurance is more necessary now than at any time. Paul exhorts us to run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and perfecter of our faith. The powers of evil are still op-

posed to God, and His purposes for us. The harvest still continues, the closing scenes of gleaning, sifting, and storing of the remaining wheat are still before us, and only by possessing patience as an element of our character can we hope to stand, and withstand the evils of our day, and become fully developed grains of wheat. Peter says (1 Pet. 3: 4) "Decorate the hidden man with what is incorruptible, even a meek and quiet spirit (which is composed of great patience) and which is in the sight of God of great price" (**Diaglott**).

Let us then emulate these notable characters and put on **patience**. In these days of waiting for God's Son may the "Lord direct your hearts unto the love of God and the patient waiting for Christ" (2 Thess. 3: 5) and the words of Heb. 6: 11, be fulfilled in each one of us: "**We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**"

## FORSAKING ALL

"Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."  
(Luke 14, 33)

The question of what is meant by "forsaking all," is seldom given a too literal interpretation by those who have something to forsake. On the contrary, most of the Lord's professed disciples seem to act as though the statement read, "He that getteth not all that he can get, cannot be my disciple;" for the getting, more than the forsaking, seems to be the aim of life with many, as with the world.

As we are very anxious to be recognised of the Master as true disciples, let us endeavour to grasp His meaning, and then honestly and faithfully put it into practice in the affairs of life.

We cannot suppose the statement under consideration (which refers back, more or less, directly to the things mentioned in Luke 14: 26) to mean that a man should leave his family to starve; nor yet that he should forsake his "own life" in the sense of starving from neglect of the necessities of life; nor yet that he should leave "houses and lands" in the sense of abandoning them to go to wrack and ruin; nor yet in the sense of immediately converting them into money and making a wholesale distribution of the results to the poor. (Matt. 19. 21.). To so understand the Master would be to suppose His teachings

contrary to common sense, and to other statements of Scripture, His own utterances, and also those of the Apostles.

It was Jesus Himself who reproved the Pharisees for making void the Law of God in saying that a son who would make a large present of money to the temple, might thereafter be excused from any responsibility to his parents in their support. (Matt. 15: 4-6.). Shall we suppose that he would make void that Law in His doctrine? It was Jesus Himself who, in His dying hour, remembered His own mother, and commended her to the care of John (John 19: 26, 27.), and shall we suppose that He taught others to neglect their parents?

It was one of the Apostles under the influence of the Spirit of Christ elaborating the teachings of Jesus, who said that a man should love his wife and cherish her even as his own body, and as the Lord loves and cherishes the Church (Eph. 5.25.), and surely he did not contradict the Master in this. It was the same Apostle who wrote that any professing to be Jesus' disciples who neglect and fail to provide for their own households, are worse than infidels, and by such a course deny the true teaching of Jesus. (1 Tim. 5: 8.). It is the teaching of the New Testament that we

should "Do good and lend, hoping for nothing as a reward; that we should "communicate" and "lay by on the first day of the week" for the poor and for the Lord's cause generally; and that a man should labour, working with his hands, that he might have to give to the needy. (Luke 6. 23, 35; 1 Cor. 16:2; Eph. 4: 28.). All these injunctions would be meaningless if we should understand Jesus' teaching to be that we were to give away every farthing to the poor: for then we should be the poorest of all the poor, and have nothing either to lend or to give.

If then we are sure the Master did not mean for us to literally abandon, neglect, and summarily dispose of homes, families, life and means, what did He mean? The question becomes all the more pertinent and interesting.

What did he mean then by the statement, "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor and follow me"? (Matt. 19: 21.). We answer that Jesus put the matter in its fullest, strongest light. The conditions of fellowship with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom are nothing less than the sacrifice of every earthly interest and earthly life as well, in His service. But this service and sacrifice is a reasonable service, and never implies that we must become paupers to make others affluent. Suppose this young man consecrated himself and determined to give up all and follow Christ, and had come to Jesus, saying, "Master, I have determined to follow your counsel, to sell all and give to the poor, and to follow thee—How and where shall I begin? I have twenty houses and three farms and much cattle—which shall I dispose of first, and how shall I distribute the money?" Jesus probably would have said, "Present all these things unreservedly to God and yield yourself as His servant also, and from that moment reckon yourself God's steward, commissioned by Him to use all those goods, as well as all your personal talents, to His glory in serving those about you." As a servant who shall give an account, be neither wasteful nor penurious. Think not of these goods henceforth as your own, and talk not about giving them again to the Lord for once given, they are His forever. Such portions of that consecrated property as you have need of, He permits you to use for your personal and family necessities; but a full realisation of your sacrifice would not only hinder you from treating it (the money) as your own, and from being lavish in your expenditures as you might have been when the money and property were yours, but should the necessities

of the Lord's work require your superfluity, and leave you dependent on daily toil for sustenance, it should be heartily rendered, with the thought, "It is the Lord's and I was entrusted with it, to use it as He should indicate." The young man to whom Jesus spoke was "very rich"; and had he become a consecrated follower he might have been kept busy for many years disposing of his goods. There is no reason whatever for supposing that the Lord meant him to sell his houses at once and throw the money into the street to the multitude. The selling of that which he had would go on proportionately, as he could find uses for the money.

This suggests another thought: It is a steward's place to seek and find places where he can dispose of the talents and moneys consecrated to the Lord, to the best advantage, as his sanctified judgment, under the guidance of the Lord's Word may dictate. This our Lord's parables indicate (Luke 19. 13; Matt. 25. 15.). He should not wait for the Lord or His cause to be hindered and embarrassed for money before giving it. To do so, would be to never give it; for the Lord never gets embarrassed. (Isa. 55: 11; Psa. 50: 12.).

Had the young man consecrated his wealth to the Lord's service as Jesus suggested, and then waited for Jesus to ask him for some of it, he would have waited and would have kept the money, but he would never have attained the kingdom and the "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter the joys of thy Lord; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things and grant thee the handling of greater riches." On the contrary, the message to such will be, "Thou unfaithful and indolent servant, thou hast been unfaithful in thy stewardship; take from him that which he would not use as he covenanted to do."

If those who have forsaken all—consecrated all to the Lord's service—could but realise the matter as all done, as all His, how it would relieve them of battles with the selfishness which continually magnifies every little disposal of time or money to be a great and new sacrifice. Such a proper realisation of the original sacrifice of all reverses the tables upon selfishness at once, and no longer treats the daily course as a self-denial, but a joyful service as Jehovah's steward, and accepts as fresh blessings from His hand all of even the commonest of life's favours.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GONE FROM US.

Sister Grace E. Humphrey (née Gresham) of Maidstone, Kent, entered into her reward on February 19th, 1939. She had been ill for some time, but was thought to be on the road to recovery, when the end came with comparative suddenness and she passed peacefully away.

We are sure that all the friends will deeply sympathise with Brother John E. Humphrey and also with Brother Gresham and the members of his family in their great loss. At the same time, we can rejoice with them in the realisation that she has been taken beyond the veil, ere the trouble in this "Day of the Lord" is intensified. It is their hope and ours that we shall all be "counted worthy" to escape the things coming upon the earth by glorification, before the "four winds" of the Revelation are loosed and spend themselves in the foretold whirlwind of trouble.

The funeral took place on Thursday, February 23rd at Maidstone Cemetery. The service was conducted by Brother Thos. Watson, an Elder of the Ilford Ecclesia with which our Sister was associated prior to her marriage and consequent removal to Maidstone. A goodly number of brethren was present from various parts.

## ANONYMOUS.

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation the anonymous receipt of 10s. towards the work.

## WHITSUN CONVENTION

A copy of the Whitsun Convention programme will be found enclosed in this issue. The Convention will be held in the Little Theatre Lecture Hall, Dover Street, Leicester, and friends are desired to write early for accommodation to Brother Thurman, 79 Stafford Street, Leicester.

## DEVOTIONAL BOOKS.

We can thoroughly recommend the following books, the first two being tastefully produced sets of poems on art paper, and the other three all consisting of daily devotional readings, all five books being highly esteemed by many of the friends.

"The Call of the Bride" .. .. .	post free	1s. 2d.
"Comforted of God" .. .. .	"	1s. 2d.
"Daily Heavenly Manna," pocket size, cloth .. .. .	"	1s. 9d.
" .. .. . leather .. .. .	"	2s. 6d.
"In Green Pastures," cloth .. .. .	"	2s. 9d.
" .. .. . leather .. .. .	"	3s. 9d.
" .. .. . pocket size, de luxe .. .. .	"	3s. 9d.
"Streams in the Desert" .. .. .	"	6s. 6d.

## B.S.M. READERS.

We would like those friends who have the B.S.M. without charge to make a note of the fact that it is necessary to renew their request for same once every year at the time when the renewal notice is sent. Whilst we are glad to send the "Monthly" to all such, we do look for this indication of continued interest once annually, in order that we can be sure the copies are still being received by the friends to whom they are addressed.

## "POEMS OF DAWN."

The Australian brethren have now republished this well-known book, and we have copies in stock at 3s. post free. The book is tastefully bound in cloth board covers blocked in gold letters and should be well received by the friends.

## "THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES."

The special offer of cheap copies of the "Divine Plan," held out in last month's issue, is now withdrawn, since this stock is exhausted. The "Divine Plan" is still available in the B.S.C. pocket edition at 1s. 3d. post free, and in the Dawn edition at 2s. 4d. post free.

We have a few odd copies of Volumes 2, 3, 5 and 6 on hand and will send these in parcels of 4, assorted as desired, for 3s. post free, during the next two months.

## APRIL B.S.M.

A few copies of the April issue were inadvertently incorrectly bound, the pages being in the wrong order. If any friends who received such a copy will send a postcard to the office a correctly bound copy will be sent by return.

## FREE LITERATURE.

Leaflets for judicious distribution are supplied free upon request, the titles at present available being as follows:—

- Peace on Earth—When?
- World Order or Chaos—Which?
- Where are the Dead?
- Hell—the Truth.
- Will there be Wars forever?

## THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES

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## SOME INTERESTING BOOKLETS

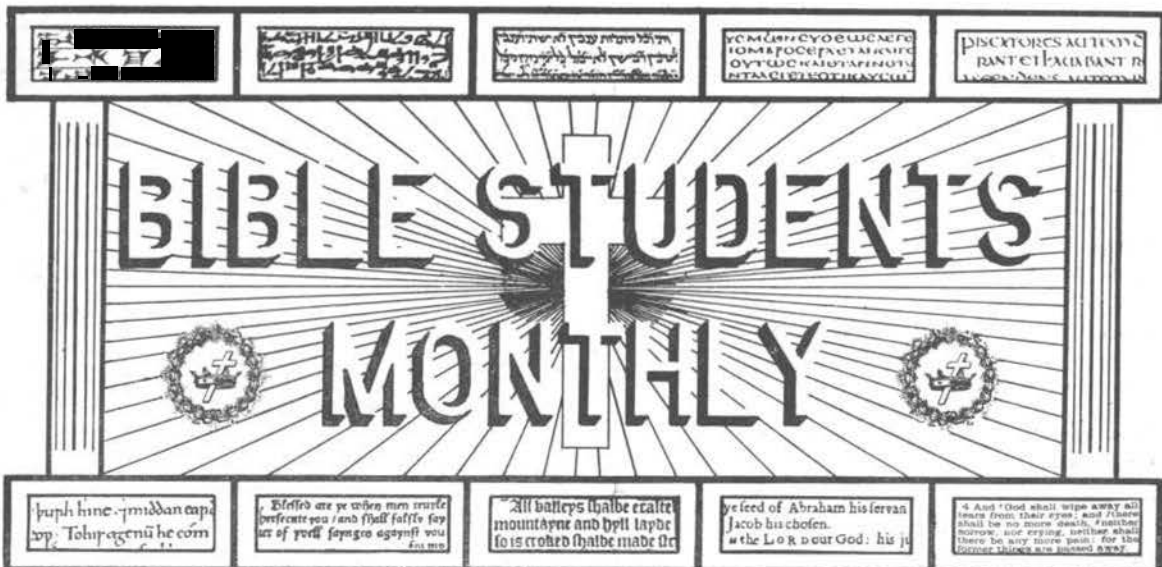
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*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



Vol. 16 No. 6

JUNE, 1939

THREEPENCE

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**THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.**

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

This periodical is published under the supervision of the Bible Students Committee, the articles appearing therein having been read and approved by at least five members before publication.

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## BIBLE STUDENTS' REFERENCE LIBRARY

Realising that many of the friends are unable to purchase or obtain all the books they would like, for personal study and reference, the Committee has decided to establish a reference library comprising the various types of works which are of value and assistance in our studies. This library will include all "Present Truth" publications of value, Bible translations and helps, historical works of repute, such as Gibbons "Decline and Fall," Mosheim's Church History, etc.; books descriptive of scenes, customs, etc., in Bible lands; modern works on archeology and exploration, and any other books which in the opinion of the Committee will assist the understanding and development of our faith along the lines of "Present Truth." The Library must of necessity be built up slowly, and in this connection if any friends care to present suitable works from their own bookshelves these will be received with sincere appreciation, although in each case it will be appreciated if the proposed books be notified beforehand so that advice may be given that the book can be usefully included.

The brethren will be able to borrow any book for a period of two weeks, and retain after that period if desired, until it is required for another borrower. A charge of about sixpence per book will be made to cover postal and incidental expenses, the borrower also paying return postage. A list of works available will be furnished to each borrower and will be kept up-to-date as new books are added.

In order to enable final plans to be made, will all friends who feel that such a library would be of service, and who are likely to make use of it, kindly send a post-card to the office to that effect; at the same time giving details of any particular books which they themselves would like to see included in the library.

## LONDON CONVENTION

The London brethren usually responsible for the August arrangements have invited the Committee to undertake this year's gathering, and this invitation having been accepted, plans are being made for a three-day convention at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, E.C.4. The sessions will extend from 3 p.m. on Saturday, August 5th to the evening of August 7th, and it is the sincere hope of all who have anything to do with the arrangements that those who shall minister to the friends will each be empowered to deliver a message which will be of encouragement and spiritual uplift. Applications for accommodation should be addressed as early as possible to Bro. C. R. Smith, 21 Werter Road, London, S.W.15, and all other information regarding the convention can be obtained from the same source. Programmes will be available shortly and can be obtained upon application to Bro. Smith or to the office.

## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

The time draws near for the annual election, and we would once again draw attention to the privilege, which all the friends have, of expressing their judgment. It gives the elected brethren a greater ground of confidence if they can feel that a substantial number of the friends have demonstrated their interest by giving their voice in this matter, and we do exhort all the brethren to make this a matter of prayer and then to vote as they believe would be in harmony with the Master's Will and according to their best judgment. For those who cannot vote in a class, a voting form will be found on the back cover of this issue, and can be filled in and detached for return to the Scrutineers. Should anyone not wish to mutilate their copy of the B.S.M., a separate form will be sent upon request.

## WARRINGTON CONVENTION

A profitable time was spent by those who attended the Easter Convention at Warrington and the attendance was well maintained. Nearly every part of the country was represented, and the fellowship was by no means the least important part of the gathering. An immersion service was held at which several brethren symbolised their consecration and so gave evidence that the work of the Age is not yet ended and that still it is true that "in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him."

## BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

All translations of importance are kept in stock for immediate despatch, including Rotherham and Leeser, which are not now otherwise obtainable in England. Prices are as follows, all post free:

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## A SPECIAL NOTICE

For the present, and until further notice, will the friends please send all correspondence involving Committee policy and other matters normally requiring the Secretary's personal attention, to Brother C. R. Smith, 21 Werter Road, London, S.W.15. Subscriptions, orders and business matters should continue to be sent to 24 Darwin Road, Welling, as usual.

## COMING HOME GATHERINGS

At Rugby, on Saturday and Sunday, July 1st and 2nd, a gathering to be prefaced by a baptismal service at which a number of the brethren at Rugby will symbolise their consecration to God. A very warm invitation is extended to brethren from other parts who would like to symbolise their own consecration upon this occasion, and any such are earnestly desired to write to Brother H. Everett, 61 Cromwell Road, Rugby, who will gladly make arrangements.

At Ipswich, on July 30th, a gathering has been arranged and a warm welcome awaits all who can attend. Details from Brother W. Clarke, 97 Parliament Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 6. "RESURRECTION."

*"Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4; 17).*

The dead in Christ are raised first. This is an undisputed fact of Scriptural revelation. The plain statement in 1 Thess. 4; 16 leaves no room for doubt that the first work of our returned Lord is to raise to spiritual life those faithful ones who have, for few or many centuries, slept in death. Here is the beginning of resurrection work, aptly styled in Revelation 20; 5 "the first resurrection."

But what of the living ones, who, to use Paul's words, are "left over to the presence of the Lord?" The fact that this period between the coming for His saints and the revelation with His saints is reserved for the work of casting down kingdoms, destroying great Babylon, and preparing the world for the glory of His Kingdom implies the possibility of other saints who have not yet passed into death and yet must be "caught up" before the next phase of the Divine Plan can go into effect. Whether there is such a company who are living and being "changed" during the time of His Presence, or whether 1 Thess. 4; 17 must be taken as implying that all the living ones are instantaneously translated at the moment of His arrival, is the purpose of this chapter to discuss.

And if the Scriptures do indicate that there are risen saints in the spiritual realm whilst at the same time there are others still upon earth, a further question arises. What are the risen ones **doing** whilst this "tarrying time" continues?

In considering these questions it should be agreed that the resurrection of the Church cannot be considered apart from that of the world. Both works stand related in time, and in their connection with the outworking of God's Plan. Resurrection, a marvellous demonstration of Divine power, commences with the arrival of our Lord at His Second Advent and continues throughout the whole period of His Presence until, at the end of the Messianic reign, the words of the parable are spoken to a restored and perfect race, "Come, ye blessed of my

Father; inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Mediaeval theology limited resurrection to the work of a moment. One long trumpet-blast, and the graves would open, the tombstones reel, and

*"Louder still, and still more dread*

*Sounds the shrill note that wakes the dead."*

whilst the souls of men, re-clothed in their material bodies, assembled before the Throne for judgment. The days of that conception are past for many Christians, but all too often there is a tendency to advance very little farther from that position and to regard the resurrection as taking place at two points of time only; first, at the moment of Christ's arrival when the living as well as the sleeping saints will be instantaneously translated, and then, after a lapse of years, another moment when humanity will arise from the grave to re-creation of human identity. When the significance of Paul's words "Every man in his own order" (1 Cor. 15; 23) is appreciated, and the fact that resurrection (**anastasis**—re-standing, a standing again) implies not only a re-vivifying or calling back to life for the individual, but also a progressive development bringing that individual to a state of full perfection and harmony with God, it is seen that the entire Millennial Age is given over to the resurrection of mankind. The Scriptures abound with references to that day when all men will hear the voice of the Son of God calling them from their graves—from the sleep of death (John 5; 28-29). The men of Nineveh, of Sodom and of Gomorrah; the children for whom Rahel wept in Ramah (Luke 11; 32, Ezek. 16; 55, Jer. 31; 15-16), all the ransomed of the Lord shall return amidst general rejoicing. (Isa. 35; 10). There is no doubt that this wonderful event will occur upon the establishment of the Kingdom in power, after the Lord has come with His saints, and Scriptural evidence need not be advanced at this moment to ensure general assent to that truth. But before this desirable condition of things can come to pass and this "general resurrection" commence, a previous event must have taken place,

That event is the raising to life and the establishing as "princes in all the earth" of the "Ancient Worthies."

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews records the names and actions of a number of men and women famous in Biblical history for their devotion to God and their sterling faith. One and all they are described as individuals who have entered into a walk with God which justifies their being termed "heroes of faith." While other men looked and strove for the plaudits and the encomiums of this world, they "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country" (Heb. 11, 14) In long ago times these gave evidence of that same devotion to the principles of righteousness which in after days has characterised the disciples of Christ, and it is not surprising therefore to find that in the Plan of God those who manifested such characteristics have a definite place.

The first clue to the nature of that place is given by Jesus Himself when He said to the Pharisees (Luke 13; 28).

*"Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, sit down in the Kingdom of God, and ye yourselves thrust out."*

Not debarred from a share in the opportunities and blessings of the Messianic Kingdom, for that would be to make the Word of God of none effect when it declares that Jesus died for all and all are to come to the knowledge of the Truth. (1 Tim. 2; 4). The inference is clearly that the Pharisees would be "thrust out" from any position of authority in that Kingdom, and that the patriarchs would take their place as "princes who shall rule in judgment," in that day. (Isa. 32; 1).

This teaching of a ruling authority upon earth, administering the laws of the Kingdom and acting as the earthly representatives of earth's spiritual King, is supported by a number of Scriptural allusions. Thus we have Jer. 23; 4, speaking of Israel's regathering—

*"I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them."*

and Psa. 45; 16, referring in symbolic imagery to the union of Christ and the Church, and voicing the declaration

*"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth."*

There is also a striking passage in Hebrews 12; 22-24 so pregnant with meaning to every

earnest observer of the signs of the times as to deserve reproducing in full,

*"You have approached to Zion, a mountain and city of the living God—the heavenly Jerusalem. And to myriads of angels—a full assembly. And to a congregation of first borns, having been enrolled in the heavens. And to a Judge who is God of all. And to spirits of the righteous made perfect. And to a mediator of a New Covenant—Jesus. And to a blood of sprinkling speaking something better than Abel."* (Diaglott translation).

In sublime language the writer to the Hebrews here pictures the position to which Christian believers have attained. Whereas Sinai of old, with its thunders and lightnings and fearful sounds from heaven, heralded the inauguration of a covenant and a new order of things for all Israel on a purely material level, the disciple of Christ is brought in vision to a spiritual Zion, which, with the symbolic thunders and lightnings of Armageddon, is to herald a new order of things for the betterment of all mankind. The symbols used can be readily recognised as having their reality in the scenes which attend the close of this Age, and since the picture includes the "general assembly of the Church of the First-born" in evident reference to the Church of Christ, the further reference to "spirits of the righteous made perfect" can only refer to those same faithful ones of Old Testament days who are to become the "princes in all the earth" of the Messianic Kingdom. They must be brought forth from the tomb and prepared for their destined place before the work of the Millennial Age can commence.

Prior to the general restoration of mankind, then, the Ancient Worthies must themselves have been restored from the grave.

That this event occurs before the close of Armageddon is evident from Zech. 12; 6 where the governors of Judah are depicted as taking some prominent part in the final phase of the Time of Trouble which, centering around Jerusalem, results in that wholehearted repentance on the part of regathered Israel which is to signal the establishment of God's Kingdom in power.

Although the Ancient Worthies' resurrection thus precedes the general resurrection of all men, it should be clear that this event cannot take place until the last member of the Church has "passed beyond the Vail." The fact that it is the entire Church which shares in the "First Resurrection" implies that every member of the

"people for God's Name" (Acts 15; 14) for the selection of which this Age has been set aside, must have finished their earthly course before the work of "giving life" can commence. Hence the conclusion to the eleventh of Hebrews, in which, after recounting the faithfulness of the Ancient Worthies, the writer closes by saying

*"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for US, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11; 39-40).*

There is therefore that period of time between the resurrection of the "sleeping saints" and that of the Ancient Worthies, and the question as to whether those living during the time of the Lord's early Presence are "changed" one by one during that period or are changed instantaneously at the moment of His arrival. There are substantial grounds for logical thought on this subject and no reason why a satisfactory understanding of the matter should not be attained.

The general view expressed by those who look for a sudden and spectacular appearance of Christ at the moment of His Second Advent is that the dead in Christ are raised and the living ones "changed" simultaneously and that they are all united with Christ in one moment of time. The principal foundation for this belief is the literal interpretation of I Thess. 4; 16-17, and an assumption that our Lord's simile likening His Day to that of Noah and Lot lay in the suddenness of the catastrophe. Further thought will generally be sufficient to show that the force of the simile lies in the **ignorance** of the people in those days to the significance of what was transpiring around them, and their persistence in the ordinary avocations of life notwithstanding the preaching of one who stood amongst them to warn them of the coming change of dispensation.

Certain groups of Christians dwell with great elaboration on the confusion into which the world will be precipitated when this event takes place. Pen pictures are drawn depicting Christian engine-drivers taken in a moment from the footplates of express trains, Christian captains from the bridges of ocean liners, and so on, with consequent destruction and death to hundreds. Such a conception of God's methods does no honour to Him and betokens considerable darkness of mind as to His true character, even although it is a perfectly logical corollary to the belief thus expressed. The

God of the Bible is One Whose works are carried out in order and with dignity, and to insist on the wholesale destruction of inoffensive people as a means of marking the final gathering of "His saints" is unthinkable to those who have come to realise the inherent benevolence of the Divine character.

Paul's words in I Cor. 15; 52 indicate that the "change" is the work of a moment; "in the twinkling of an eye." This can mean nothing else than that the moment of death is also the moment of resurrection to the higher, spiritual life, and that this, whilst not the experience of those who "sleep" during the long centuries of the Gospel Age, is nevertheless the portion of those who are still living at the time of the Lord's coming. I Thess. 4; 16-17 practically repeats the same teaching but adds the qualification "then." "The dead in Christ shall rise first. THEN we which are alive and remain unto the 'parousia' of the Lord shall be caught up together with them . . . to meet the Lord in the air." The one definite indication in this latter passage is that the "catching up" of the living ones must wait until the dead have been raised. To determine the **duration** of that "catching up" and its relation to the time of the raising of the dead in Christ, it is necessary to take the sentence as a whole. The "caught up" ones are those who are ALIVE and REMAIN UNTO (Greek **survive, left over**), the PRESENCE of the Lord. If it is once established that this "presence" is a period of time—no matter how short or how long, it becomes a reasonable conclusion that the "catching up" is progressing during the whole of that period so long as there are any left to be "caught up."

It has already been shown that the first work of the Lord at His arrival is the raising of the "dead in Christ." It has also been demonstrated that the raising of the Ancient Worthies will indicate that the Church is at last complete—beyond the veil. The reasonable conclusion therefore is that during that portion of the "Presence" which lies between these two events "we which are alive and remain" are being changed, one by one, at the moment of death, in a manner which conveys nothing unnatural to the human observer, but for the one thus changed means an instantaneous re-union with those who have gone before; "caught up TOGETHER."

This final gathering and glorification of the Church will be completed with that deliberation and dignity which has characterised all God's work with the "people

for His Name." Silently, unnoticed by men, each faithful footstep follower will be called aside while the world continues in its heedless way, ignorant of the tremendous significance of this period of time intervening between the arrival of the Lord to gather His Church and that later day when He is revealed to all men for their salvation.

The statement sometimes made that the reign of Christ commences with the moment of His arrival and that His Kingdom is even now set up is true only in an accommodated sense. In one sense Christ's Kingdom was set up at Pentecost when His followers first preached the new message. In another sense it is said to have been set up when His Second Advent became an accomplished fact and the forces were set in motion which will eventually pave the way to His assumption of royal jurisdiction. But in matters such as this it is necessary to deal with the plain meaning of terms, and since in all the Scriptures the "Kingdom" and the "Reign" refers to that time when Christ not only has the RIGHT to rule but also is actually administering His Kingdom; and since when that time arrives His Church is to be with Him, it is an evident fact that the reign of Christ has not actually commenced. The impression sometimes met with that the time of Christ's arrival and the glorification of His Church must coincide with the commencement of His reign over the nations is an assumption which does not find any support in Scripture. Until the righteous "shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13; 43) and are thus established upon the "twelve thrones" of the regeneration (Matt. 19; 28) the Millennial work proper does not begin. The Scripture evidences already presented indicate quite clearly that before this great event for which the "groaning creation waiteth" (Rom. 8; 19) can come there must elapse a period during which Christ is present superintending the downfall of the kingdoms of this world, the fall of great Babylon, and the Harvest of the Age. Hence it follows that the moment of His arrival, so far from coinciding with the time when the saints "shine forth" in the glory of the Kingdom, must be earlier.

It is therefore reasonable to ask; "What are the risen saints doing in the meantime?"

The suggestion that in some manner they are taking part in a spiritual warfare aimed at disintegrating the powers of "this present evil world" should be rejected. The Battle of the Great Day is in the providence of God a

natural result of human selfishness and impotence converging at last into the cataclysm known as Armageddon. The risen saints have no part nor lot in the warrings and strife of mortal man—their work lies in the future, beyond Armageddon, and it is for that work they must wait.

Here, perhaps, is the answer. The risen saints are to wait; for the completion of their number; for the "marriage of the Lamb;" and for their manifestation in glory to all men "in that day." It is a well accepted fact that God "rested" when man was created, preparatory to His greater work in sending and raising from the dead His own Son (Eph. 1; 19-20). Jesus also, after the work of His first advent was completed, rested, "from henceforth expecting (waiting) until His enemies be made His footstool." (Heb. 10; 13). In the same way do the Scriptures indicate that after the trial and endurance of earthly life, those raised preparatory to entering the service of the Kingdom shall wait, as it were observers of world events, until all is ready for the final act in the drama of God's Plan.

Two Scriptures afford guidance in this connection. Paul, in writing a word of encouragement to the Thessalonian Christians, has this to say

*"If indeed it is just with God to repay affliction to those who afflict you; so also, to you the afflicted, a rest together with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from Heaven with the angels of His power." II Thess. 1; 6-7 (Diaglott).*

If this revelation from Heaven has its commencement at the time of the Lord's arrival to preside over the destruction of world power, as described in Chapter 5, it follows of necessity that the "resting together" of the Thessalonians with Paul is to be something different from that "rest" in the grave which they admittedly experience through the centuries between their own day and the Second Advent. Since their resurrection cannot be to the work and service of the Kingdom, that Kingdom not being set up in power for some time after the raising of the "dead in Christ," Paul's description of a "rest" is singularly appropriate. Like the angels who are spectators in the theatre of I Cor. 4; 9 ("We are made a theatre unto the world, and to angels") the risen saints can be pictured as rejoicing in fellowship together while they watch the final stages of the drama being now played out to its ending on this earth.

The well-known passage in Rev. 14; 13 becomes luminous when viewed in this light—

*"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."*

The time is that of the Lord's early presence; the close association of these words with the Harvest picture in the following verses would indicate that, and the happy condition thus referred to is the portion of those who pass beyond the veil, one by one, during the Harvest period. They are to rest from their labours. The trials of earthly life are ended; the service of the Kingdom has not yet begun. Like those who, being "asleep" at the time of the Lord's coming, were "raised first," these are "changed" to full perfection of spiritual life to rest and to wait for their fellows.

From these considerations, therefore, it is suggested that resurrection power, once commenced at the raising first of the "dead in Christ" continues without ceasing until "whosoever will" at the end of the Millennial Age attains complete **anastasis**—a standing again—in the glory of the earthly kingdom. The dead in Christ rise first—that is the work of an instant, accomplished immediately upon the Lord's return. Thereafter, whilst the world

rushes on into Armageddon, the "living ones" are changed, their body of humiliation being cast away in immediate exchange for that "house which is from heaven" (II Cor. 5; 2). The "assembly" beyond the veil rests and waits for its last member, and then comes the time described in Scripture as the "marriage of the Lamb" (Rev. 19; 7). This climax will apparently be reached while as yet the world is still in its morass of trouble and strife, but with the change of the last member of Christ's Church the Ancient Worthies will come forth to be followed finally by the proclamation of a new order of things and the opening of the graves and return to earth of all men.

Thus seen, the resurrection, like the "parousia" or Presence of Christ, will commence in an invisible and unostentatious manner and progress steadily to that glorious fulfilment depicted by the prophet Isaiah when in an ecstasy of prophetic fervour he declared

*"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy, upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."*

*The next article in this series will appear next month under the sub-title "Every eye shall see him."*

### WATER LILIES.

How lovely are the lilies which grow in the water! They never pine with thirst; for their root is in the stream, their leaves float upon it, and their flowers peep forth from it. They are fit emblems of those believers who dwell in God, who are not occasional seekers of Divine fellowship, but abide in Christ Jesus. Their roots are by the rivers of water, and therefore their leaf shall not wither. A Christian minister once said to an aged Christian, "I pray the Lord often to visit you in His love," "Visit me!" cried the beloved saint. "Why say visit me? He lives here. Jesus dwells in me." To that abiding fellowship, we ought each one of us attain. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still be praising thee." This is going to heaven in a Pullman car, riding luxuriously as well as travelling swiftly. In this style of religion there are no doubts and fears; abundant grace drowns all mistrust. A little grace will save but it will not make us sure of our safety. The fulness of the blessing can alone secure us the joy of it.

The longer I live, the more sure do I become that our happiness in life, our comfort in trouble and strength for service, all depend upon our living near to God, nay dwelling in God, as the lilies in the water. To grow on the bank of the river of the water of life is good but to grow in the stream is far better. God's lilies need to be in Him Who is their life. With all earnestness of my soul, I would entreat all whom I love to cultivate continual communion with the Lord. It may require great watchfulness, but it will well repay the believer for all his care. This river hath golden sands. Fellowship with God is a land which floweth with milk and honey. I would rather spend an hour in the presence of the Lord than a century in prosperity without Him. There are secrets of unknown delight, which can never be known to us till we rise above the outward and worldly, and come into the life of God, which is the life of heaven. By faith this is to be enjoyed even now. The faith which brought us life at the first, is the same by which we attain to life more abundantly—C. H. Spurgeon.

## APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES

"The Seven Epistles"

The second and third chapters of Revelation constitute a distinct and unique section of sacred literature which in God's appointed time was intended to disclose an understanding of many hidden aspects of the Divine Plan. It has been customary to call the contents of these chapters "epistles;"—such indeed they are, but they are not so much messages from a distant and absent Lord, as words of comfort or censure from an abiding Presence Who, prior to His departure from the earth had said "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the Age." Beneath His searching eye the whole Church passes all her days; from His warning and comforting voice all her way was foretold; and from the beginning she learned from His lips those things He would approve or disapprove.

These Epistles consist exclusively of Jesus' own words, and are the very last which we have directly from Him. They are, perhaps, the only unabridged records of His addresses in the Church's possession. In the Gospels the records are scanty, fragmentary; condensed statements, or mere extracts from lengthier discourses; but here we have all, whole and entire, that was spoken by His blessed lips to the entranced Seer on Patmos. They are most impressively introduced; for He who spake was gloriously apparelled, and walked amid the candlesticks superintending and supervising the flow of the oil and the glow of the light. That it represented the Glorious One Who once walked the earth, is attested by His solemn assurance "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore."

Seven times the Lord entreats the Churches to hear what is said to them. By this token, we know to whom the Epistles were addressed, and for whom they contained the Saviour's final instructions. Future Ages may discern greater depths in the hidden symbolism than have yet been seen, but enough has been seen and understood for the spiritual Rebecca, the ardent Bride-to-be of God's greater Isaac, to know that her journey to the home of her beloved is across a lonely wilderness way; leaving behind her "her own people and her father's house" in order to share the Throne with Him as the "Bride of God's appointed Lamb."

The Churches to which they were addressed

were literal, historical Churches, existing at the time John wrote, but at the same time representative and comprehensive of all other Churches in all nations, places, and centuries—a complete sample of the whole Body of Christ, both in its character and career. As with the Churches so with the Epistles. They were both immediately descriptive of actual conditions, and prophetic of future days. They were really messages to these respective Churches, to stir them up to hold fast to what was right, and amend what was wrong. And thus they stand for messages to all other Churches at any time who stand before Him in like condition. Inasmuch as conditions were described in one or other of the seven Churches which have been found to exist during various stages of the Church's general career, so those seven Churches become representative and inclusive of the entire Church, and their words of censure or comfort become messages of grave moment to later Church experience of the like kind.

Thus, these seven Epistles set forth the attendant Lord's Judgment of the entire Church, as He foresaw and foreknew it from the beginning. They give us a graphic picture of her history, as seen by Divine foresight from her earliest days, and as we students of her pathway see it from these latter days. In a broad generalisation we can see seven distinct stages of her decline, from the warm zealous days at the beginning, before first love had lost its glow, until she is just lukewarm—and poor and blind. Again, the Epistles show us all the conditions into which the Church of God could divide itself. There could be Laodicean Christians in the Ephesus period, and Ephesian Christians in the Laodicean period; the whole range of the Epistles showing us the seven main classifications which could exist side by side, at any stage of her journey. Always some few have kept their first love, while by their sides some were lukewarm, others dead—with only a name. Both in cross sections; and in historical rotation the seven Churches have been there; and to meet that state the seven Epistles have always been appropriate as a source of censure or comfort for some who named the Holy Name.

Each Epistle is set out in seven distinct parts; first, an address; (Ephesus, Smyrna, etc.) second, a reference to some one or more of the sublime attributes of the illustrious Speaker; third, an assertion of His complete knowledge of the condition, duties, and doings of the persons addressed; fourth, a description of the state of each Church, with praise and promise for some, censure and admonition for others; fifth, an allusion to His Coming, and its effects upon those addressed; sixth, an admonitory command for all to hear what He was saying to the Churches; and seventh, a special promise to the faithful, overcoming saints. In the last four the order of these seven parts is varied from the first three, the call to "hear" being put after the promise to the overcomers; but in each Epistle these seven parts may be readily distinguished, showing that there is a completeness and fulness about the whole, which will not permit of their significance being confined to the few particular congregations to which they were originally addressed.

They were intended for the whole Church in all nations, in all its varied states, fervent or frigid; in peace or persecution; in exaltation or abasement, in all its days and years, from its inception till its journey was done. The seven churches, then, represent the seven phases or periods in the Church's history, reaching from the days of the Apostles till the Lord shall have gathered the last living members of His Church to Himself. Their chief characteristics may be found partly in the names of the churches selected; and partly in the contents of these Epistles. First there was the Ephesian period—a time when love to Christ was warm and fervent, and service was zealous and whole-hearted. This dates back to Apostolic times, in which days defection began by the cooling love of many, of false profession in others, and of the place-seeking which later developed into clericalism. Then followed a Smyrna (**Myrrh, bitter**) period of martyrdom, and of faithfulness unto death; but characterised with further developments in the establishment of classes and castes within the Church; using Jewish institutions of Priesthood and laity (people) as the model; and also in the establishment of the synagogue of Satan to corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel.

Then the Pergamos period, in which true faith more and more disappeared from view, and clericalism formed itself into a system of several orders, from Metropolitans and Bishops down to the lowlier officers who waited upon

them. Here the Church became united with the world, and Babylon began to rear itself aloft. Then came the Thyatiran period—the age of splendour and pomp for a corrupt priesthood, when the Church (such as she was) usurped the place of Christ, and sought to change times and seasons, and set up her own elaborate ceremonies in place of the simple institutions of Baptism and Memorial Supper. It was the era of the suppression of Truth, of the consigning of the martyrs of Jesus to the dungeon, the stake and the sword; reaching down almost to the days of Luther and the Reformation.

And then the Sardis period followed, in which some faithful souls "received and heard," leading to separation, and a return to the simple Truths of Christ,—a period when many got free from the doctrine of Balaam, and from the teachings of Jezebel; a period of a few worthy names, but marked with deadness and lethargy, the fine enthusiasm of Worms and Geneva spending itself within the life time of the Reformers, followed by stagnant spiritual lethargy until Wesley came and brought in the Reformation a second time.

Then came a Philadelphia period—a time of spiritual awakening and of Bible study and Bible distribution; a time marked by closer adherence to the written word, and more fraternity and fellowship between the various sections of Christians.

Last of all a Laodicean period—a time of lukewarmness, when faith had all but evaporated, and conviction was spent, and the Churches knew not how much they had lost when faith was lacking, nor knew how near they were to the end of the course, nor realized that the Master stood knocking and awaiting the opening of the door. These seven stages, while shading off and lapping into each successor, stand clearly marked at their peaks. There could be no doubt that Smyrna had given place to Pergamos, for exaltation displaced suffering. Thus each period after Ephesus had a waxing and a waning stage as it lapped upon its predecessor and successor. While however each period had its outstanding characteristic, yet everything that marks any one of these periods marks, in smaller degree, every other period. It is mainly the predominance of one element at a time which distinguishes one era from the others. The characteristics of all seven periods co-exist in every period, only that in one this feature is predominant and in the other, another feature. The creeds, the clergy, the in-

stitutions, the ceremonialism have carried through from when the Ephesus defection began, with each feature predominant in turn.

Perhaps we may carry the classification one stage further, and say that the seven Churches could represent seven varieties of Christian people, for every professor of Christianity in his true religious qualities is either an Ephesian, a Smyrna-ite, a Pergamite, a Thyatiran, a Sardian, Philadelphian, or a Laodicean Christian. It is one of these seven that the Church of Christ has been composed and they have thus existed throughout.

The seven Churches may be found in every general congregation; from the warm glow of

Ephesus to the chilling lukewarmness of Laodicea. If so it will give these Epistles a directness of application to each and all who call upon His name. They will tell us what the Lord's judgment upon us really is, and whether we are worthy of His care.

In every period, in every ecclesia, the Lord Jesus has walked among His Churches, with eyes of living fire; and these Epistles show us His opinion of what He sees—of what He loves and of what He hates.

God grant us more of the eyesalve of Truth to see ourselves as Jesus sees us, so that we may renew to Him our first Love, and walk with Him in white from day to day.

### GRATEFUL WORDS.

Grateful words are like cups of cold water to one who is weary and faint; and surely it is fit that men should be grateful. But suppose they are not. Suppose years of kindness are forgotten in a moment. Suppose great sacrifices are never thought of again. Suppose deeds of love are rewarded with insult, injury, wrong, or with the stab of malice. Do these returns rob you of those higher rewards which God promises to every self-denial made for His sake? Suppose one has to go through this world weary and lonely, giving out his life in unsparring measure for others, and receiving only neglect, ingratitude, even persecution. Because earth misconstrues and misunderstands, will heaven? No; there is one place where men are understood and their work and worth appreciated. No good deed will be forgotten there. No lowly sacrifice will be overlooked. There will be commendation and reward there. We may not reap here, but we shall reap nevertheless. No true work for Christ ever fails. Somewhere, sometime, somehow, there will be results. We need not be discouraged or disheartened, for in due time we shall reap, if we faint not. There is a wondrous alchemy in the divine providence than out of the commingling of life's strange elements always produces blessing.

### MODERN MIRACLES.

An essential feature of the New Era is the restoration of man's lost dominion over the animal creation and consequent disappearance of an age-old enmity between man and beast. "The lion shall lay down with the lamb" says Isaiah, and this will become a literal fact. Some time ago the "B.S.M." recorded a report that lions in the South African reserves are becom-

ing so used to man and so tame that they will lie by the roadside quite unmindful of the presence of human beings. Now John D. Craig, who has spent many years filming wild animals and deep sea creatures in their native haunts, declares in a book just published that in his experience tigers are known to regard men as objects of curiosity, and unless frightened, eventually wander away. More remarkable still, the octopus, having grasped a diver, will "let go after a while, if you don't make him think you must be good to eat by struggling." Be this as it may, it is evidently no longer absurd to think of man as recovering that benevolent control of the brute creation which the Bible declares quite definitely existed in the beginning and will one day exist again. (Gen. 1: 28, 9; 2).

The story of Jesus turning water into wine at the Cana wedding (John 2; 1-11) has been often ridiculed by the sceptical as an evident impossibility. The alchemists of the Middle Ages who spent their lives endeavouring to find a means of changing lead into gold were classed as idle dreamers by the scientific men of last century. To-day the "transmutation of matter" is a practical possibility and there are at present existing in various parts of the world elaborate electrical equipments which can transform one substance into another just as Jesus changed the water into wine—but with the difference that whereas He "spake the word, and it was done" the device of to-day requires an intricate apparatus costing nearly ten thousand pounds to construct and—in the case of a plant erected at Pittsburgh, U.S.A.—standing sixty-five feet high. This invention is being used to transform ordinary substances into radioactive materials which can be used as substitutes for radium in the treatment of disease.

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### HUMANITY'S TRUE SUPPORT.

Father, Thou knowest best,  
This thought is all my stay;  
I see but just the step ahead,  
Thou knowest all the way:  
To me, as on I walk,  
The way seems all obscure,  
But Thou wilt guide my trembling feet,  
And make my footsteps sure.  
E'en though the darkness falls,  
And hides the path from view,  
Thy rod and staff direct me still,  
And will my strength renew.  
Father, the way seems long,  
My strength is very weak,  
Support me still by Thy right hand,  
And words of comfort speak.

### CONVENTION GEMS FROM WARRINGTON.

The eyes see, the heart follows, and lo and behold, the feet follow the heart.

We are not fearful, but rejoice, for our deliverance draweth nigh. "All these things" are to be moved, but our KING reigns for ever and ever. The world looks only on the trouble, but we look on our deliverance.

The child of God is in his natural element when he can breathe the pure air of the Holy Spirit of God.

"Walk after the Spirit." Learning to walk requires a proper balance. We all begin as toddlers, but by great practice the once toddler can learn to walk the tightrope. We, too, must learn to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, by great practice.

Naturally, many are DUMB because they have always been DEAF. We have heard, therefore we SING of His praises.

To be "careful of many things" often excludes us from hours of sweet fellowship with our Lord.

Phil. 3, 8. "I count all things but refuse that I may win Christ."

Behind my back I fling  
Like an accursed thing  
My former self and ways.  
And looking forward far  
I see the things that are  
Beyond time lagging days.

It is worth the rough steep climb in the dark to be on the peak at sunrise.

We think of what we are with all our trials, but what should we have been without them?

### FULLNESS OF JOY (John 15-11)

True joy is a serious thing, its fountains are deep. It is the waking up of the heart's deep springs. Mirth and levity are not joy. They are too shallow to deserve the name. Like the sun-flash on a stagnant pool, they are a mere surface gleam of light. There is nothing in them of the calm radiance illuminating the ocean depths, many a fathom down, as if the waters themselves were a mass of solid sunshine, and remaining amid the heaving of the billows, unbroken and unobscured. In coming to Him who is the fountain of all gladness, the saint of God bids farewell to gloom. Tribulation he may have—nay must have,—but not gloom. That has left him for ever since the day he knew the Saviour and opened his ears to the joyful sound. Peace is now his heritage.

### A DISCIPLE'S PRAYER

My Master, give me grace to shine for Thee, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun" (Cant. 6: 10) at all times and in all places. Lord, make my lamp to burn more brightly. Fill me with the fresh oil of Thy Spirit. It may be I need trimming, and the trimming may be painful. The golden snuffers may be needed, the pruning-knife, the rod; but, Lord, do anything that Thou seest to be needful. Only let me not dishonour Thee by a flickering light when Thou hast provided everything to make it steady. Be Thou, Lord, ever in the central place to give me light and to enable me to shine for Thee. Let me not try to get out of Thy circle of light. May my shining be so purely from Thee as its source, that it shall burn steadily, pleasantly, helpfully until the day that the lesser lights give way to the sun, and the candle and lamp are no more needed in the City of which the Lamb is alone the Light,  
"Brightly beams our Father's mercy  
From His lighthouse evermore;  
But to us He gives the keeping  
Of the lights along the shore."

"Blessed is he who learns to profit by his wants and infirmities, and who, in all the privation he endures, is still submissive to the Word of God."

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE LOGOS

### 1. The Testimony of John

It has been said that to understand the meaning of the word "Logos" is to understand the gospel of John. Dean Farrar declared that the four words "The Word became flesh" created an epoch, telling us more about the relationship of God to man than all the volumes which Philo (the Alexandrian theologian) and his contemporaries ever compiled.

Many Christian believers have little or no understanding of that transcendent truth which is enshrined in the first chapter of John's gospel. Students of the Bible who have passed beyond the crude ideas of the Middle Ages know that the expression "Logos" in this chapter refers to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in His pre-human condition, the mighty being Who rejoiced in that glory which He had with the Father before the world was (John 17; 5). The evidence is here in John's words; it is manifested elsewhere in the Scriptures, and is borne out by a very definite understanding which prevailed persistently in the ancient world centuries before Jesus was born at Bethlehem: but the reason for using the word "Logos" is not immediately apparent.

The familiar illustration of the "King's Logos" or spokesman, who conveyed the words of a potentate to his people, the monarch being meanwhile concealed from public view, is an analogy which denotes one usage of the word but it is not this which John had in mind when he first enunciated at all time the Christian doctrine of the Logos. The roots of this belief go back much further in time than the years surrounding the lives of Jesus and John and touch upon philosophies having little in common with Christianity and Judaism.

It may first be noted that **Word** is not an adequate translation of **Logos**. The word combines the ideas of "thought" and "reason," and the nearest English word to correctly render the Greek would perhaps be "logic." The word "logos" is used many times in the New Testament where it is evident that no reference to the personality of Christ is intended. Thus it is rendered "word" over two hundred times, "saying" about fifty times, and in other instances is translated by words such as account, speech, matter, thing, utterance, reason, communication, doctrine, preaching, question, rumour, treatise, etc. It is evident therefore

that John did not take this word as a proper name appertaining exclusively to Christ Himself, but as referring to some already well-understood conception amongst his readers which made use of the common term for "word" or "thought" and personified it, in exactly the same way that Wisdom is personified in Proverbs 8.

In past generations commentators and students were generally content to accept this as the sole reason for John's use of the word—a case in point being that of Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist theologian of a century ago, who says, apropos of John; 1 1.

**"This term (Logos) should be left untranslated, for the very same reasons that the names Jesus and Christ are left untranslated. As every appellation of the Saviour of the world is descriptive of some excellence in His person, nature or work, so the epithet Logos, which signifies a word spoken, speech, eloquence, doctrine, reason or the faculty of reasoning, is very properly applied to Him."**

In times nearer to our own it was gradually realised that there was a much greater depth of meaning in John's words than this. It was discovered that the **idea** of the "Logos" was a very familiar one to the early Christians before John wrote his gospel, and that belief in a Logos Who was the representative of God before men and the interpreter of God to men was very widespread in the ancient world. A learned divine of last century (John Kitto) has this to say:

**"The term 'Logos' was borrowed by the first Christian converts from the Gnostics, and applied to Christ, and it is one of the objects of John's gospel to show in what sense the term applies to Christ. John found the term so universally applied that he did not attempt to stop the current of popular language but kept it to its proper channel and guarded it from extraneous corruptions. A constant tradition had come down from remote antiquity and a term expressive of this tradition had been applied to Christ by the converts and was adopted by John."**

Gnosticism was a form of belief which blended Eastern mysticism with Greek philosophy and in many places wrought havoc in the early Christian Church. Many of Paul's strongest denunciations of false doctrine and erring

teachers were directed against the Gnostics and their philosophies, especially in his writings to the Colossians and to Timothy. They pictured God as a kind of impersonal, all-pervading power which sent out "emanations" from itself to influence matters in the world of men. The emanation of "reasoned intelligence" which was responsible for this material world and its affairs was called the "Logos" and the whole conception was that of an intangible, shadowy force—not a personal being at all. Philo of Alexandria, a noted philosopher who was about sixty years of age at the time of Christ's ministry, spoke of the Logos as a link between the Eternal Light which is God, and the material universe. He called the Logos the first-begotten of God and pictured Him as a real existence "emanating" from an abstract principle of good and so manifesting God to men. Many of these speculations were of Greek origin and were the "oppositions of science falsely so-called" of II Tim. 6; 20.

Now John was brought up amongst all these philosophical reasonings and was thoroughly familiar with them. He declares to all these philosophers that the One of Whom he speaks is the **reality** of which all their speculations were but shadows. He is the Beginning, the Logos, the only-begotten, the One Who reveals and interprets God to man; but He is not merely an "emanation" or abstraction, rather is He One Who was "made flesh and dwelt among us—and we beheld His glory." The triumph of John's introduction to his gospel is the masterly way in which he takes up this mysterious and shadowy doctrine and after speaking of the Logos Who was "with God" carries his theme into the realm of material things and triumphantly concludes "And the Logos was **made flesh**—and we **beheld**." (John 1; 14).

So John gradually approaches his subject from the mystic basis of Gnosticism, from a level of understanding which was already familiar to his readers, strips it of all its vagueness and ambiguity, all its Oriental mysticism and Greek philosophy, and sets before his readers' minds a clear conception of that glorious truth that is so eloquently portrayed in the eighth chapter of Proverbs; "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His Way, before His works of old." The clear reasoning of John, his mind illumined by the Holy Spirit of God, banished for ever those hazy ideas of a God Who was only the principle of good and a Son of God Who was no person-

ality at all. As Paul says in another place "to us there is One God, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things" (I Cor. 8; 6) and nowhere is the separateness of identity of the Father and the Son shown more clearly than in this illuminating first chapter of John's gospel.

Right from the outset John definitely lays down the personality of the Son as One Who came **from** the Father and partook of human nature "being made like unto his brethren" (Heb. 2; 17). There are six definite stages in the exposition and each stage makes three plain statements of fact, leading from the far-away place of God's throne "in the beginning" right up to the time of our Lord's appearance amongst men in Galilee and Jerusalem.

**In the beginning was the Word (Logos)**

**And the Word was with the God (ho theos)**

**And the Word was God (theos).**

Here the mind of John goes back into the dim recesses of the time before this world was; a time when the Architect of the Universe had not yet translated into concrete form any of those wonderful designs which have now found expression in creations spiritual and material. There was a time when God was alone; that epoch ended when His first-begotten Son came into existence to "rejoice always before Him" (Prov. 8; 30) and to be in after days the executor of the Divine Plan. This is the time of which John speaks, and be it noted that he straightway lays down the fundamental teaching that the "Word," the "Logos," was not just an aspect of the Divine Mind, an emanation from God, as the Gnostics taught, but the **Logos was theos**, the **Word was God**, mighty, intelligent, all-seeing, just as personal as **ho theos, the God, Himself**. As it has been so often suggested, the Logos was a God, a mighty one. None of John's fellow-believers, reading these words, would ever deduce from them that the Logos was in person the same as the Father, their whole previous beliefs precluding such a conclusion. What they did deduce from these words was the realisation that the "Word" was indeed a personal being, the "Son of God," One of Whom John goes on to say

**The same was in the beginning with God,  
All things were made by Him;**

**And without Him was not anything made  
that was made.**

Here the work of the Logos in the creation of all things, both spiritual and material, is referred to. Verses 1 and 2 refer to a time when creation had not begun. Verse 3 speaks

of the commencement of creative activity—and the agent of creation is that One Who was "with God" in the beginning. For how many countless ages the works of creation proceeded before this earth came into being there is no means of knowing, but this brief word in verse 3 spans all that mighty expanse of time.

Now comes a new factor into the train of thought—the idea of **Life**

**In Him was Life;**

**And the Life was the light of men;**

**And the light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.**

The Logos comes night to earth. In the fulness of time this earthly creation has come into being and man exists upon it, living their short span which they call life and not knowing that in this Mighty One Who is as it were winging His flight from remote time to bring them life, lies their only hope. A dying world, the Life-giver approaching unto it and the light cleaving the darkness, but the darkness receiving it not. What a wonderful realisation to think of this tiny planet with its load of puny mortals, and that great life-giving spirit approaching as it were from the farthest recesses of space and time to illumine their darkness with the glorious light of God! That is John's picture, and in the next phrase he brings the Divine messenger into still closer proximity to man and man's home, with the stirring words

**He was in the world**

**The world was made by Him**

**And the world knew Him not.**

The celestial visitant has arrived. He Who dwelt with the Most High in the light which no man can approach unto (I Tim. 6; 16) and exercised the oversight of all the works of creation has now come to this little world which was the work of His own hands—and the world knows Him not. But He is nigh to man, and that is the drift of John's words. No longer in the inaccessible places of the "sides of the north" (Isa. 14; 13), no longer One Who was "of old" before time was—the Logos is now **in the world**, and shortly to be revealed to men.

For the full enjoyment and correct understanding of God's Word it is absolutely essential to rightly divide the Word of Truth. Because Christians do not follow Paul's injunction to Timothy many errors creep in, the Bible is not enjoyed, seeming contradictions appear, and people turn to the philosophy of man rather than to God's Book of Truth. —*Advent Witness.*

An expounder of Scripture should be like the maker of a well, who puts no water into the source himself, but makes it his aim to let the water flow without diversion, stoppage, or defilement.

—*Bengel.*

**He came unto His own;**

**And His own received Him not;**

**But as many as received Him, to them gave**

**He power to become the Sons of God.**

Closer still to the chosen people has the true Logos come. Not now merely "in the world" but—He has now come to His own; to those who for centuries were being trained under the Law to recognise Him and receive Him when He should come. The word translated "his own" has the thought of one's own home and acquaintances. The mighty Logos has "come home," to His own place, and His own people receive Him not. From the infinity of the Divine Presence the Son of God has come into the little land of Judea and from among all the hosts of the spiritual realms He has manifested Himself to the House of Israel. There can be but one fitting climax to this sublime progression of thought and that is expressed in the final words of this eloquent passage in the fourteenth verse,

**And the Word was made flesh;**

**And dwelt among us;**

**And we beheld His glory.**

Revealed at last to mortal sight, a man among men, in all the vigour and glory of perfect manhood, such as had not been seen since the days of Eden, Jesus of Nazareth stood forth as the visible embodiment of all that men had in past days reasoned and speculated concerning that which should interpret God to man. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" said Jesus to Philip (John 14. 9) and as the full significance of John's words sinks in, and in imagination we picture that scene when men stood and gazed upon a Figure that in very truth manifested the glory of God to the world of men, it is not difficult to realise that to those who in truth "received Him," all the old shibboleths and philosophies regarding the mystic "Logos" vanished like the morning mists before this rising sun of the God-given reality. As that other John cried in impassioned words, "I SAW, and bare record that THIS IS THE SON OF GOD."

If I were to choose a dwelling-house I would wish to be known as Justus was—for he was "a man that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue." One's calling, health, or circumstance might compel another choice; but I would ever give preference to a habitation near to a Gospel ministry. If I were to choose a trade, I would select one which gave me leisure for the service of the Lord Jesus. If I had the option of my condition in life, I would rather have less earth and more heaven than more earth and less heaven.

—*Spurgeon.*

# ANNUAL ELECTION OF BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE

## VOTING FORM

The following brethren have accepted nomination for election to the Committee. Each voter may vote for SEVEN names by placing a 1 in the appropriate space. Those returning a personal voting form should take care that their votes are not recorded again on any class or group voting form.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY JULY 10th

To the Election Scrutineer :

Bro. G. A. Ford  
13 Cranleigh Gardens  
Luton, Beds.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Total</i>
BATCHELLER, W. (London)		
BOYCE, A. (Dewsbury)		
DRINKWATER, B. J. (Birmingham)		
FORD, G. A. (Luton)		
HALL, J. (Gateshead)		
HOLMES, T. (Melton Mowbray)		
HUDSON, A. O. (Welling)		
OSBORNE, H. (Warrington)		
SEARS, C. (Welling)		
SMITH, C. R. (London)		
WARD, C. T. (Kettering)		

No. of persons whose votes are recorded on this paper.....

Signed.....

### ELECTION SCRUTINEERS:

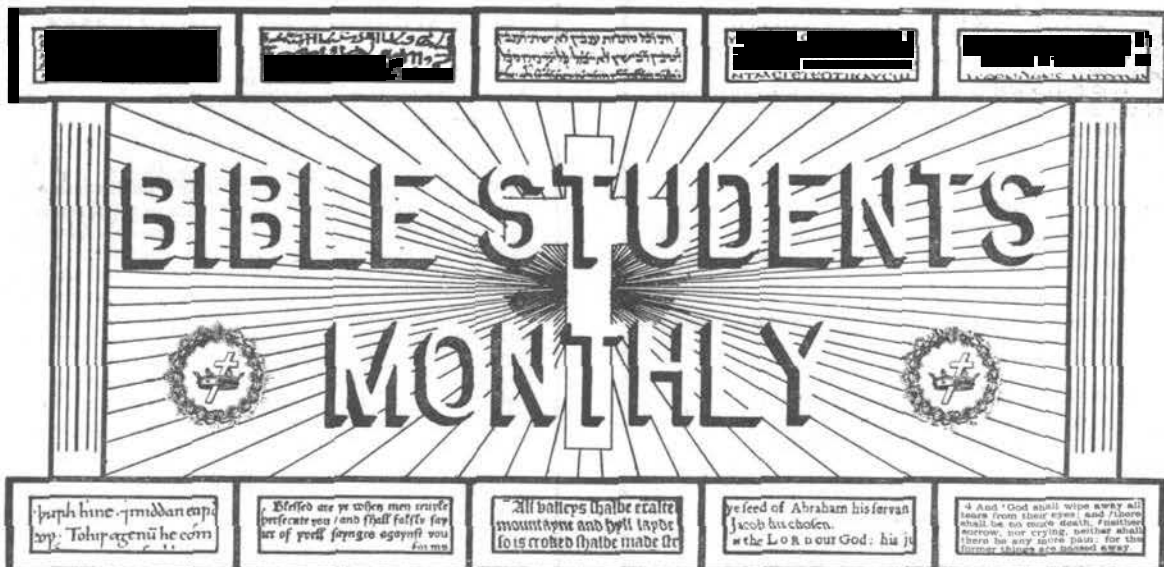
Bro. G. A. Ford (Luton)  
Bro. W. J. Rew (Darlington)

When used as class voting  
paper, please insert name  
of class here .....

The result of the election will be announced in the August "B.S.M."

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



Vol. 16 No. 7

JULY, 1939

THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

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## THIS MAGAZINE

is published to minister to the necessities of the Household of Faith in these closing days of the Church's earthly career. It is intended to be a helping hand to all Bible Students; a link between the various classes and between isolated brethren; a means to encourage all to value increasingly the precious privileges which belong to them as children of God; to help towards a clearer understanding of the unparalleled times in which we live; to assist all to put on the "whole armour of God"; and to urge all to deeper reverential study of the Word of God.

It stands firmly for the doctrine of the "Ransom for All," based upon the perfect sacrifice of the "Man Christ Jesus," building thereupon all hope of future life, both for the Church and for the world.

It stands for all consequent Redemptive and Atonement truths, as hitherto accepted and taught by our beloved Pastor and by Bible Students generally since the Harvest light revealed their orderly arrangement.—Repentance; Justification; Consecration; Sanctification—believing that these states and stages are essential parts of the plan whereby we may be accepted into Divine favour.

It stands for the truth regarding the begetting of the Spirit and development of the "New Creature" through suffering as necessary experiences in following and being conformed to the character likeness of Jesus, thereby being made "like Him" and being with Him for ever.

It stands for all Dispensational truth relating to the Plan of God; acknowledging however that new light concerning our times can yet break forth from the Word of God, confirming our conviction that we are in the "last days"—the "Parousia" of the Son of Man.

It teaches these things confidently, knowing whereof it affirms, in no way doubting that its teachings are in accord with the Word of God.

## BIBLE STUDENTS' REFERENCE LIBRARY

Realising that many of the friends are unable to purchase or obtain all the books they would like, for personal study and reference, the Committee has decided to establish a reference library comprising the various types of works which are of value and assistance in our studies. This library will include all "Present Truth" publications of value, Bible translations and helps, historical works of repute, such as Gibbons "Decline and Fall," Mosheim's Church History, etc.; books descriptive of scenes, customs, etc., in Bible lands; modern works on archeology and exploration, and any other books which in the opinion of the Committee will assist the understanding and development of our faith along the lines of "Present Truth." The Library must of necessity be built up slowly, and in this connection if any friends care to present suitable works from their own bookshelves these will be received with sincere appreciation, although in each case it will be appreciated if the proposed books be notified beforehand so that advice may be given that the book can be usefully included.

The brethren will be able to borrow any book for a period of two weeks, and retain after that period if desired, until it is required for another borrower. A charge of about sixpence per book will be made to cover postal and incidental expenses, the borrower also paying return postage. A list of works available will be furnished to each borrower and will be kept up-to-date as new books are added.

In order to enable final plans to be made, will all friends who feel that such a library would be of service, and who are likely to make use of it, kindly send a post-card to the office to that effect; at the same time giving details of any particular books which they themselves would like to see included in the library.

## THE LIBRARY—A SUGGESTION

Referring to the announcement regarding the proposed library which appeared last month and is repeated above, it is suggested that a more practical basis would be the payment of a weekly subscription of 3d., remitted perhaps quarterly, which would cover postal expenses both ways and all incidental expenses. If this method appeals to brethren interested in this project, it would be appreciated if this preference were stated when notifying their interest, in order to guide the Committee in the arrangements to be made.

## BIBLE STUDENTS HYMNAL

The new book has received general approval. Suggestions are now being considered whereby a suitable tune book can be produced cheaply. In the meantime it is earnestly desired that all the British friends become the possessors of a copy of the Hymnal, which has been produced for the general benefit.

Limp Cloth 11½d. post free  
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from the Berean Bible Institute.

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 7. "EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM."

*"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory." (Matthew 24; 30).*

Of the seventeen major passages describing the Second Advent there are only three which picture it definitely as an event which is universally seen and realised. To the Watchers, His own disciples, the fact of His early presence is manifest before any others are awake to it. To those who must learn by the stern logic of political and social events, His presence to wind up earthly affairs and establish His Kingdom begins to become evident even while, as in the days of Noah, the masses of mankind continue in their customary way, heedless and ignorant of the great change about to be inaugurated. Yet these three scriptures stand out as beacon lights illuminating a much less clear, because much later, aspect of Christ's presence. The time when He comes to be universally accepted with every sign of repentance and contrition is very evidently not yet, and cannot be whilst the reign of sin and death endures.

Nevertheless this last aspect of Christ's Second Coming can be truthfully described as a universally perceived one—a complete fulfilment of those Scriptures which picture Him coming in the clouds of heaven, visible in the skies before the gaze of assembled multitudes on earth and receiving the submission as well as the repentance of those who, at that time, will participate in a "great mourning." (Zech. 12; 11).

Our Lord's words to Caiaphas admit of no compromise. "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 16; 64). The expression is repeated in that passage where Christ describes the signs of His coming, and which is quoted at the head of this chapter. Again to the Revelator does the same word come "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; and they also which pierced Him." (Rev. 1; 7). The surprising unanimity of these statements justifies the application of them to some single

stupendous event in that series of happenings which constitutes the end of this Age; and this conviction is heightened when one word from the Old Testament is attached to these words; for by Zechariah (12; 10) comes the prediction "They shall look upon Him whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for His only son."

What is this spectacular event which it is the common lot of all men to witness and which is attended by universal mourning?

Certainly not the coming of Christ for His Church, for their portion is one of joy and not of mourning when the consummation of their hopes is at length reached. Neither can it be His coming in judgment and retribution upon the evil systems of this world for although that is admittedly a time of mourning yet it is not a time when "every eye shall see him." It is, on the contrary a time when "they knew not, until . . ." (Matt. 24; 39). Beside which, His coming at this time of universal realisation and general repentance is to be when God turns upon Israel the spirit of grace and of supplication (Zech. 12; 9-10) and this is most certainly not to take place until after the downfall of the kingdoms of this world.

The conclusion to be drawn from these various Scriptures, then, is that a time will come when the following conditions will be fulfilled.

First, Israel will be in a repentant and chastened frame of mind, ready to listen to the voice which speaks from heaven. (Zech. 18; 20-22). This is obviously after they have passed through "Jacob's Trouble." (Jer. 30; 7).

Second; the event must occur at a time when Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim of his day will have been restored to human life from the death state to witness the fulfilment of those solemn words which they declared to be blasphemy and which became the pretext for the condemnation of Jesus Christ to death.

Third; Mankind in general will be in an attitude of watchfulness and expectancy, ready to "see the salvation of our God" (Isa. 52; 10) and in that heart condition of repentance and submission to God which alone can

justify the description of universal mourning which these verses so consistently portray.

Fourth; The time of this revelation is after the great tribulation which our Lord not only declared to be the greatest and the last of all times of trouble, but which also is in itself an evidence of the earlier phases of His presence. (Matt. 24; 29, Mark 13; 24).

From these considerations the setting of this scene is very evident. It comes after the Church have been glorified and the "Marriage of the Lamb" has taken place; after the nations have suffered their final downfall and disintegration in Armageddon; after the children of Israel, under the leadership of their "princes in all the earth (Psa. 45; 16) have begun to look again to God; and even after the general calling out from the graves (John 5; 28-29) has at least commenced. (Matt. 26; 64).

In short, this aspect of Christ's coming has its fulfilment in the early days of His Kingdom established in power. It is a vivid picture of the revelation that will come to all men as by a lightning flash when the law of the Lord goes forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isa. 2; 2-4). It is the time when Isaiah's words come true—

*"It shall be said in that day; Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord. We have waited for Him; We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."*

From that time and forward, the Second Presence of Christ will be no longer a matter of doubt and dispute. All will know that He is present and that the Times of Restitution, so long foretold by all God's holy prophets, have at length commenced. The outward evidences will leave no further room for question, and the prompt application of the laws of the new Kingdom; the rapidly spreading realisation that Satan and the forces of evil have been bound "for a thousand years" (Rev. 20; 2) will leave the fact no longer open to uncertainty.

There is a striking passage in the book of Job (37; 21-22) which illustrates the symbolic setting of this "coming in the clouds of heaven." Elishu concludes his impassioned defence of the integrity of God by looking up into the skies and seeing the storm clouds parting and giving way to a brilliant glory of golden light which betokens the end of the tempest, and, too, the very presence of God.

*"And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds, but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them. Fair weather cometh out of the north. With God is terrible majesty."*

Just the same thought is indicated in these "seeing" Scriptures. The Lord comes in the clouds of trouble, assuredly; but not until those same clouds have parted and rolled away is the resplendent light of His presence revealed to all men. The suggestion is not that He comes riding on the clouds as on a chariot, but rather that He "cometh with clouds" hidden and concealed by them until the storm is over and the golden glory of His presence glints through the dark masses and then, as the gloomy clouds drift away, He stands revealed. "Every eye shall see Him."

"In like manner" (Acts 1; 11) as the enveloping clouds surrounded and obscured Him when He went away, so now they will open and reveal Him again to the blessing of all mankind.

This is the time when the Church of Christ, already gathered to Him and joined with Him, shall also "shine forth" in association with Him. Matt. 13; 43, speaking of that time, declares "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." The earnest expectation of the creation, says Paul, waiteth for the manifestation (apokalupsis—revealing) of the Sons of God (Rom. 8; 19). A wealth of Scriptures indicates that at that time when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 3; 2).

How will Christ and His Church appear to the risen millions of mankind in that day? There are many who contend that a physical appearance to the natural sight is intended by these Scriptures, and that the glorified "Bride of Christ" will thus hold literal converse with those who come to them. A literal enthronement of Jesus Christ in some great palace at Jerusalem is thus expected by some. Upon the other hand, the fact that the "Ancient Worthies" are certainly to be the intermediaries between mankind on the one hand and Christ the King upon the other may well demonstrate the greater dignity of a Kingdom in which Christ and the Church, glorified beings on the spiritual plane, are forever shrouded from mortal sight.

Should this spiritual company at any time become visible to mankind, they must of necessity "materialise" as did the angels before the Flood and as did those celestial messengers

who appeared to Manóah, to Daniel, and others. The necessity for such "materialisation" is hard to discern when a much more dignified and effective medium for the work of the Church with mankind is at hand in the form of that administrative company of men, the Ancient Worthies. Although nothing in Scripture forbids the possibility of such material manifestation of the presence of spiritual beings, it is more reasonable to conclude that there will never be such appearances and that Christ the Head and the Church which is His Body, spirit beings of the highest possible order, partakers of the Divine nature, are from the moment of their "change" (I Cor. 15; 51) forever veiled from human sight.

Mankind will therefore "see" these things with the mental sight. And how much more effective! Job, in the course of a long life, beheld much of the ways of God in nature and in men—but it was not until he had experienced for himself the wondrous workings of that God that he was able to say, in words eloquent in their brevity.

*"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee." (Job 42; 5).*

It was said of Moses in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews (vs. 27) that "he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." That apprehension of the power of God which comes by means of mental perception is far deeper and more lasting than any great spectacle which can only impress the natural sight. Let it be remembered that in this day when every scientific marvel speedily becomes commonplace, there would be no real impression made on the minds of men at the sight of a literal apparition in the heavens. The momentary

wonder over, men would speedily return to their various affairs and forget all about it. The time when "every eye shall see Him" is a time when men will perceive by mental vision, the reality of that which in time past, if they heard or knew anything about it at all, was dismissed as a visionary dream unworthy of credence or serious consideration.

The book of Isaiah concludes with a striking statement which illustrates this matter well. Speaking of the days when the work of the Kingdom has brought forth its intended fruitage in the reconciliation of "whosoever will" to God the Father of all, the prophet declares

*"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." (Isa. 66; 24).*

None would assert that a literal preservation of the bodies of the incorrigible to form a public spectacle to all eternity, is here indicated. The passage is readily seen to refer to that constant remembrance of the dire results of sin and death which will always remain with mankind as a lesson well learned and an experience which will never need to be repeated. Men will appreciate the desirability of righteousness, and the past days of sin and unrighteousness will rightly become an "abhorring to all flesh."

In like manner will they "look upon Him whom they have pierced" not with the physical sight but with a mental vision which reveals to them as never before the glorious reality of that long looked for new order of things which is to be in deed and in truth

**"The desire of all nations."**

### THE TRIUMPH OF OUR KING

There's a light upon the mountains and the freshness of the spring,  
And by faith we see the beauty and the triumph of our King.  
Dark, dark hath been the night-time with its trail of death and wrong,  
But His triumph day is breaking and we hail it with a song.

In the fading of the starlight we can see the breaking morn,  
And the lights of men are paling in the splendour of the dawn:  
For the eastern sky is glowing with the golden glory fire,  
And many a heart is stirring with a joy of right desire.

There's a hum of expectation; yet a quiet in the air,  
There's a cry of jubilation mid the sobs of dumb despair,

While the kingdoms all are falling, ever loudly rings the tone  
That the suffering, dying Jesus is the King upon His throne.

He is breaking down the barriers; He is setting up the way,  
He is calling forth His loved ones to proclaim the break of day.  
He is marching on to victory with the shining hosts above,  
And the drum-beats of His army are the heart-beats of our love.

Hark! dost hear the distant music as it comes with fuller swell?  
The triumphant song of Jesus—our King Emmanuel:  
Let us journey on to meet Him, and, my soul, be swift to bring  
All thy fairest and thy choicest for the triumph of our King.

## APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES

"Faithful witnesses"

How markedly the course of Church History agrees with the outline foretold by our Blessed Lord from His position among the Golden Candlesticks! Whatever defections or privations befell the church of God throughout the whole Gospel Age, this much is true, and markedly foreshown in the Seven Epistles sent to the Churches;—**God was never without His Witnesses upon the earth.**

With all the waning love and false Apostles, and the Nicolaitan practices of Ephesus, there were some who could not bear those who were evil; and who endured, laboured, and suffered for the name of Jesus, and whose faithfulness was to be rewarded with the joys of Paradise. With all the poverty, tribulation and reproach associated with Smyrna, and the false members of the synagogue of Satan by whom they were afflicted, there were some rich in grace, faithful to the last, and destined to wear the crown of life, unhurt of the "second death."

In spite of Satan's throne being installed in Pergamos, and of adulterous alliances, and those who built up their power by evil, usurping practices, there were those who held fast to the Saviour's name, and kept the faith steadfast unto death, who are to be rewarded by feasting on the hidden manna—immortality—and by sharing the friendship represented in the white cloven stone, upon which would be written in token of eternal friendship, the New Name of their beloved Lord.

Even in Thyatira, where Jezebel held her voluptuous court, where evil reached its vilest depths, there was a remnant who kept clear of Satan's defilements and brought forth their works of charity and faith and patience, slowly and painfully, and at terrible cost. To these would be given the early light of the Morning Star, and they, in contrast to their present subjection and humiliation while Jezebel and her paramours ruled the nations, should yet rule the nations with a rod of iron in company with their beloved Lord and Head.

The deadness of Sardis was not so all-pervading and complete but that a few names were left who had not defiled their garments; who had received the truth, and taught it, and lived it, and who were yet to walk with Christ in the white garments of absolute righteousness, and have their names confessed in heaven.

And though but a handful in the midst of many who were false in Philadelphia were to be found, there still was a band of earnest brothers on whom the doors cannot be shut, even though expelled from Satan's synagogue, and before whom they of Satan's synagogue shall yet be humbled; and who will be kept out of the hour of trial. This saintly few shall become pillars in God's temple, and be adorned with the name and character of God and of the New Jerusalem, and of their beloved Lord Himself. For the love they bore to their brethren, and their Lord, they should enter into the glorious circle of the Divine family forever.

Even among the sickening lukewarmness, pride, boasting and emptiness of Laodicea, there are some chastened and purified saints whom Jesus loves; who hear His voice; who open unto Him; who sup with Him, and who shall find a place with Him on His glorious eternal Throne. Blessed is this favoured few, who, learning of His presence, enter into the morning meal, and share with Him in the glorious light of the opening day, their hearts the while glowing hot with joy and zeal and conviction that now the long journey is all but ended, and soon they will enter into the joys of their Lord.

If then, these seven Epistles describe the whole history of the Church of God, the fact stands out with noonday clearness that God has had His saints, His living witnesses, in every stage of that journey. In spite of the dark pictures which surround these bright oases, God has not left himself without witnesses. He has had His true People who at no time kissed their hands, nor bowed the knee to the reigning idolators of the time. Vile as were those times, there was a little of the pure red gold in it, just as there was an Enoch and a Noah in the generation before the flood, and a Lot even in filthy Sodom itself. Amid all Christianity's corruptions there has always been some standing out against them. The pure ideal, gendered by such truth as they had, never failed to produce some approximate realization of itself. Dreary and dark as both the prophetic and historic delineation must appear, there is still some golden tinge to the clouds, some strip of verdure to the pathway. Ever and anon in the distant scene,

examples of faith, purity, love, heroism, devotion and obedience are never lost to view; the loveliest often being found in the darkest hours, and where they would least be expected. By some sort of compensation, in nearly every instance, when darkness and death descended in one place, light and life rose victorious at another. To quote from the pen of one who had great insight into these things, "Contemporary with the waning of piety in Antioch, was its waxing in Milan. When the Churches of Alexandria and Carthage were sinking in the decrepitude of formalism, the Churches of Gaul were battling the vices of imperial civilization, and the rudeness and disorder of barbarism. The era of the early growth of Rome's impious pretensions was the era of Ireland's light and life, holiness and beauty. While Mahomet was God's avenger on Syria and Egypt, the monks of Iona were studying their Bibles, and Scotch missionaries were crossing the Anglo-Saxon border and entering the heart of Germany. As Gregory IV. was encouraging the sons of the Emperor Lewis in parricidal wars, Claude was preaching the truth in Turin, and adorning it with a holy life. When the pontifical court at Avignon was disgracing the name of religion by luxury and vice, pious men were writing books, and preaching sermons, and practising godly virtue in Teutonic cities. When the night of superstition and despotism was getting blacker than ever in France, the morning star of the Reformation rose in England. When the Italian fields were covered with rotten stubble, Bohemia was whitening to the harvest." And so, in all the ages, there has never failed some blessed offsets to the ever downward tendency of things. Nor will it ever be, in the darkest days of Christendom's apostacy, that there will be none to stand up for God and His pure truth, or that His true people shall fail from the earth, till their day is done.

But now, let us enquire briefly what were the things which made this slender martyr band so dear to the heart of the Lord, as He looked down upon them from His place among the Candlesticks. We shall find His words in these Epistles full of deep evangelical Truth; and an important gauge for comparing the relative value of several things each of which is essential to our Christian life and standing.

First, let us note how Christ's true people are characterised by unswerving and uncompromising devotion to their profession (Heb. 3: 1). Having taken Jesus as their Lord and Master they have no obedience for any but

Him. For Him they labour, and for Him they endure. For Him they stand out against all that is evil in practice or doctrine, having no fellowship with pseudo-apostles or apostate teachers. Though charged with charity to all they have no toleration for anybody or anything save that which meets His approval. Because He hates evil, they hate it too; because He requires His ministers to be faithful, so do they try those who claimed to be apostles and teachers. In all things they stand to the truth, as having received it from Him, as a charge to defend with life and limb.

Next let us note that there are the poor, the reproached, the sorely tried, and the persecuted-unto-death. The mass of them were of the martyr band—living martyr lives, if not dying martyr deaths. Often in mountain caves, or desert wastes they lived in their poverty rather than dwell in the palaces of sin,—always living unto Him who had called them out of the world. But though poor, despised and afflicted, they cheerfully bore whatever He appointed, and kept His word of patient endurance.

The saints of Ephesus did bear for the Saviour's name, and fainted not. Those of Smyrna were faithful unto death. Those of Pergamos held fast Jesus' name and did not deny the faith of Christ, standing firm in the truth under the very sword of the executioner. Those of Thyatira and Philadelphia were commended for their endurance amid falsity and suffering, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Christendom. The Lord laid great stress upon all these things, and held them dear to His heart. Faithful service, loyal defence of the truth; patience; longsuffering, diligence;—in these He found great delight, and upon them bestowed His praise and blessing. All these are marks of true saintship and sonship, and for these He had words of approval. But there was one thing greater than all else. It was of less moment to try false Apostles; or boast of a flawless creed, or of correct theories, or even of sound doctrine, if there was no exhibition of "first love." Soundness of doctrine is important—He commended them for that—but soundness of doctrine is not enough. The most orthodox church in this list, Sardis, (for which He had no other word of censure) was the deadest. There must be faith—a true faith—based upon an appreciative, intelligent understanding of Truth; but it must be a faith energised by love, and love must labour with patience and hope and tenderness even to

wards the erring and the slow-to-learn. There are such things as "dead works"—works dissociated from true love; There is a steadfastness in doctrine—doctrine for doctrine's sake. All this was seen in Ephesus but the "one thing needful" was a return to that first uprush of love to God and love to the brethren. All knowledge, all faith, all mastery of tongues, all self-abasing service cannot make up for the lack of "first love." Not even a sharp penetration into truths and falsities, or a correctness of judgment and statement of holy things, or a zealous severance from erroneous or irresolute teachings can compensate for the lack of that warm and pure impulse which the Lord desires to see, as the one thing above all others, kept in its pristine fulness. Inasmuch as the whole catalogue of things which He hates comes from the lack or loss of this grace, so in reverse manner the growth of all that He loves springs from the root of this first love. Every good and desirable thing in faith,

in service, in doctrine, takes its "quality" from this satisfying love.

This love centres in Himself, and in a loving Father, and knows no source of pleasure or contentment apart from them. That is the major key-note of these as well as of all Apostolic Epistles, but in these we have the words—the last words—of the dear Master Himself, telling His Church as she set out over the dark journey of this Gospel Age those things that were dear to His heart, and for which, with His penetrating eyes of flame, He was looking. The last remnant of the martyr band is living in the earth to-day, and to them He says "I counsel ye to buy of me gold tried in the fire . . . anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see . . . As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." **Still the same things as before;** but now, in the days of His Presence, of greater urgency because the time is short.

#### "PERSUADED"

*"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life; neither angels nor principalities; neither things present nor things future; nor powers nor height; nor depth, nor any other thing in creation, will be able to separate us from that love of God, which is in the anointed Jesus our Lord."*

Here we are dealing with forces and powers not so easily defined in human tongue, nor so fully understood by us. Much of the same may be said of the hope set before us; as the Apostle says in this same chapter (v. 18) "I consider that the sufferings of the present time, as unworthy of comparison with the future glory to be revealed in us." It seems fitting, therefore, that the "love of God" should be spoken of in this connection; the love of the Almighty One binding us to Himself through all the unknown experiences of this present life, and that which is to come; yea, through the very portals of death which lead us thereto. "And we know that all these things work together for good to those that love God, to those being called according to His purpose."

When seeking to understand more perfectly—"the things which God has in reservation for those who love Him," that we may the more completely set our affections upon them, we would be overwhelmed by the majesty and grandeur of it all, did we not intimately know the love of God for us; on account of which nothing can separate us from Him if our faith holds firm, and so long as our loyalty to Him is beyond question. We read "Be not anxious

about anything: but in everything let your petitions be made known to God by prayer, and supplication with thanksgiving; and that peace of God which surpasses all conception, shall guard your heart, and your minds by Christ Jesus."

#### PROGRESS IN KNOWLEDGE.

This is the law of the Church's progress and growth. When a Christian, or a church, becomes convinced that it has nothing more to learn, there follows stagnation and decay. And yet what else than this is the prevalent assumption that all Bible truth is locked up in our Confession of Faith, and that it is a heresy and crime to think beyond it? No greater mistake was ever made by reformed churches than this quenching of the Spirit in the body of Christ, by the denial to its members of the liberty of progressing beyond the limits of their creeds. Confessions are good for purposes of instruction, but not to bind the conscience. Enforced creeds should content themselves with stating only the great facts and primary beliefs of Christianity, as they are given in the language of Scripture, such as "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." "I believe that He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." Human formulas, founded upon these facts, and explanatory of them, should always be held open to amendment, as God may bestow increasing light until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the perfect knowledge of the Son of God.—

*(The Watch Tower).*

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### "WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET."

The washing of the feet in olden times in oriental lands was very necessary to the comfort, and hence to wash one another's feet would signify to comfort and refresh one another even in the most menial services. This is the essence of our Lord's lesson to us, that we should be glad for any opportunity for serving one another, for comforting one another, however menial the service. Mary washed our Lord's feet with perfume, and the Mary class, the most loving and devoted class in the church, are to help one another, to wash one another's feet; and they are to do so not in the rudest and clumsiest manner imaginable, but, inspired by love and devotion one to another, they are to wash one another's feet with the kindness and sympathy and love and appreciation symbolised by Mary's spikenard; and their comforting of one another is to be with that love and solicitude which was represented by Mary's using the very locks of her head for her Master's feet.

Let us see to it that this love, this spikenard-Mary love and sympathy, is ever growing amongst the members of the Lord's Body: that as we perceive the animosity of the world and the flesh and the adversary against the Lord's anointed we are all the more devoted one to another, and all the more disposed to honour one another with care and love and sympathy, and to speak and act generously and kindly one toward another. Surely there could be no better evidence of growth in grace on the part of the consecrated.

"Let us consider one another" said the Apostle—consider one another's weaknesses, trials and temptations; consider one another's efforts to war a good warfare against the world, the flesh, and the adversary; consider one another's troubles in the narrow way against opposition from within and without; and as we do so it will bring to our hearts sympathy, a sympathy which will take pleasure in pouring out the spikenard perfume, very costly, purest and best, upon all who are fellow-members of the one Body.

"Be still! my soul, let nothing stir  
Thee from the sweet repose  
Of those who to their God refer  
Their joys, and cares, and woes."

### "GOOD FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD."

"They tell us that in Pisa's old cathedral  
All noises, harsh and loud—  
Grating of ponderous doors, shrill tones, the tramping  
And murmur of the crowd—  
Are caught up, softened, harmonised and blended  
Within the lofty dome;  
Then echoed back in one great wave of music,  
Sweet as a dream of home.  
"So all the harsh notes in life's mingled music:  
The burden and the woe;  
The stroke that almost snaps the quivering heartstrings,  
The loss that grieves us so;  
In heaven's o'er-arching dome of perfect wisdom,  
Power and love, shall be  
Gathered and blended in divinest marvel  
Of matchless melody.

M. L. Upton.

### "THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS."

Grant me, O most loving Lord, to rest in Thee above all creatures; above all health or beauty, above all glory or honour; above all knowledge or wisdom, above all riches or art, above all fame or praise, above all sweetness or comfort, above all hope or promise, above all gifts or favours which Thyself or others can give . . . above all things visible or invisible in which Thou art not, O my God. It is too small and unsatisfying, whatsoever Thou bestowest on me if Thou art not in it, or revealest to me, or promisest to me, if Thou art not seen, and fully obtained. For surely, my heart cannot rest, nor be fully contented, unless it rest in Thee. (Thomas A-Kempis).

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment and light riseth up in darkness for the godly; grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what Thou wouldst have us do, that the Spirit of Wisdom may save us from false choices and that in Thy light we may see light, and in Thy straight path may not stumble, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (William Bright).

Let me not seek out of Thee, O God, what I can find only in Thee—that peace and rest . . . which I can find only in Thine own abiding rest. Lift up my soul above the weary round of harassing thoughts to the radiant atmosphere of Thy Presence, that there I may repose in Thy love and be at rest from myself—and thence return arrayed with peace to do and bear Thy Holy Will.

E. B. Pusey—abridged and altered.

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE LOGOS

2. The "Wisdom" chapter  
of Proverbs

No consideration of Scriptural teaching relating to the pre-human existence of Jesus Christ can be complete without some reference to the part occupied by "Wisdom," personified, in ancient Jewish thought; and particularly to the well-known "Wisdom chapter"—Proverbs 8. It is in this chapter that a very clear outline of the relation of Jesus to His Father before He became man is set forth.

There is sometimes a tendency to criticise the application of Proverbs 8 to our Lord upon the ground that it merely extols the virtues of wisdom in a somewhat highly poetic fashion but that it is "wresting the Scriptures" to apply this language to the pre-human experience of Jesus. This objection cannot be sustained when it is realised—as far too seldom is it realised—that this passage is by no means an isolated one in Hebrew literature, and that for centuries the Jews had been accustomed to thinking and speaking of the Divine agent in the works of creation as Wisdom personified.

The Hebrews identified "Wisdom" with the "Word of God." "Wisdom" and "The Word" were both used as expressions referring to the Executor of the Divine purposes. Although the Greeks in later times evolved a more mystic understanding of this truth and so rendered necessary John's exposition of the "Logos" in his gospel, there can be no doubt that the Hebrews for several hundred years before Christ made a very personal application of this belief. Hence they looked upon the passage in Proverbs 8 as referring very definitely to a personal being Who dwelt with the Father, was of an inferior order to Him, spoken of as His first-born Son and the One Who conveyed Divine commands to men. As such, "Wisdom" took precedence over even the seven archangels of Jewish tradition.

This is borne out by Rotherham's rendering of Proverbs 8; 2, where Wisdom is apostrophised thus:—

*"At the top of the high places above the way; at the place where paths meet she taketh her stand."*

Here Wisdom (always referred to in the feminine gender in Jewish literature) is depicted at the head of all roads, controlling the universe—surely a fitting introduction to this famous description.

Before examining Proverbs 8 in detail, however, supporting evidence of the state of Jewish thought a hundred years or so before Christ can be referred to as illustrating the chapter. The apocryphal "Book of Wisdom," compiled in its present form at about that time, has many references of a similar nature to the Proverbs passage, noteworthy among them being one in which Wisdom is personified as being

*"The breath of the power of God, a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty, . . . the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness."* (Wisd. 7; 25-26).

Another verse is remarkably in line with Proverbs 8.

*"Wisdom was with thee, which knowest thy works, and was present when thou madest the world, and knew what was acceptable in thy sight, and right in thy commandments."* (Wisd. 9; 9).

A definitely interesting passage in the Book of Enoch (from which Jude quotes his famous saying in Jude 14) seems to afford a clear understanding of both the past and future states of the "Word (which) became flesh."

*"Wisdom found no place where she could dwell; then a dwelling place was assigned her in the heavens. Wisdom went forth to make her dwelling among the children of men; and found no seat among the angels."* (I Enoch 42; 1).

These statements, not being part of the written Word of God, have no canonical authority, but they are valuable as indicating the accuracy of the belief that "Wisdom" in Proverbs 8 is intended to be a personification of the Only-begotten Son of God. It has been pointed out by students that Jesus Himself endorsed this view when, having been accused by his critics of not following the ascetic example of John the Baptist, he demonstrated the insincerity of His opponents and declared "But wisdom is justified of her children." (Matt. 11; 19). The word rendered "children" has in this connection the significance of "something produced or brought forth," and in the R.V. and by Rotherham is translated "works." Jesus (Wisdom), was to be vindicated by the

results of His life, seeing of the travail of His soul and being satisfied (Isa. 53; 11), and in using this expression our Lord lent His endorsement to the common belief regarding Proverbs 8.

It is possible therefore to come to this chapter in full confidence that it presents the pre-human Christ as speaking. The passage is an interesting one; it purports to dwell upon the fact of His coming into existence as the first-born of God. It speaks of long ages during which the mighty works of creation proceeded and finally comes down to the time of man and dwells upon the solicitude for humanity which is displayed by that One who in the fulness of time appeared upon earth amongst men as Jesus the carpenter of Nazareth.

The account commences in Verse 1 of Proverbs 8 and continues to verse 6 of Proverbs 9. The subject of the story is "Wisdom," a personality overseeing all things and enjoying the confidence of the Almighty, active in all the works of creation and having authority to speak in the name of Jehovah. Wisdom is the Son who knows all things that His Father doeth and Who is quick to carry out every desire of His Divine Parent. Hence the appropriateness of the opening sentence "Doth not **Wisdom** cry? and understanding utter her voice?" It has already been mentioned that in all Jewish literature Wisdom is referred to in the feminine gender notwithstanding its reference to the **Son** of God, and Proverbs 8 and 9 is no exception to this custom. Right at the outset of the story Wisdom is depicted as being the **Voice** of God—thus making it easy to understand why, in the New Testament, the same personality is referred to as the "**Word** (Logos) of God."

Vs. 2. "*At the top of the high places above the way; at the place where paths meet she taketh her stand.*" (Rotherham).

Here is depicted the office of the Logos, standing as it were at the head of all roads from the uttermost parts of the Universe, in an attitude of control. This mighty being has from untold ages controlled the affairs of God's creation, and just as it was said in the days of the Roman empire that "all roads lead to Rome," since from that city radiated the famous highways to every part of the Roman world, so can it be said that the control of every part of Divine creation is in the hands of Him Who stands "at the top of the high places . . . where paths meet."

The renowned passage describing creation consists of three well defined sections. Verses 22-26 speak of a time **before** creation began, verses 27-30 describe events **during** the work of creation, and verses 31-36 tell of the condition of things **after** the material creation had come into being and man was existent upon the earth. The purpose of this whole passage is to lead up to the love of Jesus Christ for mankind by first recapitulating the stupendous happenings of past ages before man was, and showing that above all these things He was vitally interested in the welfare of man. The Septuagint adds a verse between verses 21 and 22 which confirms this fact, "If I tell you the things which daily come to pass I must mention those which from the outset of the ages may be recounted." What those things are will be realised more clearly by a careful examination of each individual verse.

Vs. 22. "*The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.*"

It is worthy of notice that whereas in John's first chapter the statement is clearly made that "all things were made by Him" (i.e., the Logos) and consistently throughout the New Testament He is depicted as the Father's active agent in all the works of creation, yet here in Proverbs 8 where the story is, as it were, told by the Logos Himself, He gives the credit of achievement to His Father, the Master-Architect of the Universe. The harmony of this presentation with that description of our Lord which declares that He desired not to make Himself equal with God, but took on Himself a bondman's form (Phil. 2; 7 Diag.) is too striking to pass unnoticed.

The word translated "possessed" is **ganah**, meaning to get or acquire, thus giving a sense to this verse which harmonises its sentiment with those other Scriptures which speak of the Logos as the "first-begotten" Son of God, the first-born of all creation (Col. 1; 16, John 3; 16). Before God brought any other created being or thing into existence, in that mysterious time when He was alone, He "acquired" His first-born Son as the "beginning of His way." The twenty-third verse is then obviously a commentary upon this statement: "I was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was" or as Rotherham puts it "At the outset of the ages had I been established, in advance of the antiquities of the earth."

Vs. 24. "*When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.*"

The narrator continues to stress the fact of His creation, or "birth," at a time **before** material creation began. There are two physical conceptions covered by the words "depths" and "deep" in the Old Testament. Purely terrestrial depth, such as the deep sea, depth of a pit, and so on, is usually **maamagim** or **metsulah**, examples of these words being found in Psa. 69; 2 and Job 41; 31. But what we in our day would call the "depths of space," i.e., the unknown deeps outside our planet earth, is expressed by **tehom**, and this is the word which is used in Gen. 1; 2, "Darkness was upon the face of the **deep**" and Gen. 7; 11 and 8; 2 with their references to the "fountains of the great deep" (the exterior waters of the canopy which caused the Deluge of Noah's day). Much the same idea is attached to the word "abyss" or "bottomless pit" (**abyssos**) in the New Testament.

In the same way the word here translated "fountain" is **mayan** a great gushing fountain, not the more usual **ayin**, a little spring or well. "Mayan" is used for the "fountains of the great deep" of Gen. 7; 11 and 8; 2 and with these facts in mind it is easy to interpret this verse as referring to a time when neither the enveloping waters nor even the wide expanse of "empty space" had been brought into existence. In other words, our physical universe which is the home of earth, sun and myriads of stars had not yet come into being.

Vs. 25. *"Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth."*

The marvellous choice of words in the original can be appreciated only when modern scientific knowledge is brought in to aid. Only in recent years has it become known that the mountains and continents of the earth are actually "floating" on a substratum of semi-fluid material at a great depth. Now the Hebrew word here rendered "settled" reveals this fact very accurately. It is the word **taba** which has the significance of sinking or becoming embedded in mud or mire—an apt description of earth's continents carried upon the

semi-fluid interior masses. The same word is used in Job 38; 6 "Whereupon are the corner stones thereof fastened?" referring directly to the same thing, the foundations of the earth. It is translated "sunk" or "sink" several times in passages such as Psa. 9; 15, Lam. 2; 9 and Jer. 38; 22, where the reference is to sinking in mire rather than water, and most noteworthy of all, is rendered for the only time "drowned" in Exod. 15; 4, where the reference is to the overthrow of Pharaoh's hosts in the Red Sea. As every Bible Student knows, the spot where that historic crossing took place was only a few feet deep and the destruction of Pharaoh's hosts was due to their being engulfed in the quicksands as the waters returned—an excellent example of the use of this word.

Vs. 26. *"While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world."*

This verse repays examination. "Earth" is **erets**, meaning the planet itself. "Fields" is **chuts**, a word meaning literally that which is without, abroad, outside the city. It was used to indicate the suburbs outside a city or the fields outside a village, or the wilderness outside a settled community. As applied to the principal thought, the **earth**, its reference would seem to be to those bodies which lie **outside** the earth, i.e., the moon and the planets. The remaining expression means literally the chief or first of the dust or clay which ultimately became fertile earth. Rotherham translates this phrase "first of the earth-particles." Thus seen, the Logos declares His existence as being before the earth, the planets or even the material of which the earth and the planets are composed had been brought into being.

At this point He ceases to speak of the time before creation. He has explained that He existed before the "waters above and the earth beneath," before the planets and stars and before the creation of the Universe itself. Now in verse 27 He begins to speak of His connection with this earthly creation with which we as human beings are more familiar.

*(To be concluded in next month's issue).*

## BIBLE STUDENTS BOOKSHELF

This column records books which are likely to be helpful to Bible Students, the class of reader to whom they will mostly appeal being indicated. Each book is provided with an index, unless otherwise stated.

## IN GREEN PASTURES.

J. R. MILLER

243 pages. Cloth, 2/6; Leather, 3/6, post 3d. Small pocket size, 3/6, post 2d.

Thomas Nelson

A book of daily devotional readings manifesting deep spirituality and a real comprehension of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. This little book is highly esteemed by many of the friends.

## HEAVENLY WISDOM

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get Wisdom" (Prov. 4; 7)

Wisdom is properly defined to be (1) the power of discerning what is true and right, what is conducive to the highest interests. (2) Conformity, so far as one's own conduct is concerned, to the course of action dictated by such discernment. The world-famed Gough summed up wisdom in these words, "Wisdom is knowledge made our own and properly applied." The best-intentioned of people find continually that they are inclined to slip away from the noble standards and sentiments of their hearts. Experience demonstrates that all need frequently to look about them and to compare present attainments with the past to note whether or not they are making progress or retrograding. Our advice to all consecrated Christians is that such introspection be taken nightly before we retire to rest—that each day's progress be noted and that fresh resolutions be presented evening and morning at the Throne of Grace to be practised to the extent of our ability daily.

The word wisdom takes on a variety of shades as it passes through different minds and it behooves us to get the right kind of wisdom—to find the wisdom which cometh from above and to clearly distinguish between it and other wisdom. The Apostle Paul explains that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God and that the wisdom which God inculcates is often esteemed foolishness by the worldly wise. One class of these worldly wise men say to us by their actions, "Money is the principal thing, therefore with all your getting, get money." There is a certain amount of worldly logic in this, nevertheless many of those thus taught have, after a few years, demonstrated by their own course the fallacy of this proposition. There are things which money cannot buy and which the pursuit of money is almost sure to drive away.—Health, peace of mind, joy, a restful conscience, the knowledge of God. Another class of the worldly wise tell us that true wisdom is the pursuit of pleasure. The gratification found in this is their happiness, and they know of no greater wisdom than the daily endeavour to gratify these tastes, yet, if they analyse their own feelings, they perceive that they are not really enjoying life, but are using their mental activities in the endeavour to find enjoyment in life. Another class of worldly wise tell us that science and philosophy are the only things worthy of the noblest minds and intellects.

They tell us that the word science signifies that which is true and that the special aim of scientists is to help their fellow men by uncovering the truth, by getting rid of all the ignorance and deceptions that surround various matters and things and thus bring Truth to the front. They tell us that thus the scientists are the real teachers of the world. They tell us that philosophy teaches the love of wisdom, which leads to search for it and that in the last analysis they are really the wise men of the world who make it their business to help other men to wisdom along all the pathways of life, in matters of financial and social, mental, moral and natural science.

At last we seem to find in this profession what we are seeking; true wisdom with noble objects before it. We commend their love of truth and their desire to rid themselves of all superstition and error and we pause to examine the practical working of this wisdom and to note the blessings it brings to these philosophers; yet the philosophers are not happy. The geologist, with his hammer, chips and examines the rocks and philosophises as to the method of their formation, the probable conditions of the earth at that time, etc., and takes a degree of pleasure in presenting his deductions to fellow scientists. Yet they all know that he does not **know**, that his findings neither satisfy his own heart nor can give satisfaction on such a subject to his fellow scientists. The biologist studies the human anatomy and the anatomy of the largest animals with a view to tracing how the lowest form of living creature was originally the highest form and how all others had been evolved therefrom. He presents his arguments to the world, and for a few short years has a place among his worldly wise associates; a little later on to be branded as a back number in the light of some other theories and facts which some other biologist shall have conceived and set forth.

Let us turn from these worldly wise men and their instructions that we may hearken to the voice of the Lord our God which tells us that true wisdom comes from above. And what is more reasonable than this? Knowing so little, of ourselves, why should we not expect to be instructed in the true wisdom by our Creator. Our Lord is the foundation of Wisdom, and we should anticipate that from this foundation alone could come the satisfaction which all hearts crave.

Let us examine carefully this true wisdom from above which the Scriptures enjoin (Jas. 3; 17). It is first pure—it sets purity as its highest standard, and the word pure takes in the thought of honesty, sincerity. Whatever questions arise respecting our dealings, our conduct, our thoughts, the first point to be decided would be, is it pure; is it honest; is it true? If this cannot be answered affirmatively, that is enough, Heavenly Wisdom says.

If the question stands the first test, the second one would be, is my motive a peaceable one? Would I thus be doing all that I properly could do to preserve peace, harmony, accord in my own heart and in my dealings with others, or would the course considered be likely to awaken strife? Only peaceable dispositions are approved by the Lord, and this thought should continually guide the Lord's people, with a desire to be pleasing to Him. This, however, does not mean a lack of firmness of character, nor the lack of a proper combativeness to oppose the wrong in the proper manner and on suitable occasions. It merely means that our conduct should be as peaceable as loyalty to righteousness will permit. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory."

Gentleness is given as the third mark of Heavenly Wisdom. The world in general has grown to appreciate the sentiment that gentleness is a propriety. Indeed, to declare that some people are not gentlemen would be one of the surest ways of so arousing their temper as to cause a display of feeling which would be anything but gentle. The gentleness of the world is largely on the outside—polish, good breeding; but the gentleness which the heavenly wisdom inculcates extends from the inside to the outside. The thoughts are gentle—brought under control by the various injunctions and instructions of the Word of the Lord. The whole life of the regenerated Christian is brought under control of the Spirit of holiness, which is on all proper occasions a spirit of gentleness, meekness, patience and long suffering. There may be times when the direction of the Lord's Word would cause His people, exercised by His Spirit, to seem ungentle, to seem severe even; yet it would be the result of a failure to rightly discriminate on the subject. Gentleness and firmness are not in conflict, though sometimes their combination is not rightly understood or appreciated by those who lack the wisdom from above.

The fourth point to be remembered in connection with the heavenly wisdom is that those

who are exercised by it are easy of entreatment—they are not hard hearted, cold, stony; they can be touched with sympathy, and will manifest their sympathy even though they may not always allow it to rule them nor always allow it to hinder them from exercising proper disciplines. There is a difference between being easily entreated and being "soft," spineless. The wisdom from above has a firm texture of character, without coarseness, roughness, rudeness, hardness.

The fifth element of heavenly wisdom is to be full of mercy—overflowing with mercy, with generous impulses, with kindly feelings, with compassion and sympathy for those in any trouble or distress. This, however, would not mean a mercy without gauges and conditions. "Mercy may fill one full and yet be limited and restrained in its course of action, because sound judgment may dictate that in some cases the restraint of mercy would be for the benefit, the advantage, of the offender. In a word, where the spirit of the world would be that of vindictiveness, hatred and animosity, because of some evil done, the Spirit of the Lord, the wisdom from above, would be full of mercy, compassion, sympathy; and would be restrained from full forgiveness and remission of all penalties, only as sound judgment should indicate that such a generous course would be contrary to the best interests of the culprit.

Lastly, the wisdom from above is full of good fruits, and delights in whatsoever things are true, honest, pure, lovely and of good report. Cannot we see the philosophy connected with this wisdom—that the possessor of it is sure to be blessed in his heart experience, to have happiness, joy, peace and blessing himself, as well as sure to scatter blessings wherever he may go? This is the tendency of this heavenly wisdom; this is the wisdom from above. This is the wisdom, therefore, referred to in the words, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom," the wisdom with these characteristics.

There is only one way to put ourselves into relationship with the Lord so as to be able to receive this wisdom from above. That way is Christ—through faith in His blood as our sin atonement. Still more than this, it means a renunciation of our sins, an endeavour to walk in the Lord's way, leading to a full consecration of heart and life to Him and the consequent begetting of the Spirit. Only from this last standpoint can any hope to receive the wisdom from above, the true wisdom.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## A SPECIAL NOTICE

For the present, and until further notice, will the friends please send all correspondence involving Committee policy and other matters normally requiring the Secretary's personal attention, to Brother C. R. Smith, 21 Werter Road, London, S.W.15. Subscriptions, orders and business matters should continue to be sent to 24 Darwin Road, Welling, as usual.

## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Friends who have not yet exercised their privilege of voting are reminded that papers should be in the hands of Brother Ford by July 10. Every additional vote cast gives added assurance to the brethren elected to serve that their activities have the sympathetic support and endorsement of the friends generally.

## NEWS FROM THE CLASSES

We would like to remind the friends that short paragraphs relating to Class activities of interest will always be received with appreciation and published in the "Monthly" if considered helpful and interesting. There are many isolated ones who, from time to time, express the desire to be able to follow the various activities of their more fortunate brethren in this way.

## "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"

Several used sets are available and will be sent anywhere for 2/6 per set post free. Second-hand Karatol sets are also available from time to time, and price will be quoted upon application if a set happens to be in stock. We are glad to record the names of friends desiring to obtain any particular "Truth" book which is out of print in order to send them one as soon as it becomes available.

## IPSWICH HOME GATHERING

The Ipswich friends extend a hearty welcome to their two-day Home-Gathering to be held on July 22 and 23, in the Ambulance Hall, Samuel Road, Ipswich. The Saturday evening speaker will be Brother H. J. Shearn, and on Sunday, Brothers P. Wright (Market Bosworth) and T. Holmes (Melton Mowbray) will minister. Lunch and tea will be provided and the brethren are requested to bring their own "Bible Students' Hymnal." Further details from Brother W. Clarke, Walcot, 97 Parliament Road, Ipswich. Friends are requested to note that the correct dates are those shown above, the July 30 date given in last month's issue being incorrect.

### The HERALD

of Christ's Kingdom

### The DAWN

of Christ's Presence

Two interesting and helpful magazines published monthly in Brooklyn, U.S.A.; and containing devotional articles and expositions of considerable interest to our readers.

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British Correspondents :  
BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE

## ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation the anonymous receipt of 10/- (Somerset) and £2 (Yorkshire) for use in the Master's service.

## LONDON CONVENTION

Preparations are now well in hand for the August gathering at the Memorial Hall, and friends who desire accommodation are earnestly required to make their requirements known as soon as possible, since it is often difficult to obtain suitable rooms at the last moment. The new "Bible Students' Hymnal" will be used at the Convention, and copies can be obtained at the bookstall, and will, of course, be available during the sessions for those who do not possess a copy of their own or fail to bring it with them.

## "EVOLUTION—AND THE SCRIPTURES"

This is the title of a little booklet just published by the Committee at One Penny, and intended for use by those who desire a handy pamphlet on the subject to hand to interested friends. It is a synopsis which calls attention on its last page to the booklet "Evolutionists at the Cross-roads," which is well known as constituting a full exposition of this subject. We shall be glad to send this new booklet upon request, at 1½d. per copy post free. Six copies for 7d.

## "POEMS OF DAWN"

This reprint by the Australian brethren is now available from stock, at 3/- per copy post free, and will be found a very attractive book to those who have in the past appreciated this well-chosen collection of poems.

## PROPOSED TUNE BOOK

A number of brethren have enquired as to the possibility of producing a suitable Tune-book to be used with the "Bible Students' Hymnal." As an indication of the probable demand for such a book, the office would be glad to have a postcard from those who would take a copy containing the tunes listed in the index. The book would need to be duplicator-produced, and the cost would not exceed 2/6.

## BIBLE STUDENTS BOOKROOM

For the friends' convenience, the Committee holds a stock of all publications issued by :—

Pastoral Bible Institute.....Brooklyn  
Dawn Publishers .....Brooklyn  
Berean Bible Institute.....Melbourne

Lists of these books, in addition to the Committee's own publications, are available upon request.

BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE  
24 Darwin Road, Welling, KENT

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages,"*

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# BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY



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Blessed are ye when men curse  
persecute you / and shall fastly say  
out of youl sayings agaynst you

All valleys shall be exalted  
mountayne and hylly layde  
to is croked shall be made str

ye seed of Abraham his servan  
Jacob his chosen.  
w the Lo R. our God: his ju

And God shall wipe away all  
tears from their eyes: and there  
shall be no more death, neither  
mourne, nor crying, neither shall  
there be any more pain: for the  
former things are passed away.

Vol. 16 No. 8

AUGUST, 1939

THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

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## BIBLE STUDENTS' REFERENCE LIBRARY

Realising that many of the friends are unable to purchase or obtain all the books they would like, for personal study and reference, the Committee has decided to establish a reference library comprising the various types of works which are of value and assistance in our studies. This library will include all "Present Truth" publications of value, Bible translations and helps, historical works of repute, such as Gibbons "Decline and Fall," Mosheim's Church History, etc.; books descriptive of scenes, customs, etc., in Bible lands; modern works on archeology and exploration, and any other books which in the opinion of the Committee will assist the understanding and development of our faith along the lines of "Present Truth." The Library must of necessity be built up slowly, and in this connection if any friends care to present suitable works from their own bookshelves these will be received with sincere appreciation, although in each case it will be appreciated if the proposed books be notified beforehand so that advice may be given that the book can be usefully included.

The brethren will be able to borrow any book for a period of two weeks, and retain after that period if desired, until it is required for another borrower. A charge of about sixpence per book will be made to cover postal and incidental expenses, the borrower also paying return postage. A list of works available will be furnished to each borrower and will be kept up-to-date as new books are added.

In order to enable final plans to be made, will all friends who feel that such a library would be of service, and who are likely to make use of it, kindly send a post-card to the office to that effect; at the same time giving details of any particular books which they themselves would like to see included in the library.

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A reader enquires if the first part of the July article in this series, entitled "Every eye shall see Him," is intended to convey the thought that Jesus Christ at the time of His revelation to the world will be *liberally visible to the natural eyesight*. No such thought is intended. Readers will recall that the previous articles, especially those in the February and March issues, demonstrate very plainly that our Lord returns as a spirit being, forever veiled from human sight. The early part of the July instalment, in quoting the various Scriptures usually declared to teach a visible appearance, has rather over-stressed the Scripture setting of the texts; although it will be noted that the latter half of the article is quite definite upon the subject. This word of explanation is inserted for the benefit of others who may be puzzled at the apparent inconsistency.

## THE LIBRARY—A SUGGESTION

Referring to the announcement regarding the proposed library which appeared last month and is repeated above, it is suggested that a more practical basis would be the payment of a weekly subscription of 3d., remitted perhaps quarterly, which would cover postal expenses both ways and all incidental expenses. If this method appeals to brethren interested in this project, it would be appreciated if this preference were stated when notifying their interest, in order to guide the Committee in the arrangements to be made.

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## BIBLE STUDENTS' HYMNAL

The new book has received general approval. Suggestions are now being considered whereby a suitable tune book can be produced cheaply. In the meantime it is earnestly desired that all the British friends become the possessors of a copy of the Hymnal, which has been produced for the general benefit.

Limp Cloth 11½d. post free  
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from the Berean Bible Institute.

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE LOGOS

2. The "Wisdom" chapter  
of Proverbs (concluded)

The "creation" passage of Proverbs 8 comprises three well-defined sections. Of these, verses 22-26 speak of a time before creation began, and this section was discussed last month. The second section, verses 27-30, describes events during the work of creation, whilst verses 31-36 tell of the condition of things after material creation had come into being and man was existent upon earth. In verse 27 the Logos speaks of His more direct relationship to this earth and its inhabitants.

Vs. 27 "*When he prepared the heavens, I was there, when he set a compass upon the face of the deep.*"

The Hebrew for "heavens"—*shamayim*,—means the "heaved up things" and usually refers to the firmament or atmosphere which separated the waters on the earth from the waters which were above the earth, and which descended at the time of the Deluge. But since those primeval rings of gaseous minerals and water vapour which enveloped the earth during the igneous ages were all "heaved up" from the earth's turbulent surface and continually returned in cataclysmic avalanches throughout the long history of the six creative days, it is clear that *shamayim* can well include this entire system of rings which at one time enclosed the primitive earth.

The expression "set a compass" is the seventeenth century translators' idiom for drawing a circle. *Chaqaq chug* means to engrave a circle or sphere and the latter word is rendered "compassed with swaddling bands" in Job 26; 10 (referring to the earth enveloped in the watery canopy of Noah's day), "He walketh in the circuit of heaven" in Job 22, 14, and "He sitteth upon the circle of the earth" in Isa. 40; 22. Remembering what has been said regarding the "deep" (*tehom*) as a description of the depths of space, we have in this eloquent verse a vivid picture of the Almighty stretching a curtain of empty space and drawing upon that background one little circle—this earth—and setting in operation those powerful natural forces which "heaved up" the heavens and after many millions of years had come and gone, quietened down to that peaceful time when "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden." (Gen. 2; 8).

Thus does the description descend to the

level of every day matters. "When he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep. When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment. When he appointed the foundations of the earth." All these phrases indicate a time when the work of preparation for man was well-nigh complete and the Logos was able to express His own rejoicing at this new development in the Divine Plan—the coming of man. "THEN" says the Logos—whilst this work of preparation was actively progressing—"Then became I beside him a firm and sure worker" (Rotherham) "and I was daily, (*yom beyom*, day by day) his delight, rejoicing always before him" (verse 30). The relationship between these two celestial workers is nowhere more clearly shown than in this apt phrase expressive of a Divine Architect and the trusty worker Who executed the Divine designs. "Day by day, his delight;" words spoken of a time when the earth's revolutions around the sun had as yet barely commenced to mark those twenty-four hour divisions of time which men call days. Perhaps the greater "days" of creation are here referred to, described by One Who, day by day, as morning followed evening, heard the Divine pronouncement upon His labours—"And God saw that it was good."

It is not easy to realise just what an important stage in God's purposes was reached on that day when Adam first opened his eyes to conscious existence. If the sad experience of man during this long reign of sin and death is to serve as an object lesson to all eternity, to races of material beings belonging to other worlds and not as yet brought into existence—and this is thought by some to be the implication of Divine revelation—then the awakening to life of that first intelligent material being, the first man, was an event of stupendous importance. The ravishing beauty of Eden; the inspiring spectacle of this first human pair beginning to explore and settle down in their wonderful home; the idyllic harmony existing between them, all throws a flood of light upon the words of verse 31 "Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." The word for "habitable parts" is *tebel*, a fruitful or fruit-bearing place, and this surely is a reference to that

"garden eastward in Eden" (Gen. 2; 8) planted by the Lord God.

Now comes the virtual climax of the whole description—partly obscured in the Authorised Version through lax translation. Picture the mighty Logos rejoicing in this fruitful garden and its occupants, "and my delights" He says "were with the **beni adam**, the sons of men. Now therefore hearken unto me, ye children (**ben**, sons) for blessed are they that keep my ways."

There are three words in Hebrew expressive of men—**adam**, red earth, applied to man in recognition of his earthly origin; **enosh**, meaning a mortal being, in recognition of his ultimate end in death; and **ish**, an individual. In verse 31 the Logos uses the most appropriate of the three—**beni adam**, the sons of earth. Likewise there are four words for "children"—**olel**, a babe or suckling; **yeled** a lad or a boy; **naar** a youth, and **ben** a son. Note the appropriate usage of terms in these two verses. The Logos declares His interest and love for the sons of earth, and immediately exhorts these same sons to "hearken unto me." Then comes an exposition of the Divine Law of creation which is at once the message of God to man and the whole kernel of Christ's preaching to man.

*"Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, . . . for whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me love death." (Vs. 31-36).*

Many long centuries were to roll away before the fields of Galilee and the streets of Jerusalem heard those same words in language attuned to their ears. "He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life" . . . "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" . . . "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him." (John 6; 47, 3; 36, 12; 48). The same eternal truths, spoken as it were at the foundation of the world, repeated to those amongst whom the Logos walked and with whom he talked, and ringing down the centuries to our own time are still not comprehended by the greater part of the sons of men. And yet, though all unknowingly, they owe their very origin to that work in Eden carried out so rejoicingly by the One Who now waits to complete His work of blessing.

For every Bible student knows the story is not yet complete. The mighty works of material creation outlined so briefly in Proverbs 8 are recapitulated only to direct the reader's attention to the much greater importance of man in the Divine Plan—man, not merely newly created as in Eden, not struggling helplessly in the iron grasp of sin and death as in the intervening years, but man as he will be in the glorious to-morrow when the whole purpose of God in earthly creation is completed. This is why, in this remarkable passage, the part played by the Logos in all those great events of the time before man existed are introduced only to lead up to the personal interest of the Son of God in man and his destiny—man, perfect in Eden; man, fallen into sin and condemned to death, without hope except that a Redeemer should come from above; and man as he will be when the curse of sin is removed. The laws which govern man's reconciliation to God are set out in verses 32-36, and to complete the story Chapter 9 in its first six verses gives a hint of the developing dispensations which at their close will see this glorious consummation achieved.

Scholars point out that verses 1-6 of Chapter 9 belong to Chapter 8 and complete the theme. Verse 7 commences a different train of thought and evidently marks the point where the compiler of the book attached his next thesis. With this in view it is interesting to note the main thoughts in these six verses.

Following the pronouncement of Divine law in the last five verses of Chapter 8, there are four main points.

*Vs. 1, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars."*

The edifice of material creation has been completed. That part of the Logos' work is finished. The seven pillars upon which the edifice is constructed may well speak of the seven creative days—all of which were pronounced "good"—foundations well and truly laid as a result of which the crowning glory of human society might eventually find its eternal home.

*Vs. 2, "She hath killed her beasts."*

The first period of Divine dealing with this human creation was marked with "sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin" (Heb. 10; 8) and this crude conception of man's approach to reconciliation with God was, for all its grossness, a necessary stage in the development of man's spiritual

understanding. But that stage passed when Jesus Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1; 10). It was then that it could be said that Wisdom

*"Hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table."*

What more eloquent description of the feast of doctrinal truth and of the "bread of life" which has been the portion of Christians throughout this Christian era could be expressed in eleven words? Wine and food; the two immortal symbols of Christian sustenance. Here surely is indicated in brief that favoured position which Christians now enjoy, infinitely superior to the crudities and materialism of the pre-Christian ages and yet built upon the growth in knowledge which men attained in that same time.

*Vs. 3, "She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city."*

Only one stage in the Divine Plan corresponds to this evidently universal invitation. "The Spirit and the Bride say 'Come,' and whosoever will may come" (Rev. 22; 17). The Bride of Christ, so aptly described as "virgins" in many Scriptures, will in very truth be "sent forth" to cry upon the highest places of the New Jerusalem and to invite all men to come into harmony with the eternal laws of righteousness and so to enter its sacred precincts and share in its glory and beauty (Rev. 21; 22-27).

*Vs. 4-6, "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding she saith to him 'Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live; and go in the way of understanding.'"*

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Did our Lord, when those sublime words fell from his lips on the mountain side in Galilee, recall words He Himself had coined many long ages before; "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither?" "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" says the Psalmist (Psa. 19; 7). Here in these last three verses the depths of Divine wisdom are manifest in all their grandeur. The simplicity of the child who is willing to learn, the sincerity of the man who is with resolution putting the past evil days of sin behind his back, these are the qualities which will enable travellers on the Highway of Holiness to partake of that bread, and drink of that wine, which the Saviour of all men, through countless ages

of loving watch care, and by virtue of an interim of suffering and anguish, and in the power of His resurrection glory, has in very truth "mingled" for the salvation of men. How true it must be that only one whose heart is fully set within him to do evil can possibly fail to heed this gracious invitation to "forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding."

There the story ends. The Logos has told of the days when God was alone; of the coming into being of all things; of the preparation of earth for man; of His own interest and joy in the things of earth; of the Divine laws by which men must and one day will live; of the developing dispensations which lead men to the great decision; and of the gracious invitation open to all men at the end. He does not tell us who will and who will not accept the opportunity, and enter into everlasting life. He does not intrude upon human free will. He Who set in motion the mightiest forces of natural things and Who has spanned the uttermost reaches of time stands outside that wall which encircles human freedom of choice. But whatever may be the ultimate result of the Millennial reign; however few or many there may be who, after the Saviour has entreated them with words of love, sullenly reject Him and all that He stands for, it will be gloriously true that "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." The work of the Logos, the man Christ Jesus, the Lord from heaven, with humankind upon earth, will at length be complete when He utters those sublime words "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

## OUR DAY.

"We are living, we are dwelling,  
In a grand and awful time.  
In an age on ages telling,  
To be living is sublime.  
Hark! the rumbling in the nations,  
Iron crumbling with the clay;  
Hark! what soundeth? 'Tis creation  
Groaning for a better day."

"Scoffers scorning, Heaven beholding,  
Thou hast but an hour to fight.  
See prophetic truth unfolding!  
Watch! and keep thy garments white.  
Oh, let all the soul within you  
For the truth's sake go abroad!  
Strike! let every nerve and sinew  
Tell on ages—tell for God!"

## "THE TRAINING OF THE SONS"

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as Sons." Heb. 12: 7.

In commencing this deeply doctrinal letter the writer sets out at considerable length, and with great force, our Lord's most excellent dignity as a Son of God. Higher than the angels, having inherited a more excellent Name than they, He was set before the whole creation as worthy of worship. Raised up from the dead a glorious spirit being, the express likeness of His Father's Person, and radiating all the effulgence of "the Glory"—(a term often used of God by Jewish writers, when not desiring to mention the incommunicable Name) Jesus was set forth and acknowledged by God as His Son. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. 1: 5). A little later in the Epistle we find this illustrious Son associated with other sons. "For it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings . . . for . . . He is not ashamed to call them brethren . . ." (Heb. 2: 10-12).

Thus the Son and His many followers are of one family; and are destined to be companions in all the eternal years beyond.

The Elder Son was made "perfect through suffering," being thus prepared for His high station in heavenly glory. In like manner, in the later stages of the Epistle, there is shown the need for the "many Sons" to undergo preparation also, in order to be made partakers of God's holiness, for without that holiness, "no man shall see the Lord." The force and beauty of this preparation has been obscured somewhat in the Authorised Version text by the use of certain words which, to-day are rather harsh in their meaning. Chastening and chastisement are usually associated with punitive correctional treatment, and are mostly taken to imply perversity, if not open disobedience, in the offender. The punishment meted out by stripes and other penances, is considered to have a chastening effect upon the disobedient son, and to impress upon him the wrongfulness of his actions. No Jewish father, would withhold the rod from any motive of soft sentimentality—for to withhold the rod was considered to spoil the child. The Apostle reminds his readers that they all had had fathers in the flesh who corrected them—and adds that they did "it for their pleasure." In

return, the sons had shown reverence, or filial respect to their fathers, for administering the correction. No son, to manhood grown, his correctional days over, would have anything but words of approval for the administration of both rebuke and rod. By that time of life he would understand how needful it had been for his parent to administer the correction, so that a wayward son might become a law-abiding citizen for the rest of his days. In this administration of corrective treatment the diligent father had the testimony of the Sacred Oracles, advising and exhorting him to train up his child in the way he should go—and to spare not the rod if need so required. All this was considered to be his duty, not only in his responsibility to God on behalf of his son, but also to his son as to a future member of the commonwealth of Israel. But it is a very perverted sense of the word to think of "chastening" as the administration only of the rod. Like many other words whose usage has changed in later days, it has not always had a meaning so harsh as the administration of corporal punishment. This severe interpretation of the Father's chastening has caused many children of God to see his hand in their lives only when suffering some painful experience. He has often been thought of as a vigilant Puritanical supervisor, watching out for every trifling misdemeanour; pouncing down on the offender with instant retributive punishment—inflicting personal, pecuniary or domestic loss as recompense for the sin committed. "What have I done that the Lord afflicts me thus" is the cry that has broken from heart to lip, times without number. And very truly, minds which could believe that God would torment poor lost souls to all eternity could easily think of Him as capable of punishing with all the severities involved in the suffering and death of loved ones and deprivation of one's earthly means. How we should thank God for dispelling that major nightmare of eternal anguish!

But it is no less needful that the minor understanding of his disciplinary measures should be corrected also, for God is no harsh disciplinarian, delighting only in wielding lash or rod! Nor would the Scripture, rightly understood, lead us to think so.

To chasten is the process of making "chaste." Even though our modern dictionaries define **chastening** as "to free from faults by punishment—to purify or refine," its derivation from the old French word "chaste" (which means **pure**, as its primary meaning) should lead us to look for another definition. Sometimes from the hand of the skilful potter, there would come forth a vessel or vase of singular beauty, delicately proportioned, and of exquisite texture and colouring—a beautiful "chaste" thing—a delight to the eye, and a joy to its eager purchaser. This is the correct usage of the word "chaste" in earlier English, and shows another side to its meaning besides the more modern, harsh phrase. Who can tell of the infinite pains taken by the magic touch of skilful fingers, as shape, balance and symmetry are brought out in such delightful proportion. Who could interpret the light of the eye, as the master-craftsman saw the work of his hands taking the shape and assuming the form which his inventive brain had foreseen. Every movement of those delicate fingers, every touch of pressure, heavy or of gossamer lightness, was working towards the "chaste" production—in fact, it was part of the **chastening**—the beautifying of the plastic clay; and then, to fix both shape and colour, with what care and concern would the exquisite thing be entrusted to the fire. Thus between the delicate manipulation of the Master's fingers and the correctly adjusted heat of the oven, a thing of singular chaste beauty would come forth. Does any brother think of this as treating the matter of God's chastening too lightly?

Let us reflect on one great outstanding fact in this setting of the Apostle's words, "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" he asks. Let us not forget what he has been saying about the sons of this great Father, and call to mind that there was one illustrious Son in whom the Father's work was fully accomplished, and who had attained to the desired perfection! Even that Prince-Leader—that well-beloved Son who was the appointed Captain of the "many sons," was chastened and beautified, and embellished with all the graces of love and holiness in exquisite perfection. Not by dint of scourgings but by the power of "joys set before Him," by the suasion of a Divine Father's Love, which caught up every desire and longing, and moulded and shaped them till the deep unfathomed eternal love of God had left its impress and likeness in the fully responsive heart of His Son. Thus the most

beautiful of all God's handiwork was wrought. Not even the well-beloved Son was exempt from this chastening; yet never an angry stripe, nor a single correction for sin was needed. No breaking of a rebellious will—no curb nor bit, nor bridle nor check-rein was necessary, but only the "guidance by God's eye" (Psa. 32: 8). For all that in the exhibition of His ready submission to His Father's Will, the "chastening" and the adornment of His soul went on—as the Hand of God inwrought every Grace and Fruit of the Spirit and every Divine attribute within. "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not" asks the Apostle, and the answer is equally explicit "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all (sons) are partakers then are ye . . . not sons."

Obviously then, we must include the lighter touches, as well as the heavier pressure of the Master's Hand in the "chastening"—for "He" was chastised as well as we. It will be the attitude of the child to the touch of the Father's Hand, which will determine whether the light touch of suasion is enough or whether the heavier pressure of threat or rod will be necessary ere the glorious "chastened" image of the first exemplary Son is reproduced in us. If we are watching for the leading of God's Eye; our eyes fast rivetted on His glance, then the touch of the Potter's hand, which will shape and embellish the New Creature to His pleasure and delight, will be light and easy. But if we forget or lightly hold the thought that He has called us into His family, and that we have covenanted to do His Will, and prove rebellious and perverse, by walking after our own desires, then, the Love which the Father bears towards us will not permit Him to let us go into the outer darkness again, without trying every possible measure of restraint to keep us in His favoured circle. "If ye endure chastening," should read "It is for chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." And that chastening, whether lighter or heavier, is administered by the Father of Spirits—of spiritual New Creatures—that they may become "partakers of His Holiness"—"and live." "Blessed is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy Law" (Psa. 94: 12).

It is not expected that the period of discipline and training will be always pleasurable. The choicest vessel must needs be "fired"—even though the clay work faultlessly to the Master's touch. But afterwards, when the work is done and the days of training are over, the

Son of God will reflect His Father's Holiness, and purity and wholesome-heartedness in all those things that make for righteousness and love and compassion. Let all children of God remember that our Father is preparing them to be "vessels of mercy," through whom He will pour out all the wealth of His love to a suffering sin-sick world, and then, if, there be a spark of sympathetic love in his heart for his unfortunate fellows, God will fan it to a white-hot glow of love like His own, if only the while he lie as plastic clay in the Potter's hands until the work is done. God has done His chastening work in His well-beloved Son, and that completed work is the pledge and guarantee for all the other "many sons" if they will endure the "chastening." Look not so much at the grievous "now," beloved; but at the glorious "afterwards" beyond.

In those darker days, then, beloved in the Lord, when the stresses of life are heavy upon us, when the rod of correction and discipline makes us smart, and we feel despondent and discouraged, "Lift up the hands which hang

down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet."

The pathway, though narrow, should be straight—there should be no perverse way in us. There may be some little "stone" of self-conceit, or some "gravel" of hard-heartedness in the "clay." The scholar may be too self-opinionated, so that the pedagogue cannot impart his lesson, other than by restraint. To keep us in His love, the Father will hedge us about with thorns, or lay us helplessly on our couch, till we heed His leading. How much better the lighter touch, the loving caress, the encouraging smile of our gracious God—for, after all, this is all that it need be, if we walk with Him, and leave ourselves wholly in His Hands.

A kiss bestowed at the right time may do infinitely more than a scolding or whipping to many a refractory child. So it may in things Divine. Accept the ministry of the Kiss, therefore, and let the rod lie unused. "Lie still, and let Him mould Thee"—into a vessel, chaste and beautiful, meet for the Master's use."

### ENDURING REPROOF.

There is perhaps no better test of a man's character than the way in which he bears himself under just reproof. Every man makes mistakes; every man commits faults; but not every man has the honesty and meekness to acknowledge his errors, and to welcome the criticisms which point them out to him. It is rarely difficult for us to find an excuse we are looking for. It is in fact always easier to spring to an angry defence of ourselves, than to calmly acknowledge the justice of another's righteous condemnation of some wrong action of ours; but to refuse to adopt this latter course, when we know we are in the wrong, is to reveal to our better consciousness, and often to the consciousness of others, an essential defect.

That man is strong who dares to confess that he is weak; he is always tottering to a fall who needs to bolster up the weakness of his personality by all sorts of transparent shams. It is not in vain that Scripture says: "Reprove one that hath understanding and he will understand knowledge;" for one of the best evidences of the possession of that direct self-government which stands as the basis of moral strength and one of the best means of gaining it when it is lacking, is just this willingness to accept merited reproof, and to profit by it when accepted.

### PRECEPTS OF MEN.

The Old Pharisees rejected Jesus because He taught men that God's plans or grace were wider than they had believed them to be. The Gentiles, the outcasts, the whole world of humanity, was included in them. The Pharisees believed that the Jews, and especially their own sect, had a monopoly of the grace of God. It is strange how this old spirit of human nature comes out in our day. Many in the Church seem to be just as averse to any view of the gospel which widens its scope beyond the narrow lines in which they have conceived it. The idea that there can be any blessing in it for the countless masses of the dead who passed out of life before Christ came, or who have since died with no knowledge of Him, is something they cannot admit. Nor have they an ear for any interpretations of Scripture which do not pass current in their sect, or which bring within the scope of God's love and blessing those whom they have always regarded as outside of His covenant. Men love to think that they belong to that favoured class who have a monopoly of both the truth and the grace of God.

(The Watch Tower).

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, THE PLANTING OF THE LORD (Isa. 61 : 3.)

A carpenter who is interested in the Plan of the Ages points out that there is represented in a piece of oak, beauty, strength, durability and usefulness. On the end there can be found white streaks or lines. These are called "medullary rays" or rays of light. They are really small tubes which carry the sap from under the bark to the heart of the tree, and, as the annual rings are laid on in fluid form, which alternately dries and contracts and thus each compresses the heart, or centre of the tree harder and harder. Thus, the centre is the **BEST** and not liable to be attacked by grubs. He suggested that the brethren do all they can to keep in the centre, out of harm's way, and at the same time be nourished and enriched by the sources of strength and beauty. Whenever one of these little tubes is cut it forms one of those light splashes on the face of the wood. He pointed out the development of the oak; 100 years growing to maturity, 100 years standing at the perfect mark and 100 years to deteriorate, 300 years in all, but if cut down in its prime and allowed to lie out in the open for 10 years (perfect number) exposed to storms, wind, etc., it would develop into a timber which would last and be useful and beautiful and strong for thousands of years.

#### "A CHRISTIAN'S WIRELESS."

God has a wireless to everywhere  
We call it the Word of God—and prayer.  
And everyone may surely win  
God's choicest gifts—by "listening in."

First we must shut out every sound  
From the busy world that throngs around.  
Vanity Fair makes a defending din  
On purpose to hinder us "listening in."

The devil will use his utmost power  
To keep you from having this quiet hour  
He knows that you can be freed from sin  
Always and only by "listening in."

But if you carefully read God's Word,  
His still small voice is clearly heard  
And wondrous power and peace within  
Daily results from "listening in."

He longs to give His best to you  
To keep you loyal, strong and true,  
So, if you have not begun—to-day begin,  
To prove God's power by "listening in."

### BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

Faithful when with tears thine eyes are dim,  
Faithful when joy's cup o'erflows its brim;  
Faithful when God seems to veil His Face,  
Faithful when He crowns thy work with grace.  
Faithful, though thy loved ones turn aside,  
Lips that praised thee once, in harshness chide.  
Faithful though success enwreathes thy brow,  
Faithful should the world before thee bow.  
Faithful till hath ceased life's fleeting breath  
Eager hands lie folded still in death.

"Faithful unto death," day by day.  
Help me thus to keep the narrow way.  
Strengthen me to bear the scorn and shame—  
Portion of all those who take Thy name.  
"Faithful unto death," when all is done,  
Cross is changed to crown, the victory won,  
Let me hear Thee say, O Blessed Lord,  
"Child, come enter into thy reward.  
Faithful thou hast been, come share with me  
Glory, Honour, Immortality."

### GOD TURNS A LEAF.

Have you not noticed that in the history of this planet God turns a leaf about every two thousand years?

God turned a leaf, and this world was fitted for human residence. About two thousand more years passed along and God turned another leaf, and it was the Deluge. About two thousand more years passed on and it was the appearance of Christ. Almost two thousand more years have passed by, and He will probably soon turn another leaf. What it shall be I cannot say. It may be the demolition of all these monstrosities of turpitude, and the establishment of righteousness in all the earth. He can do it, and He will do it. I am as confident as if it were already accomplished.

*Talmadge.*

### LOVE.

Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears.

1 Cor. 13: 4-8 (Moffatt).

From vintages of sorrow  
Are deepest joys distill'd,  
And the cup outstretched for healing  
Is oft at Marah filled.  
God leads to joy through weeping,  
To quietness through strife;  
Through yielding unto conquest,  
Through death to endless life.

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 8. "WHEN SHALL THESE THINGS BE."

*"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye\* when the Lord shall bring again Zion."*

When our Lord told His disciples that "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24; 36) he placed on record a great fact; the Creator's impassive silence as to the times and seasons of His unfolding Purpose. It has ever been that a detailed understanding of the Divine Plan relating to any particular period has been made known to the "Watchers" of that time but those same Watchers have been able to discern only a shadowy and fragmentary vision of the things which were yet to be. The Truth of God has unfolded itself before men's mental vision only as the time for its fulfilment has come and when some have profited sufficiently by the lessons of past history to be ready to receive it. Hence it is that expressions such as "Truth now due," "meat in due season for the Household of Faith," have come to bear a distinct and very specialised meaning. The light of past ages as well as of the present, converging upon those features of the Divine Plan which are now about to be fulfilled, or indeed are actually in process of fulfilment, has the effect of illuminating "things new and old" with a deeper and more accurate understanding than ever before. A familiar hymn illustrates this principle so undeniably in active operation.

*"More glorious still, as centuries roll  
Shall Truth's fair banner be unfurled  
Until at length, from pole to pole  
Its radiance shall o'erflow the world."*

It is in recognition of this fact of the ability to understand God's Plan only as it becomes due of fulfilment that the prophet cries

*"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (Amos 3; 7).*

God makes no serious move in the succession of events which mark the dispensations; brings no sweeping change in the affairs of

\*"They shall be face to face with the event." (Rotherham).

men; or permits no catastrophic end to an epoch without revealing His intentions to those who are His devoted ministers. It was so with Noah and the cataclysmic finish to the antediluvian world. It was so with Moses when God called Israel out of Egypt. The predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah and their terrible fulfilment on the nation to which they were uttered are no less striking than the knowledge of many men in the days of the First Advent that the coming of Messiah was imminent. (Luke 3; 15). Now that we who in our turn are Watchers on the walls of Zion perceive with clarity of vision the coming collapse of "this present evil world" and the early establishment of a world "wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3; 13) it should be a reasonable expectation that, no less than in the past, those whose hearts are tuned to the forces of spiritual things will distinctly perceive the times and seasons which affect their own lives so closely.

It should be expected therefore that as the various phases of the Second Advent begin to run their course there will be earnest disciples of Christ who are made aware of the fact. Although in the early stages of that Advent there is little that would carry conviction to the mind of a natural man or even to the average professing Christian, there is sufficient evidence to impress the spiritual consciousness of many consecrated children of God that the days of the Son of Man have commenced. That evidence must obviously be based upon Scriptural prophecy and the predictions of Christ Himself, correlated to the history of the world and particularly to contemporary events, if it is to be of any value. It must afford, not only a satisfactory presentation of the meaning of past events in history, not only a reasonable exposition of the position in which Christian disciples find themselves to-day, but also an outline of the manner in which the immediate future will see further progress in the work of setting up the Kingdom. It should be possible for us, as devout followers of the Master, to locate our approximate position on the stream of time in respect to this wonderful succession of events which constitutes the "Presence of the Son of Man."

This chapter draws attention to certain lines of Scriptural teaching which suggest that we who live in this first half of the twentieth century have already entered upon these days. The Lord from Heaven has come for His Church and is at this very time in process of taking them, one by one, to the glory of spiritual being. He has already commenced to be revealed in judgment upon the evil systems and institutions of this world. The third phase of His appearing, in which every eye shall see Him, is imminent, "even at the doors."

The first indication which can possibly justify Christians of this day in arriving at such startling conclusions is afforded by the trenchant words of Paul given to the Thessalonian Church about A.D. 53 as a guide for Christians for all time. That little company of believers had imbibed the hope of Christ's imminent return in a more or less visible and spectacular manner with such faith and enthusiasm that the passing of the years and the death of some of their number brought questions and doubts as to the position of those who died before the expected event took place. It was in answer to that state of mind amongst them that Paul wrote this second epistle to that Church, and in the second chapter of the epistle he states plainly and definitely that the Second Advent could not take place until certain events first transpired, and that the culmination of those events would constitute the sign for which they looked.

Here then is time-prophecy of the utmost importance. If we, from our vantage point in the twentieth century, can correctly identify Paul's inspired allusions, a strong link in the chain of evidence pointing to the time of the Second Advent is ready to our hand. Paul's words are these—

*"That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who . . . as God sitteth in the Temple of God, showing Himself that he is God . . . And he that now hindereth will hinder, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the bright shining of His presence."*

II Thess. 2; 3-8.

The salient features in this chain of events are three in number. There is to be a falling away, obviously from the true faith of Jesus, and the rising of an anti-Christian system designated by Paul the "Body (or Man) of sin,"

or "Son of perdition," arrogating to itself the prerogatives of God. An already existing power is to hinder the full development, or "revealing" of this system, but eventually that "hindering one" is to be removed and then the "Man of Sin" will reach the full zenith of its development.

Then comes destruction. The system will be consumed by the spirit of the Lord's mouth and destroyed by the radiance (epiphania) of His "parousia" or presence. The consuming and destruction of the system, once identified, is therefore an indication of the time of that "presence" which is effecting the destructive work.

In the past, Christian students looked for a superman in power and in wickedness to arise at the last day to fulfil this prediction in his own person. The enlargement of understanding which is now the possession of many indicates much more clearly that the spirit of Antichrist which existed in Paul's own lifetime was to be crystallised, after his death, into a great and all-powerful ecclesiastical system which would exert all its power to crush and destroy independent thought and worship in the Church. The hindering one was Imperial Pagan Rome, and when that power gave way to the rule of organised "Nominal" Christianity, the "Wicked One" was fully revealed.

It is a matter of recent history to recall that the greatest oppressor of the saints ever known, the Church-State system ruling from Rome and deriving its support and power from the claims of the Papacy, received a mortal wound at the hands of Napoleon in A.D. 1799; that the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 dealt it another blow, and that the annexation of the Papal States by King Victor Immanuel of Italy in 1870 and the Pope's retirement to become the "Prisoner of the Vatican" finally destroyed the persecuting power of the "Man of Sin." As a church system, it continues and takes its place in the affairs of this world—but as a ruling power making and unmaking kings, including and excluding men from the consolations and practice of religion, and in general controlling the outward circumstances of "Christendom" its power has been consumed. The rapid rise of Bible Societies and other instruments contributory to the growth of Bible knowledge from 1805 onwards, as well as that deeper understanding of the Divine Plan which came later in the century, all constitute the "spirit of the Lord's mouth" which was to effect the consuming of this system by the diversion of its adherents, formerly held

by their ignorance.

The conclusion is that during the latter half of the nineteenth century this "Man of Sin" has been undergoing its final degeneration and destruction, and this undisputed fact forms one evidence too clear to ignore that the "Presence" of Christ is already an accomplished fact.

\* \* \* \*

For a line of evidence in a different sphere it is necessary to turn back to the Old Testament. Concluding his apocalyptic foreview of world history in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Daniel, the revealing angel, having arrived at what is evidently the last great period of mortal strife between men, declares (Chapter 12; verse 1)—

*"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people . . . And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting (Heb. ollam—enduring) life, and some to everlasting contempt . . . And they that turn many to righteousness (shall be) as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words . . . even to the time of the end (the appointed time, when) many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."*

The striking correspondence of these words to the events of to-day has impressed itself upon many Christian thinkers of quite divergent theologies and schools of thought. The predicted running to and fro and increase of knowledge has been the characteristic feature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the process is even now by no means ended or even retarded. The steam engine and the steamboat have only just had their centenary. The marvellous achievements of electrical transport, telephonic and radio communication and air travel are yet many years less than a century old. And popular education has made strides undreamed of even fifty years ago. When it is realised that these wonders were declared to Daniel as coinciding with a time of trouble upon nations such as was never before known, and which is identified by Jesus Himself as marking the end of the Age and the time for the establishment of the Kingdom, it is impossible not to see in the Michael who stands up for the deliverance of his people a reference to the direct connection of Christ with these events. The knowledge and enlightenment of the nineteenth century, particularly in those directions which reveal to mankind his own potentialities and possibilities, is a manifestation of the radiance of Christ's presence, a veri-

table foretaste of the coming Kingdom. The trouble and distress upon all nations which is so equally a marked characteristic of the same period is no less the revelation of the Lord Jesus from Heaven in flaming fire taking vengeance on the forces inimical to righteousness. The entire picture thus presented to the students' view confirms the conclusion heretofore enunciated, that the latter years of the nineteenth century saw the commencement of the Second Presence of Christ in the realm of mankind.

\* \* \* \*

The attention of Bible Students for several centuries has been focussed upon that mysterious commission given to the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, as recorded in the Book of Daniel. The time was that of the overthrow of Zedekiah, the last King of Israel, and the end of the independence of that nation which sprang into being when Moses brought the Law down from the Mount. From that day to this, a period of over twenty-five hundred years, the people of Israel have been subject to the Gentiles—to Babylonian, to Persian, to Greek, to Roman, and finally to the present day powers of Europe. That period which the New Testament calls the "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21; 24) has been one long-drawn agony to a nation which once proudly bore the title of "a peculiar treasure, a holy nation" (Exod. 19; 5-6). The striking fulfilment of Daniel's predictions in the experiences of that people even up to the present day cannot fail to impress the student, and when to this is added the confirmatory evidence of Jesus and of the seers of Scripture it becomes evident that this promised period of Gentile domination between the overthrow of Israel as a nation and the establishment of that Kingdom which is to witness Israel's restoration is a very real thing.

Now the Book of Daniel presents this period of time as one in which successive world empires would wield sovereignty over the land and the people of Israel until the appointed time for the setting up of God's Kingdom should have come. For century after century the nations of men upon earth would have full liberty to govern according to their own desires and standards, and without let or hindrance from God. The inspired word makes it abundantly clear, that the ultimate result of the liberty thus accorded would be the complete breakdown of all human forms of government and an adequate demonstration of man's inability to govern and direct the affairs of this world whilst yet he remains unreconciled to God.

In symbolic language the seventh chapter of Daniel describes this catastrophic end to the "Times of the Gentiles" by picturing the various earthly powers as ravenous beasts gathered before the Lord of all the earth for judgment and destruction. "One like unto the Son of Man"—familiar expression for the personality of Christ—is pictured as taking his stand before the "Ancient of Days" preparatory to assuming control of earth's affairs for the ultimate blessing and benefit of all. The work of destruction is pictured in vivid terms—a fiery stream consuming all the institutions of evil and leaving the Son of Man and His followers, "the people of the saints of the Most High," in full possession of the sovereignty of men. Their kingdom, it is said, is an everlasting kingdom which shall never pass away nor be destroyed. (Dan. 7; 14-27).

This time of declining Gentile power must also coincide with the restoration of Israel as a nation (Luke 21; 24). That people, returned to their own land and converted at last by the experiences through which they have passed, will be active agents in spreading abroad the gospel of Christ which is to be the standard of the Kingdom (Isa. chapters 60-62). The time when "every eye shall see Him" has already been shown to coincide with this event, and it follows therefore that the days of Christ's early presence for the gathering of His saints and the destruction of the world's institutions are coincident with the period spoken of in Daniel chapter 7 as that during which the Times of the Gentiles and the power of the Gentile nations decline to their ending.

Now it is a well-known fact that observers of world affairs predict the imminent collapse of twentieth century civilisation. Many do not expect it to outlive the century. The fact that man's development in scientific knowledge has advanced at a greater rate than his ability or even desire to use that development for beneficial ends only has become a menace to the very existence of the human race. An early return to world barbarism is prophesied by some. In almost every quarter can be seen the fulfilment of Christ's words "Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity . . . Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking to those things which are coming upon the earth" (Luke 21; 25-26). The terrible efficiency of modern means of destruction makes the virtual extinction of the race no longer a fantastic conception. In short, reluctant as men may be to admit the fact, this

world, by its own standards and as a logical consequence of the course it has followed, has reached the end. Except God reaches down from Heaven to save, there is no salvation.

*This then is the end of the times of the Gentiles.* The nations in their death agonies, the world in pain and waiting for the birth of a new order. All this is in itself a confirmatory evidence that the King of Kings is present, preparing the way for the establishment of His Kingdom, and nearly ready for the time when, speaking peace to the nations, His Kingdom will extend from "sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." (Psa. 72; 8).

*This series will be concluded in the next issue.*

### UNSUCCESSFUL WORKERS.

Desponding Christians do not make successful workers or valiant soldiers. "Feeble-Hearts," and "Ready-to-Halts," and "Little-Faiths" win no battles, and wear no crowns. *They are so occupied with themselves, with their own experiences their own evidences, their changing moods and feelings, that they have no time for manly, noble service.* They are so busy in trying to perform "acts of faith," and having performed them, they are so intent upon analysing them, in order to ascertain whether they be all of the exact quality or quantity which will recommend them to God, that they leave no space for "joy in blessing," and no room for the free, large-hearted labour which such joy cannot fail to lead to. Tossed up and down on the waves of unbelief and fear, they have no heart to work. Shutting their eyes against the light, they grope their way uncertainly, and cannot run the race. Afraid to believe, but not afraid to doubt; afraid to trust, but not afraid to distrust; doubting themselves, and making that a reason for doubting God; putting away peace, and giving full scope to gloom; refusing light, but letting darkness reign within them; they are not in a condition to do hard work—nay, to do any work at all. Strength comes from joy, and of that joy they have none. They refuse both food and medicine, and they become lean and sickly. They are fitter for the hospital than the battlefield. They seem, too, to get more and more emaciated, though the food provided is abundant. Labouring under what physicians call atrophy, the more they eat the less they seem to be fed.

(H. Bonar).

### EVERY-DAY LIFE.

It is said that Beethoven when he had completed one of his grand musical compositions, was accustomed to test it on an old harpsichord, lest a more perfect instrument might flatter it or hide its defects. Many are unwilling to put the results of their labours to any such test as this, preferring to be deceived and to deceive others with outward appearances. With reference to human character it may be observed that those traits that most entitle us to the love and esteem of men, and which honour us most in the sight of God, are not always revealed on notable occasions and by extraordinary events, but manifest themselves in the quiet course of every-day life. This is the old harpsichord that tries the Character on its real merits. It is one thing to appear in the midst of popular favour and worldly success, and another to carry a noble, generous and magnanimous spirit amid the worries and anxieties and trials that spring up along the path hour by hour and day by day. Ruskin has truly said that "greatness is the aggregation of minuteness." It is the sum of little things well done that constitutes, as a whole, a really useful and noble life. It is not those who wait in idleness for some chance opportunity to distinguish themselves and do the world a great service who are likely to be the benefactors of the race, but rather those who proceed earnestly about their daily duties "doing with their might what their hands find to do." There are but few to whom it is given to discover new continents, to do an act that frees a race from bondage, to utter thoughts that stir the heart of mankind, but it is given to each and to all to pass each day of life so well, so nobly, so truly, so faithfully, so near to God, that all life is lifted up, and all the world made better by such living and doing.

"What Christ is to us we ought, in our human measure, to be to others. Christ came to our world to give His life, to pour divine kindness on weary, needy, perishing human lives. The Christmas spirit in our hearts should send us out on the same errand. There is need everywhere for love's ministry. There are few people whom God calls to do great things for Him, but the best thing any of us can do in this world is to live out a simple, beautiful, strong Christian life in our allotted place. Thus in our little measure we shall repeat the life of the Master Himself showing men some feeble reflection of Him."

### PREJUDICE.

Prejudice is pre-judgment. It is forming an opinion without examining the facts; it is hastily accepting a conclusion without investigating the evidence upon which it rests; it is allowing ourselves to be hood-winked and deceived, when the slightest reflection would keep us from such a mistake; it is being satisfied with hearsay, when we should demand the proof; it is rejecting everything at first sight, which does not confirm our former convictions or suit our former tastes or agree with our preconceived ideas; it is a revolt against the unpalatable and distasteful; it is a deep-seated reluctance to part with that to which we have been accustomed—a persistent hesitation to accept as true what we have not hitherto believed; a wicked unwillingness to admit that we can be wrong and others right. It favours or condemns upon the slightest pretext; it recoils or embraces as it is moved by caprice. It is not limited to persons—has to do with places, and creeds, and parties, and systems: hence its influence is extensive, and its evils manifold. Prejudice does not hold opinions: it is held by them. Its views are like plants that grow upon the rocks, that stick fast, though they have no rooting. It looks through jaundiced eyes; it listens with itching ears; it speaks in partial and biased accents. It clings to that which it should relinquish and relinquishes that to which it should cling. When beaten it remains defiant; when disproved and vanquished it is sullen and obstinate. There is nothing too low for its love, or too noble for its hatred; nothing is too sacred for its attacks, or too deserving for its aspersions. It is cruel as it is universal, as unjust as it is relentless; as unforgiving as it is conceited and ill-informed.

*(The Watch Tower).*

There will be a day when the Master will look upon us with eyes that pierce through to the naked soul and will say "I gave you a marvellous opportunity. I gave you an understanding of my message such as millions of earth's multitudes never received. I gave you a knowledge of my Truth such as many of my first disciples never had. I gave you the key to every problem which distressed mankind in your day, and I gave you the privilege of being heralds of my Kingdom. I gave you the opportunity which my followers in every century since Pentecost dreamed of and prayed for. What have you done with it?"

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## A SPECIAL NOTICE

For the present, and until further notice, will the friends please send all correspondence involving Committee policy and other matters normally requiring the Secretary's personal attention, to Brother C. R. Smith, 21 Werter Road, London, S.W.15. Subscriptions, orders and business matters should continue to be sent to 24 Darwin Road, Welling, as usual.

## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Friends who have not yet exercised their privilege of voting are reminded that papers should be in the hands of Brother Ford by July 10. Every additional vote cast gives added assurance to the brethren elected to serve that their activities have the sympathetic support and endorsement of the friends generally.

## NEWS FROM THE CLASSES

We would like to remind the friends that short paragraphs relating to Class activities of interest will always be received with appreciation and published in the "Monthly" if considered helpful and interesting. There are many isolated ones who, from time to time, express the desire to be able to follow the various activities of their more fortunate brethren in this way.

## "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"

Several used sets are available and will be sent anywhere for 2/6 per set post free. Second-hand Karatol sets are also available from time to time, and price will be quoted upon application if a set happens to be in stock. We are glad to record the names of friends desiring to obtain any particular "Truth" book which is out of print in order to send them one as soon as it becomes available.

## IPSWICH HOME GATHERING

The Ipswich friends extend a hearty welcome to their two-day Home-Gathering to be held on July 22 and 23, in the Ambulance Hall, Samuel Road, Ipswich. The Saturday evening speaker will be Brother H. J. Shearn, and on Sunday, Brothers P. Wright (Market Bosworth) and T. Holmes (Melton Mowbray) will minister. Lunch and tea will be provided and the brethren are requested to bring their own "Bible Students' Hymnal." Further details from Brother W. Clarke, Walcot, 97 Parliament Road, Ipswich. Friends are requested to note that the correct dates are those shown above, the July 30 date given in last month's issue being incorrect.

### The HERALD

of Christ's Kingdom

### The DAWN

of Christ's Presence

Two interesting and helpful magazines published monthly in Brooklyn, U.S.A.; and containing devotional articles and expositions of considerable interest to our readers.

Subscription price.....5s. per year.  
Three months' free trial on request.

British Correspondents :  
BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE

## ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge with sincere appreciation the anonymous receipt of 10/- (Somerset) and £2 (Yorkshire) for use in the Master's service.

## LONDON CONVENTION

Preparations are now well in hand for the August gathering at the Memorial Hall, and friends who desire accommodation are earnestly required to make their requirements known as soon as possible, since it is often difficult to obtain suitable rooms at the last moment. The new "Bible Students' Hymnal" will be used at the Convention, and copies can be obtained at the bookstall, and will, of course, be available during the sessions for those who do not possess a copy of their own or fail to bring it with them.

## "EVOLUTION—AND THE SCRIPTURES"

This is the title of a little booklet just published by the Committee at One Penny, and intended for use by those who desire a handy pamphlet on the subject to hand to interested friends. It is a synopsis which calls attention on its last page to the booklet "Evolutionists at the Cross-roads," which is well known as constituting a full exposition of this subject. We shall be glad to send this new booklet upon request, at 1½d. per copy post free. Six copies for 7d.

## "POEMS OF DAWN"

This reprint by the Australian brethren is now available from stock, at 3/- per copy post free, and will be found a very attractive book to those who have in the past appreciated this well-chosen collection of poems.

## PROPOSED TUNE BOOK

A number of brethren have enquired as to the possibility of producing a suitable Tune-book to be used with the "Bible Students' Hymnal." As an indication of the probable demand for such a book, the office would be glad to have a postcard from those who would take a copy containing the tunes listed in the index. The book would need to be duplicator-produced, and the cost would not exceed 2/6.

## BIBLE STUDENTS BOOKROOM

For the friends' convenience, the Committee holds a stock of all publications issued by :—

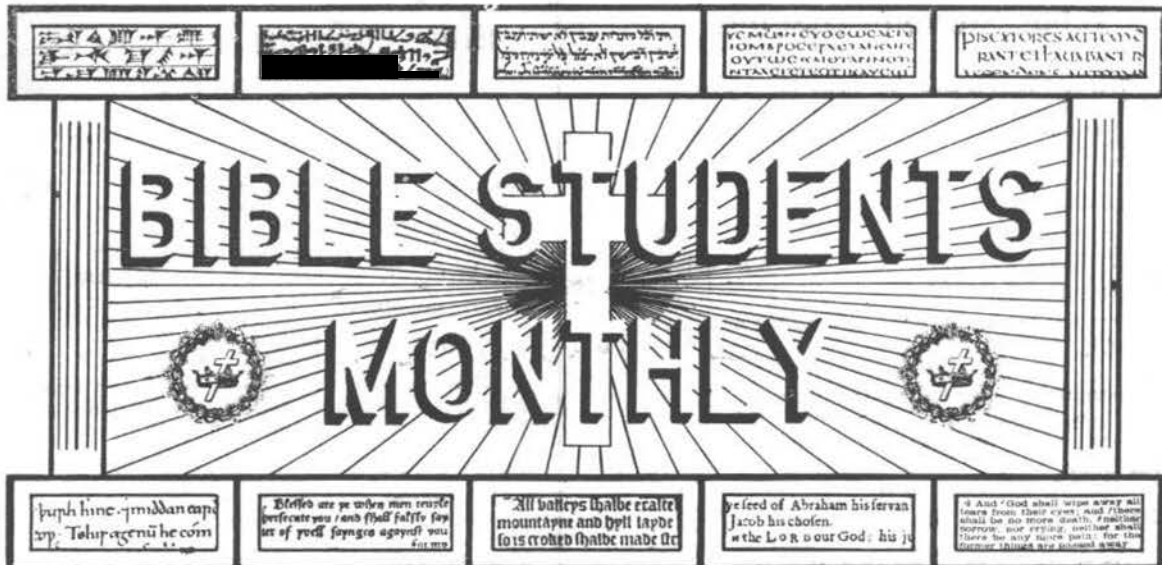
Pastoral Bible Institute.....Brooklyn  
Dawn Publishers .....Brooklyn  
Berean Bible Institute.....Melbourne

Lists of these books, in addition to the Committee's own publications, are available upon request.

BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE  
24 Darwin Road, Welling, KENT

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



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SEPTEMBER, 1939

THREEPENCE

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#### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

This periodical is published under the supervision of the Bible Students Committee, the articles appearing therein having been read and approved by at least five members before publication.

### Postal Subscription (one year)

Great Britain and Eire.....3/6  
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Overseas subscribers may remit to the addresses below if preferred.

### Correspondents in the United States

Pastoral Bible Institute,  
177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N.Y.  
The Dawn,  
136 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.

### Correspondent in Australia

Berean Bible Institute,  
19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.

Bible Students who, by reason of old age, infirmity or other adverse circumstances, are unable to pay for this journal may have it free of charge if annual request is made to that effect. This expense is met by voluntary donations from those interested.

Three months' free trial copies will be sent to any address upon request.

## Bible Students Committee

of the Associated Bible Students  
(1939—40)

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T. Holmes (Melton Mowbray)  
A. O. Hudson (Welling), *Secretary*.  
H. Osborne (Warrington), *Vice-Chairman*.  
C. T. Ward (Kettering), *Assistant Secretary*.

### Correspondence Centre

24 Darwin Road, Welling, Kent.

All communications should be sent to the above address, except those in connection with the following activities, which should be addressed as indicated.

### Pilgrim Service and Local Conventions

T. Holmes, Regent House, Regent Street,  
Melton Mowbray, Leics.

### Class and Study Group Extension

H. Osborne, 36 Sandy Lane, Stockton Heath,  
Warrington, Lancs.

### Public Meetings

W. Batcheller, 134 Clements Road, London, E.6.

## "YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME"

Stirring words, quickening the pulse of every Christian. To day, with distress of nations becoming more acute, our immortal privilege rises up before our minds. How can we best fulfil the Master's commission to "comfort those that mourn?"

The printed page has long been recognised as the most effective medium. A new booklet is about to be published, of the same general appearance as the "Plan of God in Brief" and of approximately 36 pages, designed to give a fair impression of our message to those who will turn and listen. An extract from the book appears on page 100 in this issue.

The title of this booklet is

### THE GOLDEN FUTURE

Our Hope for Years to Come

We plan to issue this book as cheaply as possible so that all may have some opportunity to pass it on. Full details will be announced next month, but in the meantime if any classes are likely to be desirous of taking 500 or 1000 copies direct from printers at a price not exceeding £5 per 1000, we shall be pleased to send a copy of the MSS to enable them to decide. This offer should be accepted quickly since the book will soon be ready, the advantage of obtaining supplies direct from printer lying in the fact that cost of double carriage is avoided and the books can be supplied more cheaply.

## AUTUMN HOME-GATHERING at

# DEWSBURY

Saturday and Sunday, September 30th and October 1st, 1939

### THE EXCHANGE HALL TOWN HALL

Dewsbury  
(Entrance in Wakefield Road)

### Saturday, September 30th

7.0 p.m. Address. Bro. D. STANLEY (Warrington)  
"The Voice of God"

### Sunday, October 1st

11.0 a.m. Manna Service  
11.15 Address. Bro. D. STANLEY (Warrington)  
"God's Dwelling Place"  
12.30 p.m. Lunch  
2.30 Address. Bro. SIDNEY SMITH (Manchester)  
"The Days of Daniel"  
4.0 Praise and Testimony Meeting  
4.30 Tea  
6.15 Address. Bro. J. W. WRIGHT (Stockport)  
"God hath spoken"

Usual catering arrangements. Bookstall.  
The "Bible Students Hymnal" will be used.

Further particulars: Bro. A. Carrington,  
6 Greenmount St., Beeston Hill, Leeds, 11

## THE PROMISE OF HIS PRESENCE

A treatise on  
the Second Advent.



### Chapter 9. CONCLUSION.

One of the most definite parables uttered by our Lord and one pregnant with meaning was that of the wheat and tares. It is one of the few parables in which Jesus first relates the story and then gives a full and clear explanation of its meaning (Matt. 13; 24-43). The striking correspondence between this passage and the vision of John in Rev. 14; 14-16 where he sees one like unto the Son of Man, coming upon a white cloud and in kingly majesty to reap the harvest of the earth, justifies the student in accepting the two pictures as relating to one and the same thing, the return of Christ to reap the harvest of the Age.

Since this is a harvest of the Age, it follows that the reaping must be a gathering of that which was sown and has been developing throughout the long centuries. Whilst it is true that all down through the Age there have been those of the "wheat" characteristics as well as those of the "tare" characteristics, it is plain that the New Testament teaching regarding this wonderful time in which we live and which is declared to be the Harvest cannot be interpreted as the mere gathering of a few saintly individuals out of "tare" systems into another earthly organisation. This is confirmed by the fact, demonstrated by history, that there has never been an earthly organisation, no matter how noble and lofty its original ideals, which has succeeded in keeping free from the "tare" element. Who among us to-day would be so bold as to say that there is such an organisation now in existence? The whole of our experience points to the contrary.

It is equally futile to conclude that the wheat and tares refer merely to **principles** of truth and error which have been broadcast during the Age and have each borne their appropriate fruitage. Futile, because our Lord Himself plainly declares that the good seed are the children of the Kingdom and the tares are the children of the Evil One. This definitely leads us to consider a development and a growth which can be identified with individuals and yet occupy all the Age in order to run its course and arrive at maturity.

The parables of Jesus are of two kinds, moral and eschatological (a word meaning "teachings about the last things") and this one

of the wheat and the tares is evidently of the latter. Our Lord gave the explanation which identifies its fulfilment at the end of the Age. (Matthew 13; 39, 40). The fact that an enemy is permitted to sow tares clearly precludes its application to the Millennial Age, for in that day nothing will be permitted to hurt nor destroy (Isaiah 11; 9), and the Lord's words fit admirably to the work of this Gospel Age in which we find ourselves.

To be in harmony with the parable, then, it would seem that the children of the Kingdom and those of the Evil One are to grow together until the Harvest, more or less indistinguishable one from the other, and that this process of united growth or development would culminate in a time when, in a collective sense, the "tare" element in the Christian world would be separated from the "wheat" element preparatory to the destruction of the one and the glorification of the other.

It is necessary, therefore, to look for a time in which the "tare" element—that section of the professing Christian community which embraces the Christian faith on account of some ulterior motive is found to become separate from that other section which is sincere in faith and is walking still in the advancing light—being in very truth "servants that wait for their Lord." (Luke 12; 36). When this separation can be observed taking place, and it becomes obvious that the cleavage is definite and final, then the "watchers" can have confidence that the Harvest is come, and that the succeeding events—the burning of "tares" and gathering of the "wheat" into the barn—will not be much longer delayed.

From Apostolic days these two seeds have been sown, and in consequence these two classes have always existed side by side, and intermingled with one another, in the Church of Christ upon earth. As Christian thought and understanding developed, and new truths were revealed, century after century, so did the spirit of Antichrist develop also. At no time could men point to an earthly Church consisting entirely of "wheat," and in point of fact the ability of men to discriminate between wheat and tares was largely non-existent—even as in real life in the East the tares resemble

wheat and cannot be distinguished from it until the Harvest.

But a time came at length when conditions changed. With the growing enlightenment of the nineteenth century men began to look upon the truths of religion with clearer eyes. They saw a world torn with the antagonistic theologies of many sects, but holy men from all those sects came to the study of the Scriptures in a new frame of mind. The rise of Bible Societies, of Sunday Schools, of facilities for reading and hearing expositions of the Word of Truth increased a thousand fold. Great men whose names are household words to this day expounded the first glimmerings of a light which in later years shone much more clearly upon the "Household of Faith." After more than a thousand years of oppression and persecution the Word of God became studied and discussed as never before.

Concurrently with this the vague shadowy ideas men had formerly held concerning the end of this world and the coming of a better one began to take more definite shape. The study of time-prophecies and chronology, which characterised so many Christian movements of a hundred years ago, was but the first crude endeavour to explore what the Scriptures have to say concerning the Heavenly Father's immediate plans. Later on the signs of the times began to show more definitely than any chronology that events were moving toward the climax of the Age. The first half of the nineteenth century was a time of rapidly developing Truth and it was in this period more than ever before that men began to get clear ideas on the main teachings of Scripture with regard to the Divine Plan. In the second half of the century a conviction grew that the Kingdom was imminent. A few there were who perceived with that deeper understanding of the distinction between human and spiritual natures which then came to light that Jesus would not return as a man, visibly, but as "the Lord that Spirit," invisible to human eyes. They understood in a new light the Scriptural teaching that He returns for His own at a time when the world in general are quite unconscious of the fact.

At the same time that the "Watchers" were thus assimilating the "cream" of Christian thought and understanding then available, the writings of Darwin, and the conclusions of scientific research, came with a shattering impact against the structures of Christendom. The "Origin of Species," published in 1859, provoked a theological storm the echoes of which

have nearly died away, but which at the time was a first-class issue. The old theology had no answer to make. Christendom was so committed to its doctrinal errors, the absurdity of which—such as the literal fires of Hell—were becoming apparent to every reasonable man, that in large measure the case went by default. Belief in the integrity of the Bible began to vanish. Those who attended Church and professed Christianity from ulterior motives began to find it unnecessary to keep up the appearance of religion. Church going was no longer a necessity to being "respectable." People who served Christ because of fear as to the consequences in a future life if they failed to do so, now lost their fears with their beliefs. In short, during the past seventy years the "professors" of Christianity have been steadily falling away from any form of association with religion, and standing revealed in their true colours as "tares."

Upon the other hand, this same enlightenment concerning the errors of the Dark Ages and the clearer understanding of Divine Truth which marked that entire century also produced a people who more than ever before justified the name of "Watchers." Not only devoted to the ethical principles of Christ's teaching, which is an essential for all believers in Christ, these went further, and by dint of deeper study and whole-hearted consecration were able to perceive, much more definitely than the majority of those still supporting the denominations, the manner in which God's Plan is working out. The clearest vision of "things to come" has proceeded, not from theological colleges and cathedral pulpits, but from men of lesser fame and often without degree or denominational ordination.

Here is the fulfilment of the parable. The "tares" have been gathered out from amongst the "wheat"—by the process described. Their "tare" characteristics will be burned, destroyed, in the troublous period which is to close the Age, when the "wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (Isaiah 29: 14). The work of reaping and gathering the wheat proceeds, an evident picture of the gathering of the people for God's Name" (Acts 15: 14) into that condition where they are ready to be used in the outworking of His designs "for the life of the world."

The Gospel Age, then, produces two classes of people. When the Age comes to the full, there is a separation, first the tares being rooted out, and then the wheat gathered. The field

was "ready for harvest" by the middle of last century and the two great influences—increase of light on the Word of God, "Truth now due"; and increase of scientific knowledge, were the influences which separated, finally and definitely, these two classes.

In our own day, we see what is evidently the closing features of this work. The separation is all but concluded. The fiery experiences which shall consume the "tare" class are very evidently close at hand. What then is the obvious conclusion? Surely it is that the Chief Reaper gave the command to "Reap" and that the reaping has progressed at the hands of His servants. The symbols of Revelation 14; 14-16, have been fulfilled; the One seated upon the white cloud has thrust in His sickle to reap, and the earth has been reaped. The gathering of the wheat into the barn has been likewise progressing and will progress until it can be truly said that "His wife hath made herself ready" and the Marriage of the Lamb shall have come. (Revelation 19; 7). That event still lies in the future, but must surely come as a triumphant climax to this wonderful work. This testimony regarding the harvest of the Age finds abundant and irrevocable fulfilment in the events of the past half century and constitutes one more line of reasoning justifying the conclusion that the period of Christ's presence has already commenced.

\* \* \*

It is of interest to note that in Revelation 16; 15, a unique parenthesis occurs which may not be without meaning. Bible students are accustomed to regard the events of the sixth vial of wrath (Rev. 16; 12-14) as depicting the preliminary events leading up to the Time of the End and the seventh vial (Rev. 16; 17) with its dark foreboding "He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" as describing the final conflict in which the Kingdoms of this world pass away. Now inserted between these two descriptions there is one brief word

*"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."*

If that verse was set in that position by Divine intention, it must at the very least constitute a strong hint that the proclamation and the fact of His presence "as a thief" at a time when the necessity for continued watchfulness is imperative, was between the sixth and

seventh vials. Such a casual reference cannot by any means be described as an "evidence"—nevertheless it must be accorded some respect as an indication to be considered and regarded. And if it tells anything at all regarding the time of His coming, its testimony is in accord with the evidences which have just been presented.

\* \* \*

Can there be any reasonable doubt, in the face of these considerations, that the Second Presence of Christ has already commenced; that He has already raised the sleeping saints to be with Himself; already commenced the "change" of the living ones as one by one they come to the end of earthly life; already set in motion the forces which are rapidly consummating the inevitable destruction of this "present evil world"? And if the Scriptural evidences, taken in conjunction with the signs of the times manifested in world events, are thus positive, what is the reasonable conclusion as to the immediate future?

It can be nothing else than that the third phase of His coming—the revelation with His Church to all men—is an imminent event. That the present gathering of the nations to war and destruction is definitely the final expression of the folly, the wickedness and the futility of man's government without God. That upon the ruins of this doomed social order there will quickly rise the edifice of God's Kingdom upon earth, a day of light and gladness in which the ransomed multitudes of all humanity will leave behind the miseries and injustice of the present, and receive with open hands and open minds the blessings and laws of a Kingdom of righteousness, — peace — security — health — everlasting life. Every aspiration and desire of the normal human being is to be gratified, men and women living in perfect harmony and brotherhood with their fellows, and all with one accord moulding their lives in complete assent to the wise provisions of that universal code which is at once the Law of Nature and the Law of God.

*"And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; FOR THE FORMER THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY."* (Rev. 21; 4).

What wonder then that the aged disciple John, sole survivor of those who seventy years before had seen their Lord ascend from Olivet, now ending his days a prisoner on the island

of Patmos, should lift up dim eyes to heaven and, exulting in the knowledge of this glorious consummation to God's Plan for humanity, give voice to that heartfelt prayer vibrant with the certainty of ultimate fulfilment, which stands for all time as a signature to the written revelation of God in the Bible.

**EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS.**

*The End.*

## What I Live for:

*I live for those who love me, whose hearts are kind and true;  
For the heaven that smiles above me, to rejoice my spirit too:  
For the precious ties that bind me,  
For the task by God assigned me,  
For others still behind me, and the good that I can do.*

*I live to tell the story,—He suffered for my sake,—  
To emulate His glory, and follow in His wake;  
With the noblest of all ages,  
Whose deeds crown sacred pages,  
Who reap salvation's wages, and God's great volume make.*

*I live to hold communion, with Him who is Divine;  
To feel there is a union, with His dear heart and mine:  
To welcome His correction,  
Grow wise by calm reflection,  
Increase in love's affection, to fulfil His grand design.*

*I live to hail that season, by prophets long foretold,  
When men shall live by reason, and not at all by gold;  
When man to man united,  
And every wrong thing righted,  
The whole world shall be lighted as Eden was of old.*

*I live for those who love me, for those who know me true;  
For the heaven that smiles above me to rejoice my spirit too:  
For the right that lacks assistance,  
For the wrong that needs resistance,  
For the glad approaching distance, and the good that I  
can do.*

—John 17: 3.

## NO POWER CAN SEPARATE.

*"Who shall separate us from the love of the anointed one? Afflictions? Distress? or Persecution? or Famine? or Nakedness? or Peril? or Sword?"*

All of which things we are liable to whilst dwelling in the flesh. How overwhelming any of these experiences might seem to be at any time! And, physically, we are no better equipped to endure them than are other people; many of whom succumb in despair. Nevertheless these experiences, when they do come, are not able to separate us from the love of the Anointed. They may have the effect of deepening and strengthening that love, but cannot separate us from it.

What a blessing it means to us that the Anointed One, our Head, has been tempted in all points like as we (New Creatures) are; and, therefore, knows, and loves, and cares. Every one of the conditions mentioned He knew by personal experience; which makes Him the sympathetic High Priest that He is. Now that He has all power in heaven and in earth, He will not permit such circumstances as mentioned to separate His followers from himself, but will comfort them, and encourage them to be faithful, as their Good Shepherd.

Clearly the way of triumph for all of us is, to hear His voice and follow Him unhesitatingly. Indeed—"In all these things do we more than overcome, through Him that loved us." This does not mean that Satan will cease to attack us along these lines; he is a persistent foe, and knows that a separation is possible; therefore he abides his time, and tries to catch us off guard; but our abiding faith means victory in the end, through One greater than Satan.

## "IN THAT DAY."

"So will the centuries pass, whilst the earth grows ever fairer and more beautiful, and mankind attains to a better and more complete knowledge of the message of Jesus Christ and the goodness of God. The days of evil will slip away into the background—never forgotten, always remaining an imperishable recollection of the terrible consequences of sin, but with no longer the power to hurt or destroy. The song of the angels, "Peace on earth—goodwill among men" will be an accomplished fact at last. Human beings will be fair of form and virile in body; magnificent examples of the creative power of God;

and with the consciousness of that eternity of supremely happy life which is before them will rise at every dawn to pursue with unflurried minds the occupations and pursuits to which they have set themselves. The world's work will go on—men will till the earth and reap the fruits of their labour; they will foregather together for the study and practice of arts and sciences which will always have something new to reveal; they will travel and rejoice in the varied glories of Nature and live their lives in absolute peace and harmony with each other and with God."

(From "The Golden Future," the new booklet.)

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### THE LORD KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT.

Yes, the Lord knows all about it—  
All about the path I tread;  
All about the part I've journeyed,  
And the part that lies ahead,  
All my footsteps He has ordered,  
And what greater joy can be,  
Than to know that, smooth or rugged,  
All the way He walks with me.  
—(Job 23. 10; Matt. 28. 20; Psa. 27. 11).

Yes, the Lord knows all about it—  
All about the pain we bear;  
Not a pang in mind or body,  
That He does not fully share.  
Who can tell how much He suffered?  
But He suffered not in vain!  
And if we are called to suffer,  
With Him also we shall reign.  
—(Zech. 2. 8; 1 Peter 2. 21; 2 Tim. 2. 12).

Yes, the Lord knows all about it—  
All about our conflict sore;  
With its all too many failures,  
But the issue ever sure;  
For we've this undimmed assurance,  
Based on His unerring Word—  
Though Satanic hosts assail us,  
We shall triumph in the Lord!  
—(1 Cor. 15. 57; 2 Cor. 2. 14).

Yes, the Lord knows all about it—  
Whatsoever the IT may be;  
Burdens, sorrows, losses, weakness—  
Each an ordered ministry.  
Hush, then, O impatient spirit,  
Though the billows o'er thee roll,  
'Tis His loved ones whom He chastens—  
Love is fashioning the soul!  
—(Exod. 3. 7; Heb. 2. 10; Heb. 12. 6).

By S. E. Burrow

### THE COINAGE OF A NEW WORD.

(Acts 11; 22-26).

After describing the degenerate conditions in Antioch at this time, Dean Farrar writes, "It is the darkest just before the dawn. When mankind has sunk into hopeless scepticism, the help of God is often very nigh at hand. "Bitter with weariness and sick with sin," there were many at any rate, even among the giddy and voluptuous Antiochenes, who, in despair of all sweetness and nobleness, were ready to hail with rapture the preaching of a new faith which promised forgiveness for the past, and brought ennoblement to the present. (Acts 13; 38). The work grew and prospered, and for a whole year the Apostles laboured in brotherly union and amid constant encouragement. The success of their labours was most decisively marked by the coinage of a new word, destined to a glorious immortality:—the disciples were first called CHRISTIANS at Antioch."

### SUGGESTION FOR REFLECTION.

If we are to be the judges of the world in the next age, how shall we be fitted for this position if we do not learn now how to take the proper viewpoint, the Lord's viewpoint, in our estimates of our brethren? If our love and our esteem for them is gauged by trifles, yea, by matters even unworthy of notice in the eyes of the Lord, are we developing the qualities of character which will fit us to be the judges of the incoming age? How are we growing up into Christ in all things? Let us judge ourselves rigidly along these lines, that we may indeed become like the Master and win His final approval.

### THE KING WHO GAVE.

The natural man lives to be ministered unto—he lays his imposts upon others. He buys slaves that they may fan him to sleep, bring him the jewelled cup, dance before him, and die in the arena for his sport. Into such a world there came a King, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The rough winds fanned His sleep; He drank of the mountain brook and made not the water wine for Himself; would not use His power to stay His own hunger, but had compassion on the multitude. He called them He had bought with a great price no more servants but friends. He entered the bloody arena alone, and, dying, broke all chains and brought life and immortality to light.

### WHAT THOU HIS TIME.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." Do not make the mistake of expecting Him to give you the desires of your heart at the very instant of your request; to make your path peaceful, easy and pleasant as soon as you commit your way to Him; and at once to bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noon-day. He has not promised to do that. *TIME* is necessary for the working out of His kind providences in our individual affairs; for God works on philosophical principles and for lasting and blessed results. So—

"If not to-day, be thou content, poor heart!  
God's plans, like lilies pure and white,  
unfold;

We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart;  
*TIME* will reveal the calyxes of gold."

## A PORTRAIT OF LUKE

"The beloved physician"  
Col 4: 14

Luke, the Evangelist, physician and historian, is said by tradition to have been a painter, and perhaps in the picturesque qualities of his writing we may trace the origin of this pious opinion. There is a legend that he painted the portrait of the Virgin, and certainly the greater part of the little we know of our Lord's mother is due to St. Luke, who preserved for us the Magnificat, and drew in words that poetic picture of the Nativity adorned with the Nunc Dimittis and the Benedictus which pictorial art has never ceased to reproduce. There is always a widespread desire to discover the personalities of great writers, and surely there is no one who has any feeling for Christianity but must regret our ignorance about the four Evangelists. Luke is the only one of whose character it is possible to form any definite idea. Even in his case we must rely mainly upon conjecture, for the modest chronicler of the Acts of the Apostles has purposely withdrawn himself from the gaze of his readers. He never tells us who he was, nor asks for our sympathy or our praise for the many hardships which he and Paul bore, and the many heroisms they displayed together. He never even betrays his presence except by the use of the pronoun "we." All we know for certain is that the "beloved physician" never failed his friend, but was alone with him when he made "ready to be offered." There is no direct evidence as to whether he was a Jew or a Greek, but many authorities adhere to the latter conclusion. Luke shows little sympathy with the Jews as a nation, and always paints them as hindering the work of the Church. On the other hand, he betrays some tolerance for the heathen religion around him, and a just and sympathetic comprehension of the attitude of the Roman Governors towards the new faith.

But whether he belonged to "the people" or "the nations," the historian was an artist,—a man of great literary genius, whose heaven-instilled purpose, while it inspired his work, never for a moment obscured his artistic skill. The object of the book of the Acts is, as we read it, twofold. First, the author desires to draw a picture of the early Church while it was still but an offshoot of Judaism; and secondly, to describe the bursting of the Judaic bonds by the real hero of the book—Paul. Inspired by his wonderful—we are tempted to say his

Greek—love of beauty and happiness, Luke begins with an exquisite picture of the early Christian community. An ideal social life prevailed among the brethren. "No man lacked anything," for "they had but one heart and one mind." No one "called anything his own, but they had all things in common," and "breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." We are told that "a great peace was upon them all," and that they possessed singular gifts of healing. Their increasing influence with the people disquieted the authorities, who, "doubting how far this would grow," summoned the apostles to appear before them and tried to bind them over to silence. Peter and John, however, replied to their accusers with light-hearted courage saying, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than to God, judge ye," and so far impressed the learned Gamaliel with their assurance that he begged his brethren to let them alone lest they themselves should be found fighting against God. When persecution threatened them Luke shows us the disciples assembling themselves together and praying that God, seeing their peril, would grant unto His servants that with all boldness they might speak His word by stretching out His hand to heal, that signs and wonders might be done by the might of His holy child. In the next picture which Luke puts before us the state of the Church is somewhat changed. The brotherhood has been greatly enlarged, and we trace some diminution in the early simplicity and joyousness. There arose, we are told, a murmuring among the Christian poor because some were better cared for than others;—evidently there is no longer community of goods. Certain men are chosen for the work of practical philanthropy, among them Stephen, who by giving offence to the orthodox Jews, became the first martyr. In presenting Stephen to his readers Luke departs a little from his ordinary method of character-drawing. Generally he adheres strictly to the dramatic method, and allows his characters to reveal themselves by their own words. But in the case of Stephen it is not so, and the world knows Stephen better by what Luke tells us than by the long discourse which is reported as his. We are convinced by his biographer rather

than by his eloquence that "he was full of faith and power," and that his hearers "were not able to resist the wisdom and power by which he spake," so that "all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly upon him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." By the description of his actual martyrdom this impression of spiritual fascination is confirmed in the reader's mind, and perhaps the picture of Stephen "looking into heaven," seeing the "glory of God," and forgiving his enemies, while they, "cut to the heart, gnashed upon him with their teeth," is for mere beauty of depiction the finest passage in the Acts. This moment of tragedy is the one which Luke chooses as the one in which to present Paul. "The witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul."

Once more the scene changes. Henceforward the reader's interest centres round Paul, —his conversion, his perils, his trials and his defences. As we read Paul's words as recorded by his friend it is impossible not to wonder to what extent they have been modified by passing through the medium of another mind. Was Luke's report always accurate? Verbal accuracy was surely impossible. It is out of the question. If a speech took some hours to deliver it is not possible to compress it into a short paragraph and maintain verbal accuracy. All the same, the short report may be a true one. A man may give in ten minutes an account of a speech he has heard in the House of Commons, and may convey truly both the subject matter of what was spoken, and also the manner and mental characteristics of the speaker, though he give up all attempt at a literal repetition of the sentences. Such a report could not be called imaginary, though it makes of necessity some tax upon the understanding and imagination of the reporter. The account would remain essentially true, and in this matter of essential truth, so far as Paul is concerned, every reader of the Bible who has the smallest grasp of character is in a position to verify Luke's account. Is the Paul whose adventures we follow in the Acts the same perfectly original character who reveals himself to us so unreservedly in his letters? Undoubtedly he is. No one could fail to recognize the great Apostle.

Nevertheless, every portrait reveals the painter to some degree, and in all Luke's sketches of character we see the same aversion to dogmatism, and the same fair attitude toward "those of the contrary part." He dwells

particularly upon any sympathetic allusion to the classical standpoint made by the apostles, repeating with evident sympathy the words spoken by Paul suggesting the nearness of God toward those philosophers who had "felt after Him"; and again, when Paul prevents the populace from worshipping him, we catch a glimpse of Luke's artistic appreciation of the joyousness inherent in a point of view which, however erroneous, bore testimony to the goodness of God, "who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not himself without a witness in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

All through his book Luke shows the characteristics of a man of much education. He seems almost to share the High Priest's surprise at the eloquence and force of Peter and John, "seeing that they were unlearned and ignorant men," and he displays that distrust of the multitude so common in men of exceptional gifts exceptionally cultivated. Witness his allusions to "fellows of the baser sort," and his account of the mass meeting of the Ephesian silversmiths, where "some cried one thing and some another, for the more part knew not why they were come together." The sudden changes of mind observable in crowds strike the historian's notice. He describes how the barbarians of the island on which Paul was shipwrecked, on seeing him bitten by a snake, concluded that he must be some murderer flying from justice whom vengeance had overtaken. "They looked that he should have swollen and fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while and seen no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god." Again we see a trace of the same feeling in the almost satirical account of the behaviour of the Jewish rabble before Gallio, when with utter inconsequence they beat Sosthenes in the Judgment Hall because they could not be revenged on Paul, and we feel that Luke is not wholly out of sympathy with the supercilious Gallio, who looked on at what he considered a quarrel "about words and names and their law," and "cared for none of these things." To Gallio himself it can never have occurred that his name would be known two thousand years later solely in connection with a petty riot he hardly noticed, any more than it occurred to Festus how bitterly the course of history would satirize his contemptuous summing up of Christianity as a question of Jewish

"superstition" and of "one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Man has a treacherous memory. It is hopeless to say what he may remember, or to gauge how

much he will forget. Agrippa, Felix, Festus, Gallio would have been as dead men out of mind but for Luke's pencil. Luke showed wherein lies "the artist's vantage o'er the king."

## THE ACCEPTABLE TIME

"Behold, now is the accepted time.  
Behold, now is the day of salvation."  
II Cor. 6: 2

These words of the Apostle quoted from the Prophet Isaiah are generally understood to be a call to the world to improve the present opportunity of accepting Christ by faith in order to salvation, with the warning that the present time furnishes the only opportunity, this being the day of salvation.

But this is not the meaning of the text. Neither the Apostle nor the Prophet addresses the world. Both address justified, consecrated believers. The class addressed is plainly seen from Isaiah's prophecy to be consecrated believers of the Gospel Age. It thus reads, "Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time I heard THEE, and in a day of salvation have I helped THEE: and I will preserve THEE, and give THEE for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that THOU mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves." (Isa. 49: 8, 9).

It is the anointed, the Christ, Head and body, selected and developed during the Gospel Age, which is to accomplish the great work here pointed out—the work of the resurrection or restitution in the next Age, saying to the prisoners in death, "Go forth," and to those in the darkness or shadow of death, "Show yourselves." "Now," the Gospel Age now closing, has been the acceptable time for justified believers to offer themselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, because this Age was specially set apart by God for the calling and development of this class of sacrificers whose sacrifices are now acceptable.

"Now," or the accepted time, did not commence until the Gospel Age began at Pentecost. In the fullest sense it began with Jesus' sacrifice, dating from His consecration at baptism. The sacrifice of Christ which actually takes away sin was THE ACCEPTABLE sacrifice; and it must be an accomplished fact, before any of the condemned sinners could be

actually legally justified, so as to be accepted as joint sacrificers and joint heirs with him. When the sacrifice had been made, any who trusted in it were legally justified, their sins being cancelled, and the righteousness of Christ imputed to them by faith.

Though justified by faith in Christ's redemptive work, none of those justified in this Age have been able to reach actual restitution to human perfection, that being the privilege of the coming Millennial Age. But that right to human perfection and lasting life having been secured for all, those who now by faith accept it are reckoned as now possessing that perfection—as though now perfect men. Such during the Gospel Age have been invited to present themselves as living sacrifices to be used up in God's service, and the assurance is given that whoever thus sacrifices "NOW" during the acceptable time, is accepted of God, and shall in due time receive the reward of the Crown, the Throne, and the Divine nature, as joint-heirs with Jesus Christ whose example they thus follow—after being justified by faith in His sacrifice for their sins.

Those who before the death of Jesus our ransom trusted in God's promises, and walked in obedience to God, were not actually justified until the only sacrifice which could take away sin was actually offered. Nevertheless their faith shall receive a reward in the times of restitution. Living before the "acceptable" time, they were not informed of the "high-calling" of the Divine nature and joint-heirship, and therefore were not invited to thus offer themselves as members of the body of Christ and joint-sacrificers with Him. "Now (The Gospel Age) is the accepted time." "Now is THE day of (the "great") Salvation."

The class thus called and accepted, the Prophet declares, is called and chosen for the special work of accomplishing the salvation of the world—their restitution from death to per-

fect life in the next Age. Then that will also be a day of salvation,—a day of salvation for all the world. In that day men will neither be called nor permitted to offer themselves as living sacrifices, nor to deny themselves the comforts, joys and righteous liberties then provided for all, but simply to forsake sin and pursue righteousness.

Paul, in referring to these words of the Prophet, urges those who have received this grace (favour) of justification, to see that they receive not this grace in vain—(2 Cor. 6: 1). This leads us to consider how we could receive the grace of justification in vain.

Since we may not in this Age have an actual restitution to perfection, the only special advantage of being justified now is that it affords us the opportunity of presenting ourselves as acceptable sacrifices and candidates for the Divine nature and joint-heirship with Jesus. Those therefore who have received the grace of justification through faith in the ransom, who realize that though still imperfect they are reckoned of God as perfect so long as they rely upon the ransom, and who yet neglect to USE this reckoned perfection, and to present themselves covered by it, as acceptable sacrifices to God's service within the acceptable time, have received the favour of justification without making full use of it; and consequently they are little, if any better off than the world, whose day of acceptance to favour is in the age coming.

But those who have been justified, and who have also consecrated themselves to God, may also have received the grace of God in vain, if they turn back to the things which they left behind, despising or ignoring their covenant. If we would make our calling and our election sure, we must fully carry out our consecration—even unto death.

Paul had a very clear idea of what a life of consecration meant. He did not have the idea which many now seem to have that it simply meant an easy-going tranquillity of disposition which might win friends in every direction and be at peace with all the world. Such is not the experience of those who are faithful at the post of duty, for those who will live godly in this evil time will suffer persecution in some shape or form, and generally in many forms.

Our consecration is to active service for the Master, and a patient uncomplaining endurance of whatever it may cost in the way of sacrifice.

Faithfulness to our covenant will not shrink from any service because of the cost, and he that endureth unto the end shall receive the crown of life. Let us mark well the example and counsel of Jesus and the Apostles, that we may gain courage and strength by the way.

Paul gives a vivid picture of the true Christian life which we cannot ponder too carefully:—"Giving no offence in anything (against the principles of truth and righteousness) that the ministry be not blamed. But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6: 3-10).

How nondescript is such a life before the world; yet how perfectly this marks out the course of the truly consecrated. It is not a life of easy lethargy, it is not a course that secures the approval and friendship of the worldly minded, it is not a course which secures present temporal advantage, nor is it a course agreeable to the flesh; yet in it, the "New Creation" rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and in every condition gives thanks for the privilege of fellowship in such sacrifices and self-denials with Christ Jesus our Lord and Redeemer.

In the time which remains before the glorification of the remainder of the Body—the Church, let us endeavour to make our calling and election sure, and thus prove that we have not received the grace of God in vain. If you have made the covenant of sacrifice, even at the eleventh hour, your sacrifice should be on the altar and the fire of zeal under it consuming your time, talents, reputation and all in the heavenly service. Let it be burning briskly, that the odour of sweet incense may ascend to God, that you may be fully accepted in the Beloved in this acceptable time, and be made partaker of the glory to follow—so close at hand.

## THE GOODNESS & SEVERITY OF GOD

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?" 1 Cor. 6: 9

God's severity consists in his insistence upon absolute righteousness—his refusal to approve sin in any sense or degree. The very first statement of Divine law is that death, destruction, must be the wage or penalty for transgression against his righteous regulations. For six thousand years the Lord has maintained this original position—has refused to sanction sin or permit sinners to live. Such an unchangeable attitude at first seems severe, especially when we consider that we were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, infested by weaknesses and surrounded by evil influences. It seems severe on God's part to insist upon perfection, when all of our experiences teach us that it is impossible for fallen humanity to attain absolute righteousness in word and deed and thought. Indeed the Scriptures confirm our experiences, declaring, "There is none righteous, no, not one"—Rom. 3: 10.

The goodness of God is not seen in the severity, but, wholly separated, it stands side by side with it. God's goodness, his generosity, his mercy, kindness, love, which are not manifested in the sentence and in the execution of its penalties, are manifested in the great gift of his love—the Lord Jesus and the Redeemer provided in him—a redemption coextensive with the fall and with the condemnation. The Apostle expresses the matter pointedly in the words, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John 4: 9). God's love was not previously manifested: for over four thousand years only the severity, the justice of the divine character was manifested, though a hint was given to Abraham and subsequently through the prophets, that God had kind sentiments toward the fallen and tainted race, which in due time would bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

The period between the first advent of our Lord and his second advent is in some respects a parenthesis in the Divine plan, during which the Church is specially dealt with. The redemption of the world and its reconciliation with God, based upon Divine goodness expressed in the death of the Redeemer, wait for its further expression to the world until the end of the Gospel age and the opening of the Millennial age—"the world to come." When the morning of that new day shall dawn, the goodness of God will be seen more distinctly than

ever by mankind. Indeed it may be said that the world as yet has seen nothing of the goodness of God; it has merely seen his severity, executed against the entire human family for the last six thousand years. A comparatively small proportion of humanity has ever heard of the grace of God in Christ, the "only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And even those who have heard to some extent have been measurably deceived by the great Adversary in respect to the nature of the penalty for sin and the fullness and wideness of the mercy extended to men in the person of the Redeemer.

In that new dispensation the facts will all be made clear. The blessings then coming to the world—peace, righteous government, helpful influences, the restraint of evil, the knowledge of the Lord and understanding of his gracious arrangements and purposes—these will all be most convincing proofs to mankind of God's sympathy and mercy in Christ. The Adversary who now deceives mankind will then be bound, that he should not deceive the nations any more until the thousand years be finished, and the Word of God, which is in general now a sealed book to the world, will then be opened, and as a result the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep.

Nevertheless, we are not to understand that this triumph of God's mercy and goodness then displayed will in any wise imply a change of his character or of his attitude towards sin. God never changes; "He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever." (Heb. 13: 8). When we come to understand the matter thoroughly, this unchangeableness on God's part is a guarantee that the blessings to be bestowed under his arrangements will be everlasting, unending blessings.

The goodness and severity of God will be displayed side by side throughout the Millennial age to every creature. All must learn the lesson that God is kind, generous and full of blessing to all those who are in harmony with him and his principles of righteousness, but that he is and always will be like a consuming fire to all who are not in accord with righteousness.

The redemption of the world by the sacrifice of our Lord entitled humanity to a re-awakening from the sleep of death, to be granted an opportunity of full reconciliation to the Father.

Not a reconciliation in sin, however, but a reconciliation in righteousness. It is manifest that no change takes place in the character of any during the sleep of death: the awakening must be to the same conditions of heart and mind that went down into death. The awakened ones will, therefore, find themselves at first in the same attitude of rebellion against God and the principles of righteousness that they were in when they went into death. But there will be this difference—that when awakened under the Kingdom conditions they will find their surroundings totally different from those of the present life: themselves the same, all things surrounding them will be changed. The powers of evil to tempt their fallen tendencies will be absent; temptations to selfishness, covetousness, etc., seen in the dominion of the prince of this world, shall find no part in the dominion of the prince of light, in the world to come—in the new dispensation. Indeed the awakened ones will find love and righteousness and kindness the laws in general force throughout the world.

And if their fallen tendencies shall still grasp after the selfish things as before, they will steadily learn the lesson that under the changed arrangements selfishness will not be advantageous to them but disadvantageous, bringing to them shame and contempt. Gradually they will learn the rules of the Kingdom, the laws of righteousness based upon justice and love. Gradually they may come into accord with these if they learn the lessons of experience during that golden age under the great Teacher, the Christ, Head and body, and under the immediate supervision of the earthly ones appointed to be their instructors and helpers in the good way and their correctors in respect to their fall. Instead of the rule which now prevails in the Church, namely, that "whosoever will live godly will suffer persecution," etc., they will find, instead, that whoever will live godly shall prosper and have increasing evidences of Divine favour. In that day the ungodly shall suffer "stripes," "corrections in righteousness," "judgments," a prompt and just recompense of reward for every good and every evil deed.

The world then will be entirely in the hands of Christ, in whom the Father has centred all his mercy and all his provisions of grace. Only those who will then come into accord with the Son, the glorified Christ, and continue in accord with the laws of the Millennial Kingdom—and none others—will be prepared by the close of the Millennial age to be delivered over

directly to the Heavenly Father and the operations of his absolute law of justice without mercy. This is the period spoken of by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 15: 24-28, when Immanuel shall have put down all sin, all unrighteousness, all insubordination to God; when he shall have raised up as many of the redeemed human family as would hear his voice, as would obey him—raised them up to human perfection—to all that was lost in Adam.

Having traced the operation of God's plan toward the world, as he instructs us it will be carried out during the Millennial age, we now return to the still more important matter respecting the operation of God's goodness and severity toward ourselves—toward the Church during the present time. Why the Lord should make a difference between his dealings with the Church in this Gospel age and the world during the Millennial age can only be appreciated by those who accept the Scriptural declaration that during the present time God is making special selection of a special class, possessed of special characteristics and for a special service both now and hereafter. It is because of all these special features that the Church has a different experience from that which the world will have by and by.

Now, the Lord speaks to the New Creation, saying, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived." At first we are inclined to stand amazed and say, God has made no provision for our attaining actual perfection, all the provisions for such restitution belonging to the next age! How then can he require righteousness of us, who still have the blemished bodies, imperfect judgments, etc., resulting from the fall? After telling us that there is none righteous, no, not one, how shall we understand the declaration that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God—not be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom—not inherit the glorious things which we have hoped for by the Lord's grace? The answer is that God has made special provision for the Church of this Gospel age. Instead of making us perfect in the flesh, and then requiring absolute perfection in word, deed and thought, as will be required of the world at the close of the next age, the Lord deals with us in an *imputed* manner. To those who exercise the requisite faith he imputes righteousness, which offsets the unrighteousness or natural blemishes of their flesh. But only to those who exercise the faith is there such an imputation of Christ's righteousness; those who cannot exercise the

faith are still in their sins, aliens from God until the coming of the new dispensation, when the blotting out of sins will begin in an actual way. But to those who do believe and to whom the righteousness of Christ is imputed because of faith, there is still a testing of the heart.

It would be useless for the Lord to offer the prize of joint-heirship in the Kingdom to anyone perfect in the flesh when there are none such—our Lord Jesus being the only one, and He because He was not of the Adamic stock. God's provision, therefore, is that the justified by faith shall be counted perfect, counted righteous so long as their hearts, their wills, their best endeavours, are for righteousness. How simple and yet how sublime this arrangement, how it adapts itself to all the circumstances and conditions of the Lord's people! It is respecting this justification *by faith*, this "righteousness of God by faith," that the Apostle says, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" being justified freely from all things.—Rom. 5: 1

All of the saints must be the foes of sin. Wherever sin is they must wage a warfare against it, and see to it that in their hearts at least they are free from sin, that in their hearts they do not countenance sin but oppose it, that sin finds no harbouring place or sympathising weakness in their hearts. This will make them radical as respects the words of their mouths, the conduct of life and the meditations of their hearts, that all of these shall be in absolute accord with the Divine Word and its spirit of righteousness, holiness, truth, etc. Such as get this proper foundation of character before they begin to build love will find that they are making progress properly. All love that is founded upon injustice or wrong ideas of righteousness is delusive, is not the love which the Lord will require as the test of discipleship.

The Apostle's words in our text, "Be not deceived," imply just what we see all about us: that many profess to be the Lord's people, profess to love him, profess the golden rule as their guide in life, and yet are blind to justice (righteousness) in many of the affairs of life. They exercise too much mercy in dealing with their own shortcomings and too little when examining the faults and weaknesses of others.

In other words, it is in vain that we profess to be the Lord's people, profess to be the servants of righteousness and truth, and love these principles, if our conduct clearly demonstrates that we love unrighteousness. For such per-

sons to profess to be the Lord's people is to mock God by assuming that he cannot read the heart, and that what may be hidden to some extent from earthly beings is equally hidden from the Almighty with whom we have to do. He that doeth righteousness is not necessarily he only who is perfect, but rather he that doeth righteousness to the extent of his best ability and who is trusting in the Redeemer's merit to compensate unintentional shortcomings—he is righteous in God's sight—he is approved.

The Apostle proceeds to specify other unrighteous conduct wholly inconsistent with membership in the Kingdom class. These are specified as covetousness, revilings, extortioners, etc. Those who have made any advancement in the Christian way, we may surely trust, are far from having sympathy with the gross evils; and they may therefore have special need to examine themselves carefully in regard to these other more subtle evil qualities, deleterious to their interests as prospective heirs with Christ in the Kingdom. What is covetousness but selfishness—the desire to have, possess, enjoy something at the expense of another? What is idolatry but selfishness, the idolising of money or fame or influence or child or self or some other creature, exalted to and receiving the honour due to the Almighty?

The Apostle in another epistle repeats these words, "Be not deceived;" and adds, "Whosoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 6: 7, 8.) He is not addressing the world; it is the New Creation that is either sowing to the flesh or sowing to the Spirit, and that either will reap of the flesh or reap of the Spirit. We sow to the flesh every time we allow the fleshly, selfish, unjust, unrighteous desires of the flesh to have sway in our hearts and lives, and each sowing makes easier the additional sowing and makes more sure the end of that way which is death. On the contrary each sowing to the Spirit, each resistance to the desires of the flesh toward selfishness, etc., and each exercise of the new mind, of the new will, in spiritual directions toward the things that are pure, the things that are noble, the things that are good, the things that are true, is a sowing to the Spirit, which will bring forth additional fruits of the Spirit, graces of the Spirit, and which, persevered in, will ultimately bring us in accord with the Lord's gracious promises and arrangements—everlasting life and the Kingdom.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ANONYMOUS

We would acknowledge, with sincere appreciation, the anonymous gift of 5/- (Gloucester) which has been applied to the interests of the work.

## DEWSBURY HOME GATHERING.

The Dewsbury Class will be holding its Annual Home-gathering as usual, on the first week-end in October, Sept. 30—Oct. 1. A Saturday evening meeting will be held in the committee room of the Town Hall, at 6.30, and the Sunday sessions will commence at 10.45 a.m. in the Exchange Hall of the same building. Meals will be served on the premises by the friends. Further particulars can be obtained from Bro. A. Carrington, 6 Greenmount St., Leeds, 11.

## LONDON CONVENTION.

A happy season of fellowship was enjoyed by many who attended the gathering at the Memorial Hall during the August Bank Holiday season, and by no means the least profitable part of the proceedings was the meeting of old friends, with consequent short conversations on matters which lie near to our hearts.

Brethren from various parts of the country ministered from the platform and it is hoped to present a synopsis of the messages they brought, in a future issue of the B.S.M. Greetings were sent from various quarters, including one from the General Convention recently held at Los Angeles, and the friends joined with one consent in returning Christian greetings to all others of like precious faith.

## MILITARY SERVICE.

The minds of some of our brethren are occupied at the moment with recent developments in the above connection, and some have expressed the desire for a word of guidance. Those thus interested will be glad to know that a short treatise on the subject may be obtained without charge on application to Brother T. Holmes, Regent House, Regent Street, Melton Mowbray, Leics.

## REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The response to the proposal outlined in recent issues of the B.S.M. has been hardly sufficient to warrant the institution of the Reference Library on the scale originally visualised, but it has been decided to put the scheme into operation in a modified form, and to make the books available to the friends without any charge except the payment of postage both ways. A list of the books available will be published in the October B.S.M., and this list will be revised from time to time as new books are added. It would be sufficient for brethren desiring a book to send a postcard to that effect, when it will be sent by return. Full particulars will be announced in our next issue, and it is hoped that this effort may prove to be of real service to the friends.

### THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES

A book with a message which never grows old.  
A vindication of the Divine character, affording a complete answer to the age-old question:—

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## BRILLE TRACTS.

We would once again take an opportunity of reminding the friends that free tracts printed in Braille are available on request for passing to blind persons, or those interested in work amongst the blind. These tracts serve to interest the recipient in our larger books which can then be loaned to those who are sufficiently interested. We especially commend the "Divine Plan of the Ages" and the "New Creation" as suitable for recommending to prospective readers.

## "DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA."

A long felt need has now been supplied by the publication of the Manna book in large form with birthday pages. The book is an exact replica of the familiar one, except that it is rather less bulky, bound in red cloth and with red edges to the pages. Publication has been undertaken by the Dawn brethren and stocks are now held in the Bookroom, and copies can be obtained upon request. The price is 2/6 post free.

## ANNUAL REPORT.

The Annual Report and Balance Sheet concerning the activities of the Bible Students' Committee for the past year has been prepared and will be available during September. A copy will be enclosed with the October B.S.M. for the benefit of readers, and brethren requiring further copies may have as many as they can use upon application.

## WATCH TOWER REPRINTS.

Several second-hand sets in good condition are available at the moment and will be sent carriage paid for 12/6 in cloth binding and 15/- half leather binding.

## BOUND COPIES OF THE B.S.M.

Will those friends who would like the twelve months' issues of the B.S.M. for 1939, supplied as one complete cloth-bound volume at a cost of about 4/-, please send us a postcard to that effect, in order that the possibilities of this suggestion may be considered.

## FREE LITERATURE.

Leaflets for judicious distribution are supplied free upon request, the titles at present available being as follows:—

- Peace on Earth—When?
- World Order or Chaos—Which?
- Where are the Dead?
- Hell—the Truth.
- Will there be Wars forever?

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Obtainable from Bible Students' Committee.

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*

109

ESAY 40:1-11

PSALM 124

ISAIAH 40:1-11

ROMANS 8:28-30

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13

# BIBLE STUDENTS

# MONTHLY

Thou shalt have a name as the city of the living God

Blessed are ye when men curse / persecute you / and shall fall to say / us of you for ye shall be hated

All battlers that be crated / mountayne and hilt lapde / to is croked shalbe made str

ye feed of Abraham his servan / Jacob his chosen / in the L O R our God: his j

And God shall wipe away all / tears from their eyes: and there / shall be no more death: neither / sorrow: nor crying: neither shall / there be any more pain: for the / former things are passed away

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THREEPENCE

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#### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

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136 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y.

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Berean Bible Institute,  
19 Ermington Place, Kew, E.4, Melbourne.

Bible Students who, by reason of old age, infirmity or other adverse circumstances, are unable to pay for this journal may have it free of charge if annual request is made to that effect. This expense is met by voluntary donations from those interested.

Three months' free trial copies will be sent to any address upon request.

## Bible Students Committee

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(1939—40)

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The new 36pp. booklet is now available. It is being published at a time when distress and anguish of heart is rife, and when many will turn to listen if there is a voice raised in conviction and assurance. Let this be a means of binding up the broken-hearted, of comforting those who mourn, and of pointing men and women to the world's only hope—our Lord Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

### Here are the Contents:

Chap. 1. Does God Care?	Many evidences that God does care.
.. 2. Into the Darkness.	Human government sliding into the abyss.
.. 3. Whither Man?	God's purpose in the creation of mankind.
.. 4. Christ—A King!	The first time—a Redeemer. The second time—A King!
.. 5. A New Social Order.	The coming reign of righteousness.
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## LOOK UP—LIFT UP YOUR HEADS.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" Matt. 24 : 35

Down the vista of the ages Jesus saw the inevitable consummation of human selfishness and sin. "Upon the earth" said He "there will be distress of nations with perplexity. The restless, discontented masses of humanity voicing their anger, men's hearts failing them for fear and for seeing no way out"—for that is the literal meaning of the Greek—"and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Dark days indeed, but days full of promise to those who have set their trust in the Most High. "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, look up, lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh." Not only our own deliverance from this earthly tabernacle and our gathering to that glorious assembly which is to surround the Lord Jesus to all eternity, but also that wonderful deliverance of all men from the bondage of sin and death, and their emancipation into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8: 21). What wonder that although like Jeremiah of old we behold the earth, and it is void, and the heavens, and they give no light, we can yet pierce the clouds of trouble with that clear gaze of faith which assures us that the Prince of Peace is waiting on the other side to commence His work of reconciliation.

"Is it not yet a very little while" cries Isaiah "and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest?" Yes, Lord, it is yet but a little while, and Thou shalt fulfil all Thy good promises. "For as truly as I live, saith God, all the earth shall be filled with My glory."

Our nation is involved in war, and no man can say what the coming days will bring. Many there are who have no foundation for trust in the Eternal God, no knowledge of His plans for the future, no confidence, no hope. Their lot to-day is pitiable. But we, brethren, who these many years have built our hope and trust upon the everlasting promises of God; we who have sat at the feet of Jesus and learned of Him; we who have feasted at His table and dispensed "portions to them for whom nothing has been prepared," how shall we react to this new phase of the trouble upon the nations. Is our faith going to falter, to break down under the strain. Are we going

to forget the words we have said in brighter days, the confidence we have felt that "though all men forsake thee, yet will not I forsake thee." Let the answer reverberate to the heavens in one united voice, an anthem of assurance carried straight to the Throne of God by angel messengers. "GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. THEREFORE will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled; though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." So shall we demonstrate to ourselves, to our brethren, to all men around us, that our faith structure has been well and sturdily built during the calmer days, and so shall we be veritable pillars of strength to those around us who can view the prospect of to-day with nothing but fearful apprehension.

"It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days, when the sun of favour shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved; summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance; hold fast to your hope; call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and 'cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.' 'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.' 'Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him,' and faith has gained her victory."

Inspiring words, familiar to most of us. How calmly then can we go about our allotted tasks, confident in the all-protecting power of God Who doeth all things well. Conditions of life will be different for a while. The "even tenor of our way" has been rudely interrupted. But there will be all the more opportunities for telling enquirers of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, of the coming Kingdom which shall become the desire of all nations, of the final overthrow of evil and establishment of righteousness supreme. Do not neglect the opportunity, brethren. In this dark day of perplexity and distress when the souls of men and women

will cry out for a word of comfort and hope, let it be true of us that we "preach good tidings unto the meek, bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and—comfort all that mourn."

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, **THY GOD REIGNETH.**"

## *Afterward*



"God's ways are equal: storm or calm,  
Seasons of peril and of rest,  
The hurtling dart, the healing balm,  
Are all apportioned as is best.  
In judgments oft misunderstood,  
In ways mysterious and obscure,  
He brings from evil lasting good,  
And makes the final gladness sure.  
While Justice takes its course with strength,  
Love bids our faith and hope increase:  
He'll give the chastened world at length  
His afterward of peace.

"When the dread forces of the gale  
His sterner purposes perform,  
And human skill can naught avail  
Against the fury of the storm,  
Let loving hearts trust in Him still,  
Through all the dark and devious way;  
For who would thwart His blessed will,  
Which leads through night to joyous day?  
Be still beneath His tender care;  
For He will make the tempest cease,  
And bring from out the anguish here  
An afterward of peace.

"Look up, O Earth; no storm can last  
Beyond the limits God hath set.  
When its appointed work is past,  
In joy thou shalt thy grief forget.  
Where sorrow's ploughshare hath swept through,  
Thy fairest flowers of life shall spring,  
For God shall grant thee life anew,  
And all thy wastes shall laugh and sing.  
Hope thou in Him: His plan for thee  
Shall end in triumph and release.  
Fear not, for thou shalt surely see  
His afterward of peace."

### IN THAT DAY.

None will be coerced into everlasting life. None who despise the Divine gift of life will be compelled to accept it and live on into all eternity tortured by an existence which they resent and an environment into which they will not fit. The Lord Who gave is also the Lord Who will take away if the gift of life, joy and happiness is not esteemed or desired. No shadow of injustice or even hardship is inflicted upon one who, called into being by the will

and power of the Universal Creator, and finding this creation, its laws and its principles, its obligations and its responsibilities, so distasteful that he will not voluntarily assume his rightful position as a citizen of creation, loses the life of which he cannot make rightful use. The Divine power that gave him life and existence withdraws that life, and existence ceases as though he had never been.

*(From "The Golden Future.")*

## THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### "FATHER, I KNOW"

Father I know that all things work together  
For good to those whose love is set on Thee,  
O give me grace to trust Thy overruling,  
Thus recognise Thy plans as best for me.

Father, I know, the love Thou hast to Jesus  
So perfect is, so strong, true and sublime,  
And all who follow in their Saviour's footsteps  
May claim that special love, for they are Thine.

Father I know, Thou takest out a people  
For Thine own name, to reign with Christ above,  
Then all the residue of earth's creation  
Rising from death may seek and find Thy love.

Father I know, in peace Thou wilt be keeping  
All those whose minds and hearts on Thee are stayed  
Teach me to lean not on my understanding,  
Committing all to Thee, of naught afraid.

Father I know, from death we have been turning,  
We love the brethren, in this heavenly race,  
Transformed we'd be into our Master's likeness,  
Pleasing to Thee, and growing in Thy grace.

Father I know, that when our journey's ended,  
If true and faithful, we Thy face shall see,  
Raised with our Lord, to share His heavenly glory,  
The "seed" for blessing all, complete will be.

—J.W.W.

### WALKING IN LOVE.

"AS Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us." (Eph. 5: 2.)

"AS the Father has loved me, SO have I loved you." (John 15: 9.)

"Love one another AS I have loved you." (John 15: 12.)

"As"—"So." Wonderful truth this! I am to follow God as a dear child, living, walking in love AS Christ hath loved me. What a high standard! I am to love my brother with no less love than that of God Himself. I am to think of him as God thinks of him, to treat him as God treats him, to love him as Christ loves him—nay, it is as Christ loves me. Just as I want Christ to love me, so am I to love my brother. How can I ever reach such love as this? The words "as I" suggest the great secret. It is not only like Him, but through Him and by Him, that we are enabled to love.

"A new commandment I write unto you: which thing is true in Him and in you." (1 John 2: 8.) Yes, it is true in Him first and so in you. It is true in you, because He is in you. In a word, Christ Himself must do the loving in us, and the secret of it is abiding in Him!

*"Living in the love, the love of Jesus  
Leaning upon His breast,  
Walking in His holy will each moment,  
This is a heaven of rest."*

### A PROFITABLE DREAM

A Scottish minister, Horatius Bonar, shortly before his death dreamed that his zeal was represented in a package of considerable size and weight, and that some angels came to it and weighed it and assured him that it was full weight, an hundred pounds—all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyse it. They put it into a crucible and tested it in various ways and then reported the result thus: "Fourteen parts selfishness; fifteen parts sectarianism; twenty-two parts ambition; twenty-three parts love to man; twenty-six parts love to God." Awakening he realised that it was but a dream, yet felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it throughout the remainder of life. That dream may be equally profitable to each of us in leading us to a close inspection of the motives which lie behind our words and thoughts and doings—especially behind our service for the Lord and for the brethren.

### FRUIT BEARING.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." (John 15: 8.)

In our endeavour to bring forth fruit to His praise, let us bear in mind the old illustration of the wild rose stock into which you have grafted a choice rose. In due time you know that you will have beautiful roses, but you know, too, that there is a tendency for the old stock to send out shoots, and if you allow it to do that you will have nothing but wild roses from the old stem. The gardener, therefore, every time he sees a shoot coming from the old stem, takes his sharp knife and cuts it off.

So let us, by the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, that we may live and produce fruit to the glory of God.

### "WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH."

Oh what I owe to the file, to the hammer, to the furnace of my Lord Jesus, who hath now let me see how good the wheat of Christ is that goeth through His mill and His oven, to be made bread for His own table. Grace tried is glory in its infancy!

(Samuel Rutherford).

## GRACE SUFFICIENT

"My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." II. Cor. 12: 9.

In the days in which we live there is great need for grace and strength, while according to our understanding of the prophetic Word there will be even greater need of these qualities ere the Church completes her course this side the veil. These are indeed times when faith is to be tested to the uttermost and there are abundant evidences of the "shaking" process on every hand. (Heb. 12: 27, 28.)

In the setting from which the text quoted above is taken, the Apostle has in mind his "thorn in the flesh." We recall how the Apostle was given a glimpse of the Lord in His heavenly glory as "a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun" (Acts 26: 13) on the Damascus road, and how that experience took away his sight. It appears moreover that this was never fully restored, for he usually had an amanuensis and when he did write it had to be "in what large letters" (Gal. 6: 11—Weymouth), due to his failing sight. In consequence of this affliction he petitioned the Lord to remove his "thorn in the flesh" even as he states—"for this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." It was indicated to him, however, that such was not the Lord's will, whereupon he records "my grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" and the Apostle testifies "most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

With this viewpoint in mind we can apply the principle of the text to ourselves, for we have many human weaknesses. As the Vow hymn says:—

*"When I think of self I tremble;  
When I look to Thee, I'm strong."*

As the trouble gathers, so we shall need more grace, and if we are in the right attitude that grace will be given. Hear again what the same Apostle has to say—"there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I Cor. 10: 13). This means that His grace is sufficient, so that whatever may be the trial through which we have to pass the way of escape will come eventually so that we can bear (and not escape) the trial successfully.

Yes, as we pass through the valley of the shadow of death "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" while a table is prepared in the presence of our enemies and the head is anointed with oil so that the cup runneth over in blessings.

In Psalm 42 also we have an inspiring illustration of "grace sufficient." Verse 4 tells us of the time of joy and thanksgiving when "I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday" and we might well apply this principle to the blessings of the past years of the Harvest. Despite this mountain-top experience, however, the Psalmist (speaking for the Lord's people) finds himself in trouble and difficulty—"why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me?" (verse 5). The following verses, under various figures, continue to show the severe experiences through which Christ passed in the flesh, culminating in verse 7—"All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Then in beautiful contrast comes the theme of our subject—"Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." The same thought is continued in the next Psalm in the words—"O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Incidentally, we often think of the light and truth leading us only in the present life, but the real thought carries us beyond the veil, right into heaven itself—the hill of the Lord, Zion, which God hath desired for His habitation. Only the overcomers will attain to this position, those who can say that "it is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes," while they are meantime sustained by His "grace sufficient." (Ps. 119: 71).

### Old Testament illustrations.

First of all, Moses. In Exodus 4 we are told of the human weakness of Moses; he was fearful because of his deficiencies—"O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech." Then comes the compensating quality, as seen in God Himself—"the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the see-

ing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." This is the same principle as "my grace is sufficient for thee" and this record should surely help us if ever we find ourselves, for example, "brought before governors and kings for my sake." (Matt. 10; 18).

Another outstanding illustration of faith and trust in God is provided by Job. He suffered much and the Adversary was permitted to bring all manner of trouble upon Job, short of taking his life. His faithfulness remained, however, and he could say "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." (Job 13: 15).

Daniel was another of those Ancient Worthies who did not rely upon his own strength, but rested in the grace of God for his day. What encouragement we always derive from his witness—"our God whom we serve is able to deliver us." God honoured this great faith by His protection of the Hebrews in the unfavourable conditions surrounding them. He will similarly undertake for us, so long as we trust Him implicitly.

The Apostle recounts how that God hath not chosen many mighty or noble ones for the heavenly inheritance, but the weak whose lack is made up by "grace sufficient." He continues (1 Cor. 1: 30-1) "but of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." God's grace is and always has been sufficient, for "when I am weak, then am I strong." If war should come, or loss of dear ones, or any other form of affliction, His grace will always be sufficient for us so long as we have faith to take Him at His Word. This does not mean that we must be quiescent, for the Scriptural principle is "ask, and it shall be given you." We must ask and ask aright, by prayer and supplication. How important this is in these times when there is no peace in the outside world. The only peace we can have is that which comes through "grace sufficient" in response to prayer. We recall how our Lord, in His final experience, prayed earnestly to the Father and "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." (Luke 22: 43).

#### How grace is imparted.

God does not, in this age of faith, work supernaturally. The time of necessity for

miracles and visions has passed and thus we ask ourselves how God fulfils His promise "my grace is sufficient."

In the first place, by means of the light and truth which lead to His holy hill of Zion. The examples of those who have gone before, for instance, the Ancient Worthies mentioned above and, of course, our Lord Himself, all assist our faith so that we may make the "exceeding great and precious promises" our own. We can see their faithful walk and how they relied upon God, how they communed with Him and how He answered, whereby we are in turn given encouragement and strength. (Heb. 12: 1). Then again, there are the doctrinal aspects of God's Word by which our Father also imparts His grace. In these days when this means of grace is so neglected, it is good to hear the Apostle's injunction to Timothy—"Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine . . . Meditate upon these things: give thyself wholly to them. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." (1 Tim. 4: 13-16). The deep truths of the Bible represent the spiritual food of the new creature by which we are enabled to grow into the likeness of Christ.

In particular, the present truth is a means of grace sufficient. As we look back and recall the great joy imparted as the truth became manifest in the Harvest time, so we surely realise the place which this has in God's grace. The realisation that the Bridegroom had returned! How it thrilled the hearts of the watchers so that they took their lamps and made known the glad tidings to the wheat class lest they should fail to enter in before the shutting of the "door." Psalm 126 beautifully expresses, in figure, the joy of the captives who returned from bondage in mystic Babylon.

Another aspect of God's grace concerns the work which we can perform in relation to one another. These are difficult times and we can often give a cheering word with a corresponding measure of encouragement to fellow members of the Body by reminding them of God's all-sufficient grace. This is a service not denied even to the least of the Lord's little ones, who may not be able to exhort their brethren in any more public manner. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6: 2). On the other hand, we can stumble our brethren if we have not their interests at heart, or if we manifest slackness in the Christian life. This illustrates the force of example (1 Tim. 4: 12) and is, once again, a matter which affects all members of the Body,

whether prominent in the Lord's work or otherwise. "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18: 6). Language could hardly be more expressive to show how great

is our responsibility in this respect.

*Morn after morn, we love Thee and adore Thee,  
Vowing to serve Thee through the livelong  
day;*

*Eve after eve, we lay our sins before Thee,  
Bring Thee our failure and for pardon pray.*

## "I KNOW WHAT ! . . . I KNOW WHOM!"

"I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded." II. Tim., I, 12

Words sometimes take on a deeper meaning by reason of the circumstances that call them forth.

A devoted mother or a faithful father may many times have said to a wayward child "Now my son, listen to me, . . . give heed to my advice"—but if those words are spoken for the last time in the solemn hush of a death-chamber the aged parent's words will carry a vastly more serious meaning to the listener. Last words! how much they are treasured up in after years! How they remind us of scenes that are gone! How many times a life has been guided aright or inspired under difficulty by words uttered by dying lips.

This Second Epistle may be taken as Paul's last words to Timothy. It is the deep cry of a longing heart for the last glimpse of a dear face, and for a last contact with a kindred spirit in the fellowship of the Gospel. "Do thy diligence to come before winter" entreats the aged Saint—before the rains and snows made the roads impassable. (2 Tim. 4: 21). "I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day" (1-3). Timothy is assured—"greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears. . . ."

How close the bond of affection which had grown between this spiritual father and his dear son in the faith! How beautiful it is to see the enthusiasm of youth guided by the maturity of age—a condition where youthful drive and elderly wisdom can work hand in hand. Why did Paul long so ardently for a sight of the beloved face? "Paul's days were all but done, his life's work all but ended. The 'charge' with which he had been entrusted by his gracious Master had been passed on to his son, Timothy." "That good thing"—the appointment as a preacher of the Word of God—had ever been a serious, sacred thing to Paul. It came from God, the God of all grace,

through His beloved Son, the Saviour of the world.

No greater source could ever be than that from which his 'Calling' came, no worthier channel could ever rise than that through which his appointment came! The God of Abraham, the Eternal God, had called him! Paul never forgot that; nothing was ever allowed to obscure that fact. No wrath of man nor malignity of demons could ever becloud that assurance. He knew and was persuaded, no matter who denied. The Hand that made the worlds was connected with his life, and had committed unto him a ministry of reconciliation. And he had kept his charge, 'steadfast, immovable' until this day.

Good indeed were it for every child of God to carry ever the same assurance, and live day by day fully persuaded that He that called him is the Eternal Unchangeable God! The world and all its potentates would seem trivial, small, when measured by His span. The child who knows that his Father dwarfs them all can stand their Lilliputian threats and thrusts unmoved and serene.

Paul lived so long beneath the shadow of the Almighty that he had no fear of man. But now his day was done, and the hour of his death drew near. A great desire surged through his soul to look again deep into son Timothy's eyes, the while the burning flame within himself should charge his white-hot words to stir the youthful heart to fervent enthusiasm and appreciation for his own calling. Paul had been deserted by many of his former helpers—this but made the longing keener for this loyal son. These former colleagues blamed his present fettered state to his too ardent zeal. He had in their opinion been too extreme, and had raised needlessly the animus of his Jewish kin. If only he had been more moderate it would not have been necessary for them to withdraw

their assistance, and now withhold their approval. Now they were ashamed to think of a man of his ability, in chains, about to pay with life for his fanatical zeal! It is often thus! The man of strong conviction will finish at the stake—the go-slow, accommodating minister will be popular and approved.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me his prisoner—but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel . . ." (v. 8) "for which cause I also suffer . . . nevertheless I am not ashamed . . ." (v. 12). **NOT ASHAMED!**—though deserted by almost every former friend; though in chains and facing the lictor's axe, though evilly reported on every hand, his life's work in apparent ruins, with little to show for all his labours and pains. **ALONE, BUT NOT ASHAMED!** Others hung their heads for him. He looks the whole world in the face, unabashed and unafraid! Why was this? Why did not his face crimson when others blushed? For this he gives two reasons—first he knew **what** he had believed! second, he knew **whom** he had believed!

The purpose of Almighty God had been made known according to a plan devised before the world began, and God had invited the co-operation of such as would follow in Jesus' footsteps. God purposed to abolish death, and confer life on some, immortality on others. Restitution of all things lost by man's transgression, for humankind; exaltation to heavenly glory for such as overcame, and suffered with their Lord.

This Gospel he had received from God, and from his blessed Lord, and he was not ashamed of such a glorious Plan! Why should he be? From earliest times no story such as this had reached human ears! And he knew that this stupendous plan was evolved and sponsored by the Eternal God. He knew that God had sent His Son from heaven to earth to seal with blood that wondrous plan. He knew that God had raised His Son, and set Him forth as pledge and surety that all that had been promised should be done! He knew it—though a world should shake its head! He knew it—though his kin should scoff and scorn! It was unchallengeable and true, as sure as that Jehovah lived. He knew **what** he had believed was broad-based and built on the Eternal Rock—the Rock of Ages (Isa. 26: 4.) It could not fail. But more than that, he also knew **WHOM** he had believed. He knew his God; he knew his Saviour. And

that was more than all that could take sides against him. Former friends might cease to labour, but that did not prove his preaching false—early helpers might forsake, but that would not leave him bereft of all. The "Best" he still enjoyed.

This lesson stands true for us to-day. The basic secret of the "Steadfast, immovable" and overcoming life is still found in knowing **WHAT** we believe, and knowing **WHOM** we believe. Casting one's mind back over the pilgrim way these thirty years, too many men and women, one fears, have come within the orbit of the Truth on other grounds than these. So many came and stayed awhile, then fell away, the first enthusiasm spent. At first the truth was 'a pleasant song'—but soon it palled and satiated. The charm of some silvery tongue allured awhile, but did not reach the heart. The quiet oasis of repose in some little class,—or the happy spell of love—gave comfort after storm, till strong discussion entered. Then, peace was gone,—and with it the seeker too. Unable or unwilling to ascertain how far the message was of God, the interest centred mainly in some messenger who, as teacher, failing to attain to the ideal set up, became a fallen idol—and the interest was dead.

Or else, discussion running disorderly, the threadbare theme degenerated into contentious argument, and though the interest survived, in some the enthusiasm expired. No word of censure or reproof is uttered here—these things are mentioned only to point out the panacea.

To know that God has spoken—to be assured it is His voice we hear speaking through prophet and Apostle, and through His Son, this is the unfailing sovereign Remedy for all these ills. Men have so long clothed God's Truth in the drapery of creeds that few had really known what God hath said. Accustomed to receiving men's opinions instead of God's word, it has not been an easy task to cut right through this mass of concept and tradition, and come face to face with God as Speaker, Teacher, Authority and source of light. It is no easy thing to throw off the sense of deference to creed and Council, to presbytery and Synod. The dead hand of tradition may have gripped us more than we cared to acknowledge, and inclined us to give too much credence to the pronouncements of men. Thus while we were getting really free, the severed strands, though cut, would still entwine our feet and prevent the march ahead.

To cut free from the spell of churchianity's

Articles of Faith, is not a moment's work, it is a process and a growth. The men who rallied to Paul's side when his ministry was young, at no time got quite free. The shackles of the early days still held, the elders and the synagogue still called, and when the first enthusiasm of the new faith was spent, they went back, as Peter says, to wallow in the mire. Just so, so many who received the truth remained in thrall to the opinions expressed by men, and failed to become aware that in the real concepts of Truth the voice of God must be heard.

It was a tenet of our faith to demand a 'Thus saith the Lord,' but that was more a matter of finding a text in a Book, than of attributing that text to the voice of God. To realise that the Book says 'so and so' has far less driving power than realizing that God has said that 'so and so.' Paul had broken right through that shell of tradition, and went right up to be face to face with God. It was the voice of God to him, no matter who had uttered the sounds or penned the words. He understood

'WHAT' had been spoken; he also understood by 'WHOM' it had been said. That being so, the conviction and persuasion never wavered, the zeal and enthusiasm never waned. It carried through undiminished till life's flickering flame was spent. To go through life persuaded that God's word can never fail is to live within the grip of that mighty force which spake and it was done." To tread the pilgrim's pathway knowing and known of Him who intends life and immortality to supersede the reign of sin and death is to find one's self linked up with that Mighty Dynamic which sustains the whole round of creation. The child of God who knows 'WHAT' and 'WHOM,' can stand unmoved in every storm—his feet are on the Rock.

To-day more than ever heretofore, the need for every child of God is to "know Him and the fellowship of His suffering and the power of His Resurrection"—being enabled by His indwelling Presence to stand "steadfast and immovable," till life's little day is done.

## PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

### THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Matt. 13, 24-43

When our Lord began His ministry, the message sent forth was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"—"is come nigh unto you." The commission to the disciples was to proclaim Jesus the King and to announce that He was ready to establish His Kingdom. Yet His ministry with that nation closed a few days before His crucifixion, when He, weeping, uttered the solemn denouncement, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke 13: 34). The literal seed of Abraham having thus failed to accept the Kingdom, the next step was to find another nation suitable to God's purpose and hence a new nation was to be formed: and this has been the work of the Gospel age, to call out "a holy nation, a peculiar people" from every nation, kindred, people and tongue, to constitute this Kingdom of Heaven. The "Israelites indeed," a small remnant of the Jewish nation were attracted by the truth and were the first accepted mem-

bers of the "holy nation," at Pentecost. They in turn as ambassadors for God, were sent with the King's good tidings of the coming blessed Kingdom to the Gentiles,—to gather from all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues a sufficient number to complete the "holy nation," "worthy" to be the Kingdom of Heaven and as such to bless the world.—Rev. 5: 9, 10.

It is this "holy nation" in its preparatory condition that is referred to in the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven. These parables of the Kingdom gave prophetically the Church's experiences from various standpoints,—from the time the work of selecting began, to the time when that work will be completed: when the full number of the elect "little flock" will have been called, found faithful under the tests and disciplines and polishings of the great Master. Then as a whole it shall be glorified, and shine forth a glorious Kingdom, full of the excellency and power of God and in every way fully qualified to fulfil the original promise to Abraham, by blessing all the families of the earth with the true light and drawing them all (through a knowledge of the truth) to the

great Life-giver, that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely.

Our Lord himself "soweth" this good seed of the Kingdom, which germinating constitutes his Church, spiritual Israel. This is shown in his exposition, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man." The good seed itself, we are told, was the message respecting the Kingdom—"the word of the Kingdom." This word, or message of the Kingdom was planted by our Lord and his servants the apostles.

So long as our Lord lived, the Adversary, Satan, found no opportunity for sowing the seeds of error amongst the seeds of truth: our Lord declares, "While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept." (John 17: 12). And so long as the apostles lived the Church was similarly protected from the errors which the Adversary fain would sow: the apostles for this very purpose, were specially guided of the Lord. And the Church did recognize this Divine supervision and accepted the apostolic rulings as inspired and authoritative.—See Acts 15: 24-29, 31.

"But while men slept"—after the apostles had fallen asleep in death, Satan the great enemy, found little difficulty in sowing the seeds of error,—false doctrine. And as the true doctrine produced **true children** of the Kingdom only, so the false doctrines introduced, produced **false children** of the Kingdom only. The wheat seed could not produce tares; the tare seed could not produce wheat.

As in the parable the servants inquired of the Master whether or not the seed sown had been good, so to-day and all down through the Gospel age, the Lord's people have wondered how it comes that the Church is, and always has been from the first, infested with a class of people who have a form of godliness, but not its power and spirit. They have wondered whether or not the truths sown by the great Teacher could possibly produce such a varied crop as is seen in the church which nominally is his Church. The Lord assures us that the seed truths which He planted were pure, good, and that the tare seeds were planted by Satan. And looking over the field, the world of mankind, we can readily see the field wherein the truths and errors respecting the Lord's coming Kingdom have been planted,—where these plantings have brought forth correspondingly a true and a false Kingdom class.

The fact that the wheat-field was not free from tares was not discovered until the fruit began to appear;—then the question was, How

should the matter be dealt with? Any attempt to root out the tares—to separate between the children of the truth and the children of error—was positively forbidden; the instruction being, "Let both grow together **until the harvest.**" While God's servants were not to attempt the separation, the true from the false throughout the age, they nevertheless were to understand that mixed condition would not be permanent—that a time of separation would surely come—in the harvest, in the closing time of the age.

To our understanding of the Scriptures, we are already in the "harvest" time of this age. The great Chief-Reaper, the Lord Jesus, is now, through his messengers or servants, gathering the harvest of the Kingdom truths which he sowed eighteen hundred years ago; and very soon the Sons of God will be manifested and their great work of blessing the world will begin. (See Rom. 8: 21, 22). This Sun of Righteousness shall "shine forth" as the prophet has declared, with healing in His wings—provisions of mercy and restitution for all mankind.

The furnace of fire in which the tares will be destroyed (as "tares," and fully and freely confess that they and their institutions are not the Kingdom of God, that they have neither part nor lot in that matter, but were mistaken) is the great time of trouble, the day of Satan's binding when he shall deceive the nations no more; the day when the rod of Divine vengeance shall smite and break the systems of earth as potter's vessels, preparing the world of mankind for the blessings and favours which Divine grace has provided in Christ Jesus our Lord, who gave Himself a Ransom for All, to be testified in **due time.**

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE GREAT SUPPER.

Luke 14: 15-24.

The feast of this parable is not the feast of Isa. 25: 6. That is to be a feast for all people and points forward to the Millennial age and its blessings, when the Kingdom of God will be established for the blessing of all the families of the earth:—"And in this mountain (Kingdom) shall the Lord of hosts make **unto all people a feast** of fat things." That will be a feast of joy and gladness such as earth has never known, the blessed tidings of which were proclaimed by angel messengers at the birth of Christ, through whom the invitation was to be extended to all mankind. "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto **all people.**"

But the feast of this parable is one to which only a select number are invited. It is a feast which was announced as ready at the beginning of the Gospel age. John the Baptist first announced it to the Jewish nation, saying, "Repent ye; for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 3: 2). And after him came Jesus of Nazareth, saying, "The time is fulfilled—"all things are now ready") and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel (the good news of the great feast now ready)." (Mark 1: 15). It is noticeable also that while this feast was announced as ready in the beginning of the Gospel age, and that while the bountiful board has been spread for a select company all through this age, the feast for "all people" is foretold as a thing future—after the great time of trouble (Isa. 25: 1-4).

Both of these feasts consist of the good things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; but the difference is that the feast of this Gospel age pertains to the spiritual phase of the Kingdom, while that of the age to come will pertain to the earthly Kingdom. The feast now spread is for the elect Gospel Church, while that of the Millennium is for "all people"—all the willing and obedient.

Those who have a mere curiosity interest to know what good things are found upon the table of the Lord can never know. Only those who come with sincere hearts to taste and see for themselves can ever know. Theirs is the "hidden manna." They have "meat to eat" that others "know not of;" for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him."

It is their blessed privilege to know and realise their relationship to Christ as His prospective bride and joint heir, and as His betrothed to hold sweet communion with Him here. And they may feast continually upon the glorious hope of inheriting with Him the spiritual phase of the Kingdom of God, being partakers with Him also of the Divine, immortal nature. Words can never make manifest to uncircumcised hearts the blessedness of the privileges of the saints at "the table of the Lord," even amidst the trials and difficulties of the present life and its warfare with the powers of darkness. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over;" for the glorious fellowship with Christ hereafter has its joyful beginning even here, in the fellowship of His sufferings and His cross.

Only those are invited to this table of the Lord—this feast of spiritual blessings, of communion and fellowship with God, of a knowledge of the deep things of God, the exceeding great and precious promises, and of joy in co-operating with Him in His plan of salvation—who desire to forsake all other tables; for "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils." (1 Cor. 10: 21). Only deeply appreciative ones are desired at this feast—those who will gladly forsake all to enjoy the favour. Our Lord Jesus expressed this fact forcibly when He said: "If any man come to me and hate not (love not less) his father and mother . . . yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."—Luke 14: 26, 27, 33.

Those who do of their own free will comply with these conditions are privileged to come to the table of the Lord and to partake of His bounties. But the realisation of these conditions is the explanation of the indifference and even opposition of many who hear the call. They consider the cost, and prefer to be excused.

The parable shows three classes called: (1) Those originally invited; i.e., those of Israel who, having respect to their covenant, were striving to keep the Law, and thus to attain to all that God had promised. To this class **belonged** the Kingdom favours by Divine covenant, if they had appreciated and accepted them; but the strait gate and narrow way repelled them and they excused themselves, and were excused. (2) The class of the streets and lanes of the city represents the publican and sinner class of Israel—the prodigal-son class, of which some came, and, accepting the terms, left all to follow the Lord. But that remnant was not sufficient. Hence (3) the Lord sent forth the message to the Gentiles—outside the city, outside of Israel—in the highways and hedges **urging** a sufficient number of them to come to complete the elect number.

Truly so precious an invitation is worthy of our strivings and self-denials to attain it; and the truly appreciative will lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race for this great prize. But, thank God, we are no longer deluded into the belief that those who, blinded by Satan, reject this great invitation will be everlastingly tormented therefore. Compare 2 Cor. 4: 4 with Isa. 29: 18; 35: 5.

## "WHEN THOU SHALT BE OLD."

"Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken." Eccl. 12: 6.

These words were spoken by our Lord to Peter on that memorable occasion when Jesus, in a more public manner, re-instated Peter into His Apostleship after his public denial of the Master during the trial before Pilate. Jesus had met Peter privately on the day of His Resurrection (Luke 24: 34) and there can be little doubt that He had spoken words of comfort to the distracted heart. What passed in some quiet spot between the Risen Lord and Peter with his overwhelmed contrite heart, we do not know; it is not recorded, and it might be only presumption to attempt to reconstruct their conversation at that time. Peter had evidently told his brethren about this interview with his Lord, for when the Emmaus brethren returned to Jerusalem with the story of their wonderful experience, the Jerusalem brethren rejoicingly replied "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." Peter had thus been reconciled to his Master prior to this public interview, and held in his heart the full assurance that he had been forgiven and that the Lord still loved him dearly, his failure notwithstanding.

In the grey dawn of this particular morning Jesus had searched the soul of Peter through and through by His thrice repeated query "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these"? Peter was grieved that the Lord so persistently put His question as to ask it a third time. It seemed as though the Master doubted his word, and was not satisfied with the two assurances already given.

Jesus did not doubt his word, for whatever may have been the purpose in Jesus' mind when asking the question thrice, He immediately proceeded to tell Peter that He would serve Him long and well right on into old age. "When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself and walkedst whither thou wouldst; when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." John 21: 18.

John, who wrote these words, and lived long enough thereafter to see their fulfilment, says "This spake He (Jesus) signifying by what death he (Peter) should glorify God."

In the freshness of youth Peter had chosen his own course and acted on his own initiative, but when he should have come to old age his freedom to act should be curtailed. No matter how he still desired to serve and lead the flock of God, hindering circumstances would arise, and prevent the accomplishment of his heart's desire. Though the passing years brought mellowing ripeness to his soul, tempering the impetuous rashness of his early life, making him the more fitted to counsel and guide the pilgrim band, yet the withering frost of age, or the hindering hand of circumstance should bar and check the work he would always long to do. How would that react upon his mind? How would he stand when, instead of being master of the situation, the situation became master of him? When, instead of serving long and late, his strength was spent before the sun was set—when, wanting to travel far, the journey was too great? Could he resign himself to his state without regrets or fears?

Among the many trials of the Christian life, the trials due to advancing age are not the least. Especially trying will they be when following on an active life. In the full hey-day of life when strength was equal to every opportunity, the faithful soul found joyous delight in every task. The thrill of contest on many fields, the pleasure of service in many spheres, the power to "do" when duty called, all this had brought delight untold. Life teemed with purpose and accomplishment. Each passing day saw something attempted, something done. It was good to be alive. It was a touch of very heaven, to have a glorious message to tell and hearing ears to proclaim it to.

To pass out from the crush of the arena into the quiet hush of the shadows for no reason besides advancing years may be extremely hard to bear. Only when in the earliest of the declining years the spirit of sloth and slumber has settled down upon the mind can retirement into the shadows be accepted with total resignation. Only when the drag of inertia and irresolution of the will has made the easy chair more acceptable than the conflict can one regret that the day of opportunity is done. The joy of service is not lightly laid aside by those

who drank its cup athirst. Unless dry rot had started ere the day was done the evening twilight hours might chafe. The corrosion of rust would be more feared than all the wear of usefulness where service had been delight.

This pause from labour need not bring regrets nor cause repining if the heart is quietly at rest in God. To grow old gracefully and peacefully is right and blessed in God's sight. It is not that He needed the puny hands to help in His task, even when quick and strong. He could have done it by some other means. It throws no added burden upon His mighty arms when we lay down to rest or cease to toil. Our best endeavours brought no profit or enrichment to Him. Our efforts yielded Him no wealth. Profitable servants we never were. Like some mere child with small toy spade, hindering perhaps more often than we helped, He watched us dig His plot, He bore our little whims, and over-ruled them all for good. We thought He needed us, or else the work would stop. Had we not swung the sword, we thought, the cause of Truth would fail. Had we not fed the flock, the sheep must famish by the way. What little vain conceits we had! He did not chide nor thwart our little task, but He who made the Sun and rules the world; who filled the heaven with Stars, pursued His Sovereign way, and out from our little effort, made His own pattern come true. Withal we fussed and prated, but He worked deep within, and now His work will stand to crown our closing years. Though memory now may fail us, He set the cast of our mind so that it turns to Him as the needle to the pole. Though eyes be dimmed and long-prized books perforce be laid aside, the fibre of the soul is sound, tinged through and through with root principles of Holy Writ. Though thought be slow and words be few, the sense of rest and peace prevails—the "Peace of God" has taken sentry-duty there. Though strength be scant and feeble limbs scarce move at will, the faith looks through the thinning veil and soars aloft, beyond earth's sensuous things to find in contemplation's quiet retreat the presence of Him who makes her foundation firm. The law of compensations now works strong within, for when the earth has little else to give the bounteous Hand of Heaven gives more, and sublimates each act of life. He eats and drinks of heavenly grace, unhurried, unperturbed. No hectic call of duty nor rush of common round breaks in upon the soul's repose, as in the former years, in its "At Home" with God.

It is not loss, nor theme for vain regrets if Heaven thus loads the moments which Time filches from our scanty store. It is not lazing out life's remnant hours, to dwell alone with God. "Rest" brings no "rust," enfeebled limbs cause no inactivity, when we abide with Him. The hands may tremble, and footsteps falter; this is not impotence if we walk with Him. This is that fruition and Harvest-time for which our earlier sowings have been made.

This is maturity, where crudities and greenness disappears in near-finished ripeness and sun-tinting of the fruit. This is the completion of the sketch, the painting-in of the last glowing tints, to balance out the backgrounds sombre hues. It may be sunset-hour, but at 'evening it is light'; life's purposes stand out clear. It is a climax, but not an end.

Dear child of God whose steps approach the postern gate, these words are penned for thee. Thou art grown old; perchance circumstances carry thee whither thou wouldst not. Thy race is nearly run. Thy toil is almost done. The trail of life lies stretching back through years of tangled brier, but thou art near the end. The Hand that led thee last will lead thee still; God will not suffer thy faith to fail in thy last days. He has engrained too deep the precepts of His Word for thee to drift away. 'Hold fast that which thou hast' and keep to thee the 'gold' already bought (Rev. 3: 18). Let none deprive thee of thy peace and rest and trust. God is thy life and light, and will shortly be thy salvation. Fret not thy waning powers, nor pine because thine eye is frail. Thy Father knows all this, and He who marks each sparrow's fall will bear thee on His wings till thou shalt see His face. Perhaps thou canst no longer work for Him, mayhap thou canst not even read His Book with thine own eyes; but mind it not, it is not what thou hadst to give, but thee, thyself, the Master seeks, and in the quietness of thy evening hours He finds all that He desires. Have patience! and hope on!

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Softly, oh softly, the years have swept by thee,  
Touching thee gently with tenderest care;  
Sorrow and death they have often brought nigh thee  
Yet have they left thee but beauty to wear;

Growing old gracefully,

Gracefully fair.

Eyes that grow dim to the earth and its glory  
Have a sweet recompence youth cannot know;  
Ears that grow dull to the world and its story  
Drink in the songs that from Paradise flow;

Growing old graciously,

Purer than snow.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ANONYMOUS.

Acknowledgment is here made of several anonymous donations, 10/- (Gloucester); and £1 and 10/-. Our sincere appreciation is extended to these unknown friends.

## STOCKPORT.

The friends at Stockport wish it to be generally known that regular meetings are now held in that town and brethren able to attend will be warmly welcomed. The class secretary is—Mrs. M. Hamer, 580 Dialstone Lane, Stockport, who will be glad to give further details.

## MILITARY SERVICE.

The Committee is prepared to issue a certificate to brethren affected by the new Armed Forces Act certifying the sincerity of their position. It will be necessary for this certificate to be signed by two brethren who are elders, and who have personal knowledge of the applicant, and will be countersigned by the Committee. The certificate will state the length of time the applicant has been known to the signatories and will vouch for his sincerity. Applications should be addressed to the Office, giving names and addresses of brethren who will act as signatories. In general it will be wise not to apply for this certificate until a reasonable time before the applicant is called upon to appear before such tribunal as will be appointed.

## ANNUAL REPORT.

A copy of the Annual Report for year ending July, 1939, is enclosed with this issue. Further copies can be obtained upon request, and it is with deep appreciation of the privileges which have been ours that the report is presented.

## COLPORTEURS.

We would like it generally known that the Committee is able and willing to facilitate the work of full time colporteurs by the issue of permits and the supply of literature at appropriate rates. It is necessary that such colporteurs restrict the literature they handle to that published by ourselves and our Overseas friends (i.e. Pastoral Bible Institute, Dawn Publishers and the Berean Bible Institute) but if anyone interested to hear of this facility will write to the office we shall be pleased to enter into arrangements with them.

## STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Friends all over the country will be glad to hear that the six volumes of Scripture Studies are to be re-published by the Dawn brethren. No changes are to be made in the text, and the books will be comparatively small, about the size of the old "Karatol" edition, and attractively bound. The Bookroom will have the new books in stock as soon as they are available, but in the meantime orders may be placed for sets or individual volumes (no money should be sent at present), to be filled when the first consignment comes to hand.

Until the first thousand sets are sold, the price will be about 25/- per set. This will be a special presentation edition intended to help defray the initial cost of type setting, etc. After this the price of succeeding editions will be somewhat lower, probably about 15/- per set.

It is, of course, well known that we in England are still able to supply the original "Society" edition of Scripture Studies, new. In order to leave the field clear for the new Dawn edition, we propose to offer all our present stock at specially low prices and will hold this offer open only until the new "Dawn" books are ready. It will be a great help if brethren who avail themselves of this opportunity would do so at once and so assist us in reducing the quantity of stock we have on hand at present.

### Until further notice.

Set of 6 volumes, "Studies in the Scriptures" post free, 4/9  
Volumes 5 and 6 only, the pair, post free 2/-

## SECOND-HAND DEPARTMENT.

We are able to offer the following for immediate disposal, all second hand. Prices post free.

Young's Concordance, good condition . . . 13s. 6d.

Young's Concordance, complete but cover partly detached. Requires re-binding.

Otherwise good condition . . . 6s. 0d.

Crudens Concordance, fair condition . . . 2s. 0d.

Complete list of second hand Bible Students' helps available will be sent on receipt of post card request.

A number of second-hand volumes of "Scripture Studies" are available and will be sent, while they last, free of charge upon payment of postage, which will amount to 9d. for parcels of six, and 1/- for parcels of one dozen, assorted as may be desired. A few complete sets can be supplied at 9d. the set of six volumes.

## "DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA."

We are now able to announce that the "Manna" book complete with the ruled pages for birthdays is available in two editions. The cloth edition is 2/6 post free, and the De Luxe edition 5/- post free. There are probably many brethren who would be glad of the opportunity to possess one of these books, and we shall be glad to despatch upon receipt of the requirements of these friends.

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## BOUND COPIES OF THE B.S.M.

Will those friends who would like the twelve months' issues of the B.S.M. for 1939, supplied as one complete cloth-bound volume at a cost of about 4/-, please send us a postcard to that effect, in order that the possibilities of this suggestion may be considered.

## OCTOBER GATHERING AT SHOTTON

Sunday, October 22nd, 1939,

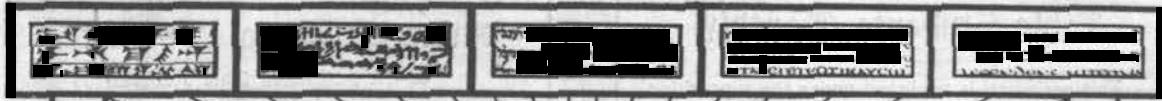
at  
TRANSPORT HALL  
NELSON STREET  
SHOTTON

## THIS GATHERING HAS BEEN CANCELLED

Will friends please make this fact known since no other intimation will be possible.

Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

*The "Divine Plan of the Ages."*



# BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY

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 vy. Tohr agenu he com
 

 Blessed are ye when men shall  
 persecute you / and shall falsly say  
 of you, sayngs agaynst you
 

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 Jacob his chosen.  
 the Lo R our God: his jo
 

 And God shall wipe away all  
 teares from their eyes: and there  
 shall be no more death: neither  
 sorrow, nor crying, neither shall  
 there be any more pain: for the  
 former things are passed away.

Vol. 16 No. 11

NOVEMBER, 1939

THREEPENCE

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### THE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

An undenominational Christian fellowship devoted to the study and dissemination of Bible truth in the light of present-day knowledge and to the deepening of personal Christian life and experience. Its members stand unreservedly for the teachings of Jesus Christ as a complete solution to humanity's problems, and believe in the eventual establishment of a new order of society upon earth in which the principles of love, equity and righteousness will prevail and evil be eliminated; and that under the spiritual rule of Christ and His Church the dead will be restored and mankind live in eternal harmony with God.

## Bible Students Monthly

This periodical is published under the supervision of the Bible Students Committee, the articles appearing therein having been read and approved by at least five members before publication.

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*Its Object—The Restitution of all things*

Much of the distinctive part of our belief is built around this familiar theme--the fulfilment of Christ's promise that He would come again and after taking His "saints" to be with Him in glory would initiate a time of blessing for all men. The appreciation manifested by many friends in connection with the series recently published in the "Monthly" has led to its reproduction in booklet form, in the belief that some friends will welcome such a production for their own use or for sending to others whom they know to be interested or perplexed in regard to this subject.

\* \* \*

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" 2 The Glory of the Celestial  
" 3 Dawn  
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" 5 In Flaming Fire  
" 6 Resurrection  
" 7 Every eye shall see Him  
" 8 "When shall these things be?"

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*Our Hope for Years to Come*

This is a timely booklet for the days in which we live. It speaks of God's care for man, of the failure of human government, of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ as necessary to restore order out of confusion, of the ages of eternity to follow His mediatorial work. Some brethren are already distributing copies among their friends—others are keeping half-a-dozen by them to lend as opportunity offers.

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" 3. Whither Man?  
" 4. Christ—A King!  
" 5. A New Social Order.  
" 6. Dead Men Live Again!  
" 7. The Choice.

## "YE BELIEVE IN GOD"

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." John 14, 1.

At a time when Jesus' chosen disciples were facing an exceptional crisis, when their little world seemed about to dissolve into nothingness, He said to them "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God . . ."

It was no everyday scene that confronted them at that time. It was no longer "the daily round, the common task" they had to face, but the greatest crisis the world, to that time, had ever known. All hopes and expectations were about to be dashed, and all life's purposes (thus far understood) were to be shattered. The anticipations kept alive over many generations were about to be withered by the blackest frost human hearts had ever known.

"Ye believe in God" said Jesus. Yes! they believed in God . . . . .

The lips that spake these words were about to be overwhelmed in those strange events, more than any; yet what mattered? There was still God, high over all, unmoved and unchanged. God was still there above the storm, and would be still there when the storm was ended. No blast of fury could drive Him from His place, nor deprive Him of His Throne. From everlasting to that dark day He had been God; from that dark day throughout eternal years He would still be God. His Throne was sure forevermore. God . . . Abraham's God, Isaac's God, Jacob's God, Moses' God, David's God, Daniel's God . . . Jesus' God . . . and their God! Let the nation rage, and the Roman scourge, what mattered that—the Father was seated upon His Throne; all would be well with His child. The child might not see up through all the surrounding clouds, but the Father's eye could pierce the darkest sky, and watch each moment and each movement of the weakest child. "Let not your hearts be troubled" then—God lives! . . . and loves! That is enough.

We need to catch anew to-day the inspiration of these words. Dark days are here, and conditions hard to understand. The world is reeling under blows terrible to contemplate. Brute force is rampant, the clash of steel and bark of guns is heard again in this sad and mad old world. Aggression ruthless, pitiless, seeking its own ends, has broken forth, and countless hearts are breaking 'neath its blow. War,

cruel, blind relentless war, is raging once again, laying the earth's fair lands in ruin and waste. Where will it end? There may be a long row to hoe before reason returns to dwell with men,—the treasure and wealth of better years may wither at its blast, and this sad world may be sadder still before the smoke dies away. A world which men have built through tedious years is cracking under strain. "The lights may go out in Europe for many years to come" said one distinguished knight of the pen, "God will stand in need of a witness throughout the world should another war come" says another scribe. Well, that war has come! and it might be true, that before it ends, it may be hard to justify God's ways to man. If "might" should once assert itself above "the right," it might be difficult to prove that God still reigns above. Weak faith, and dwindling confidence would crack beneath the strain. The lash of whip and force of iron boot might make men look within, and not above. The aching heart and wounded soul might make men sink dispirited to death, and as they sink see only mud, not stars.

We need that upward, optimistic look to-day, that sees God there, above the clash of arms, and din of war. Long years ago, we talked of this,—a world grown old, outworn, a-dying. That day has come. God gave us many years to build our faith and trust and confidence in Him. God gave us truth, delightful, wonderful, for our daily need, and years in which to grow from childhood to maturer years forewarning us the while what things were bound to come when 'the due time' arrived. God entered in our hearts, our lives, and made them His, strong-knit to Him by ties of love. He had these days, as well as the eternal years in view, when thus He fed and filled us so.

And now, beloved, the deeper night is come;—the darker hours are here. "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God." No storm can outlast His term; no crisis break from His control. Amid the dying pangs of this departing world, God knows where to locate His own,—a hand Divine still reaches through the darkening clouds down to this sad old earth, to clasp His loved ones and hold them tight. "Believe in God" beloved, and still

"believe in God" when all that constitutes this present evil world is crashing to its doom. Trust Him to keep and succour in the darkest hours—He will do this, for His own Name's sake, and for the sake of His dear Son.

Let none who name that Holy Name lose grip or contact with the Father's hand—but meantime, let none tempt Providence by rash unseemly act. Though God can keep His own 'mid shot and shell, let none eschew the

measures made for their natural well-being. Use those means of natural protection which are near at hand if need arise, remembering that Jesus said "thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" when asked to do an irrational thing.

Make use of all provision for your welfare, withal committing yourself and all whose interests are linked with yours, into God's hands daily, hourly, and all the time. "Let not your hearts be troubled . . . Believe in God . . ."

## LONDON CONVENTION, 1939.

*An account of the discourses at Memorial Hall, London, August, 1939.*

"We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the House of God in company."

The London Convention is a very pleasant memory in the minds of many who were able to attend. One frequently heard from the lips of those present that it was good to be there and to meet so many brethren from all parts, and one felt that the many prayers that it might be a blessing to all had been answered abundantly. Brother Batcheller in his words of welcome gave assurance that God would open up His treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge for His people whose hearts were ready to receive His Word.

### Saturday Afternoon Bro. A. O. Hudson

(Welling)

"What doth the Lord require of thee?"

The opening session was addressed by Brother Hudson who dwelt for a time on Micah 6; 8. "He hath showed thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

He declared that this was a plain and definite injunction to each one of us for ourselves, and was not merely a commission to go and tell someone else what they were to do. Three things God required of His people Israel, and those three things He also requires from us; and more so as we live in a day when it is possible to live closer to God and to have a greater appreciation of the things of God. There is more light, and therefore more is required of us. We are to do justly, to love mercy and to live in quiet fellowship with our God. In each one of these rules of guidance in our lives is enshrined our duty and service to our Father, to our brethren, and to all mankind. We should give proper attention to the

claims of all three, as did Jesus when He was on earth,—going about doing good and speaking to all who would listen. To do justly where God is concerned is to obey His invitation to give our hearts to Him, realising all that He has done for us—"to obey is better than sacrifice." The next duty with regard to doing justly is toward our fellow believers. If we have that peace which comes from a whole-hearted surrender to God we cannot continue to live in an individual way, for there is a work for us to do in ministering and building up the other members of the Body of Christ in the most holy faith. We are to love mercy, which means we are to be kind and love our brethren in Christ and also those who have not yet come into this favoured position. Our training now is to fit us to be kind and merciful in the future and we should manifest in fair degree the laws of the coming Kingdom now and show kindness to all with whom we come in contact. We are learning to walk in quiet fellowship with God—to set our affections on things above, to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit and to put off all those things which are not in accord with the Spirit of Christ.

### Saturday Evening Bro. W. Smallman

(Warrington)

"Holding forth the word of life,"

Brother Smallman followed with the subject "Holding forth the Word of Life." God gave life and He is the fountain of life, but death is the wages of sin. There is always light where there is life. In the beginning the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and God brought form and symmetry and order out of con-

fusion. Mankind was like this; though originally created in the likeness of God, they became without form and void and full of darkness through sin. Mankind does not now reflect the image of God—the bright mirror is broken. God has provided a way through the death of Jesus whereby we might have life, and have deliverance from the law of sin and death. We must have our hearts right with God and prove ourselves worthy to hold forth the Word of Life. God is not confined to certain agencies, but works through all those who have given themselves humbly and reverently to Him to do His Will and to be used by Him. Jesus held forth the Word of Life and honoured it while He lived on the earth, for He came that we might have life, coming to bring life (human life) and immortality (spiritual life) to light through the gospel. Are we willing to lay down our lives for the brethren that the Truth might flow through us? God has delegated the holding forth of the Word of Life to human beings like ourselves. Men have been handing on the Word of Life all down the Age, and we too are not preaching ourselves but the Word of Life, which can only come from God Himself. If we have the privilege of knowing the Truth it is not for us to hide it under a bushel, but to give it forth that others might be enriched by it; for we might never have known the Truth if it had not been handed on to us by others. We should show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into light. God's spirit and power is within us that we might show forth the Truth in our lives. The words of Jesus brought Lazarus forth from death, but it was the disciples' privilege to "loose him and let him go." It was they who loosed the grave-clothes from him that he might have freedom to walk. The words of Jesus bring life but it is our privilege to loose the grave clothes (the works of the flesh) from one another and so bring liberty to walk in the Christian way; and by and by we will be able to assist the world to put off their grave clothes when Jesus has called them from the sleep of death.

**Sunday Morning**

**Bro. J. W. Wright**  
(Stockport)

"God Hath Spoken."

Brother Wright traced through the Bible (which has been called the "Divine Library,") the fact that "God hath Spoken," and revealed His plans to mankind. There were thirty-five writers who wrote at different times and in different circumstances, but one Supreme Mind,

one Divine Author was behind it all. It emanates from one source and there is perfect harmony throughout. There are eighty-nine direct quotations in Hebrews from the Old Testament, proving that the writer's mind was well saturated with the sacred writings. In John's Gospel there are one hundred and twenty-three direct quotations from the Old Testament. The interrelationship of the Scriptures makes it peculiar. All the writings of the Scriptures centre round two persons—the Almighty Father and His dear Son, of Whom these books are full, unifying and making the Bible unique in itself and unequalled in the literature of the world. The writers of the books claim no credit for this, for they spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God. Even Jesus acted as the mouthpiece of His Father. The Bible must be rightly divided. We must not take the writings to the Jews and give them to the Gentiles, nor the teachings that apply to the Church and apply them to the world. The Bible satisfies heart and mind on many a universal problem. It deals with the problem of life, the beginning of life, the origin of life and the purpose of life. It deals with problems of suffering and pain, poverty and want, the reason of sin and death and all that comes with them; and we have a telescopic view, in the Word of God, of the hereafter, satisfying both heart and mind. The Old Testament shows man's need, and the New Testament shows God's supply to meet that need. In the Old Testament God sets forth in types and shadows His purpose for man's redemption. The New Testament shows the only way back to God through His Son, and the Church's call to be joint-heirs with Him and to share with Him in blessing all the world. When rightly divided we can see a wonderful harmonious Plan running right through the pages of the Bible. It is truly the revelation of God to man, and contains all that the man of God needs to be thoroughly furnished.

**Sunday Afternoon**

**Bro. R. Cormack**  
(Glasgow)

"A Righteous Peace."

Brother Cormack took as his subject "A Righteous Peace." This is our A.R.P., he suggested, and as we look around we can see there is not much peace and security in the world to-day. All men are agreed that peace is a good and desirable thing and they would give much to possess it. Peace is the natural environment of perfect life and the essential element of love. It is therefore of God and inheres in Him. Only to the extent that we

enter into the Rest, or Peace, of God can we know what it means. Those who are endeavouring to walk according to God's will and His word are those who enjoy the peace of the Lord at the present time. Adam and Eve lost that perfection of life which meant peace with God to them. They, and all mankind through them became out of harmony with God, a harmony which was broken when our first parents sinned. **"The work of righteousness shall be Peace,"** says the prophet. The measure of that peace which we attain can only be regulated by the measure of righteousness we can attain by the grace of God. Peace implies a reconciliation between two estranged beings. God and the human family have been estranged. God is the source of peace and His peace cannot be disturbed. He has been resting—keeping Sabbath for six thousand years. The work of righteousness—the death of Jesus, the shedding of His blood which brought remission of sins, and means of release for all mankind—shall be peace for all. **"The work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."** There is none righteous but the Righteous Branch, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and Truth, who willingly gave up all human perfection in order that Adam and his race might receive it. Christ is made unto us righteousness. Jesus is our peace. Our Lord left peace as a legacy to His disciples, His peace which was the result of righteousness. *Peace amongst the Lord's people is a progressive peace.* First, there is peace with God (justification), then the peace of God (consecration) and then we have the God of Peace (sanctification). When we draw near to God, Christ's death having made that possible for us, we have peace with God. We present our bodies to Him as living sacrifices and are transformed by the renewing of our minds, and then we have the peace of God which passeth all understanding to guard our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ. Our submission to the Will of God will bring the desired result when He shall see His Image perfected in us, and "the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly," and the work of righteousness shall bring peace to the whole world forever.

Sunday Evening

Bro. Sidney Smith

(Manchester)

"God's Great Gifts."

Brother Sidney Smith spoke on "God's Great Gifts." In order for our faith to stand on a

sure foundation it is necessary for us to have a knowledge of certain fundamentals. First of all, we see things from a human standpoint and appreciate God's gifts to us as human beings. In 1. Tim. 6; 17 we are charged not to trust in uncertain riches, but to trust in the Living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. The greatest gift that God has given us as human beings is life, for without life it would not be possible for us to enjoy any other gift. We always esteem life, even at the present time with its joys and sorrows, to be a blessing. Yet it is uncertain because it is in God's power to terminate it at any time. Paul says to the Athenians **"Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you; God that made the world and all things therein, giveth to all life and breath and all things . . . for in Him we move and have our being."** God is the only source of life to all beings. How do we get life? The most wonderful law of all is the law of procreation. It is the privilege of human beings to co-operate with God in passing life on to other human beings. How do we live? Air alone will not keep us alive, but other things are needful also that we might continue to live, and God has given us these other means, namely, various kinds of food and drink. We should give God thanks in the morning for all the things we shall receive during the day, for He is not sparing—He giveth us richly all things to enjoy. He gives us the trees and flowers for our pleasure. Man has grown in knowledge and has co-operated with God and in observing the laws of nature he is able to produce food for daily use. God gives the earth, the soil, seed, sunshine and rain, and horticulturists and agriculturists specialise in co-operation with God, in making the earth bring forth these wonderful things for the enjoyment and sustenance of man. God has also given a home to humanity wherein one can have rest and fellowship. The earth has He given to be a home for mankind. God gave a dominion to man, for he was told to replenish the earth and subdue it, but we do not see men subduing all things yet, although we do see Jesus, who tasted death for every man. This earth is indeed a wonderful treasure house for mankind, for everything we eat and enjoy comes out of the earth. Man co-operating with fellow-man together with a knowledge of God's laws, brings things into being. Electricity, wireless, telephone, television are all definite signs of the end of the age, for they show that we are reaching a finality in certain things. It is the abuse of God's gifts that is

causing man to misuse materials for the destruction of mankind instead of producing things out of the same materials for their blessing. God has promised the gift of eternal life to all those who believe on His Son in this Age, and who follow in His steps. Jesus gave Himself, and in so doing He co-operated with God in giving the ransom. God is preparing a "Bride" for Christ to share with Him in everything. "Thine they were and Thou gavest them me." We are invited into that wonderful Bridal company, and Christ co-operates with the Father in this work. "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him, and him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise

cast out." Christ so loved the Church that He gave Himself for it." God giveth us richly all things to enjoy—all things that pertain to life and godliness. He has given to us exceeding great and precious promises. He has given to us His Son, His Holy Spirit, joy, peace, wisdom, and many other wonderful gifts, and if we are faithful, Christ will co-operate in giving the final reward, for "to him that overcometh" will He give a crown of life. These are some of the great gifts of God and they all come to us through Jesus. "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

\* \* \* \*

*To be concluded in next issue.*

## THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS.

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." Hag. 2:7.

These well-known words of the prophet Haggai were spoken by the Lord to encourage the people of Israel to rebuild the Temple, now that they had returned from the land of captivity. The prophecy is so worded that the casual reader might consider that the consequent rebuilding of the Temple was the fulfilment and end of the prophecy. But because the writer to the Hebrews quotes part of these words (Heb. 12: 26) and speaks of them as being still future, we must look for a further realisation of the prophecy. The prophet's words encourage us to look further than Israel's local history for fulfilment, for the wording speaks of the shaking (and therefore, removal, adds Paul) of the heavens, the earth, the sea, the dry land and ALL the nations. Surely this is the day of God's judgment of the nations, the oft declared time of trouble on the whole world. But, as is often the case with the prophets, the words of calamity are immediately followed by tidings of joy—the desire of all nations shall come. This manifestation of Divine dealings—judgment followed by grace—is the main theme of the Bible so far as man is concerned. (Oh, that all forthtellers of judgment would likewise speak of the ensuing grace!)

What is this "desire of all nations" that follows the world-shaking? Various answers can be made to the question and each have its portion of truth. It is conceivable that the de-

sires of men and nations alter as the page of history brings new visions and new needs to view. The Reformation brought a desire to be free of Papal machination and oppression; and according to the slogan of the French Revolution, mankind in those days wanted "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." These desires were but partly realised, possibly because the shaking of those days was more of man than of the Lord. Some will say that man's desire to-day is for peace. This is true enough, if peace is merely abstention from war. But not yet do they desire that peace which accrues from harmony with their Creator. That will be their desire after He has made wars to cease and the judgments of the Lord are in the earth. As they learn righteousness then they will desire true peace. These desires are all subsidiary to man's eternal desire for life. This desire, like the others will only be attained by Divine intervention. God intervenes by shaking all nations, and then gives to man his desires, for it is by opening His hand that He satisfies the desire of every living thing.

But when national peace is achieved by the quelling of oppressors in the time of trouble; the restriction of Satan; and the establishment of the Kingdom by Him who will take the kingdom and possess it for ever, even for ever: then surely man's desire will change. National peace will give way as a need to the desire for personal peace. Peace of body, of mind, of

heart or in one word—LIFE! And they will find that the one who gave them rest from war and strife will give them life. Obey and live will be the universal rule.

When man is enjoying the gifts of life then surely another desire will come into his heart. He will want to know more of Him who made peace and life possible—and we instantly think of Him (Messiah) who will then be the desire of all nations. Rotherham's translation speaks of "delight of all nations." Do the Scriptures so portray our Lord? Once He had no beauty that they should desire Him; but now all beauties that man can imagine are his. The word "beauty" is not full enough to describe Him who will then be the desire of all nations.

The prophet Isaiah in ch. 9, v. 6/7 shows how He is man's desire and cause of adoration. See how in these words man's many desires are accomplished in one Person!

**WONDERFUL.** A thing is wonderful when it causes man to wonder how it occurred; or is miraculous; or because it transcends man's own imaginings. And a thing is wonderful when it is the only one of its kind. This appears to be the Bible sense. The idea in the Hebrew is "singular." Using the word in this true sense we say of Him that He stands alone and above all others. The whole of the fifth chapter of Revelation shows Him to be wonderful because He is exceptional, and the chapter closes with universal adoration of this desire of all nations. He alone could die the just for the unjust, and He alone can extricate man from his troubles. When the Revelator looked to see the Lion of Judah who had prevailed to open the book he saw the Lamb—which is certainly singular and wonderful. The Strong One is found to be He who dies as the Lamb.

**COUNSELLOR.** Man has had many counsellors who merely dispense advice, but are incapable of dispensing the real need. This desire of man is a counsellor in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge coupled with the power of an endless life. One only can combine this work of prophet and priest.

**THE MIGHTY GOD.** He does not supplant Jehovah. Jehovah is an exclusive word; but here the word "el" like "elohim" is used of Him wielding power. The word mighty is "gibbor;" it also has the sense of power and

is rendered champion. It refers to He (other than God Himself) Who is properly known as man's powerful champion. The modern counterpart of this combination is "dictator"—and some think this is the present desire of nations.

**THE EVERLASTING FATHER.** One of man's many desires (life) is met by Him who has abolished death and brought life to light through the gospel.

**THE PRINCE OF PEACE.** It has been well said that man now desires peace, but not the Prince of Peace. True, but when man enjoys that peace which will arise from the righteous rule of the Prince (Isa. 32: 17) they will desire to know of Him who has so blessed them.

The next verse of the prophet Isaiah (ch. 9: 7) details some of the glories of that righteous kingdom. Once established this desire (the kingdom) will never end. It is dominated by the throne of David. David's throne was at Jerusalem. There will thus be a visible world centre for man to desire and delight in. And so, in this One Person and work man's best desires are all met.

Are these the final desires of nations? Will they not desire one thing more? Surely by the time the kingdom has settled down to rule, and the whole earth is at rest and is quiet, one more desire will arise in the heart of man. They will surely desire to honour the Father even as they honour the Son, for (says Isa. 9: 7) it is the zeal of the Lord of Hosts that has made this great kingdom possible. Nothing would ever have been fulfilled unless God himself had planned it all. Man's final desire will be to "know thee, the only true God," and thus have the full blessing of eternal life. (John 17: 2/3) And he will be quite ready for the day at the end of the reign of Christ for the kingdom to be delivered up to the Father, that God may be all in all.

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#### TRUST.

How often we trust each other,  
And only doubt our Lord,  
We take the word of mortals  
And yet distrust His word.  
But oh! what peace and glory,  
Would shine o'er all our days,  
If we always would remember,  
God means just what He says.

## THE QUIET TIME

My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

### THE GOLDEN AGE.

When memory of battles  
At last is strange and old  
When nations have one banner  
And creeds have found one fold,

When the Hand that sprinkles midnight  
With its powdered drift of suns,  
Has hushed this tiny tumult  
Of sects, and swords and guns,

Then hate's last note of discord,  
In all God's world shall cease,  
In the conquest which is service,  
In the Victory which is peace.

(F. Lawrence Knowles).

### HOPE.

There is a palm, called the Comb Spine palm, which grows in the midst of dense forests. It has a crown of leaves so heavy that the slender trunk is wholly unequal to the task of supporting it. Yet by a beautiful provision the tree is enabled to stand erect and grow upwards. A stem, or continuation of the trunk, rises to a considerable height through the leafy plume that generally terminates the growth of other palm-trees. This stem is furnished at the end with hooks or grappels, by which it lays hold upon the giant branches of some overshadowing tree, and is thus supported and rendered stable. This anchor thrown on high entering within the leafy curtain of the growth above, keeps the palm from falling or being blown away.

Behold an image of the Christian's hope! He, too, has a crown, "an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory," which his own feeble powers are not able to sustain. But just such a means of support as we have described has been given him. When heart and flesh fail, and his spirit sinks within him, he may reach the arm of a confident hope far above, and thus lay hold on the immutable promises of God. "Hope of salvation," "hope in Christ," "a good hope through grace," this steadies and strengthens the soul. A happy, steadfast expectation of eternal life proves to the child of God an unfailling stay. Anchors are generally cast below, but that of the Christian is thrown on high. Thus the Apostle says of those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. 6: 18-19).

(Selected).

### NO CROSS, NO CROWN.

The purple grape must be crushed  
To make the sweet red wine,  
And furnace fires must fiercely burn  
The drossy gold to refine;  
The wheel must cruelly grind,  
Else where the jewel's light?  
And the steel submit to the polishing,  
Or how would the sword grow bright?

How then, my soul, wilt thou  
The Spirit's fruits possess,  
Except thou lovingly yield thyself  
To the Hand that wounds to bless?  
Then patiently let the fire  
Consume all earthly dross—  
Thou canst not hope to wear the crown,  
If thou refuse the cross!

### "FREELY." Romans 8.32.

#### "With Him all things."

He will give all things freely. He gave us His dear Son freely. He did not even wait to be asked to deliver Him up for us all. The gift of Christ was no answer to prayer. It was the purely spontaneous bounty of God. Nowhere in Scripture can we discern the slightest reluctance on God's part as to the bestowment of that gift, great as was the suffering which it cost the Giver as well as the Gift.

It was not to a world all penitent and in tears, prostrate at His throne in anguish and despair, that God gave His well-beloved Son; but to a world still at enmity with Him, still disobedient, impenitent, hard-hearted. And yet He gave Him freely. Freely?

Yes, of course. Whatever God gives, He gives freely. He loveth a cheerful giver, for He is Himself a cheerful giver. There is no gift of grace that we need but that He gives freely to all who ask Him.

Dr. J. Hastings.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Phil. 2: 5.

To have the mind of Christ is indeed the one requirement of lawful striving—a mind which humbly and faithfully submits itself to the will of God as expressed in His great plan of the ages, and which devotes all energy to the accomplishment of His will, because of an intelligent appreciation of the ends He has in view.

Daily Mama.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRESENT TRUTH.

### PART I.

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also . . . fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

II Pet. 3 : 17-18.

At this critical period of time in the history of the Lord's people, it is necessary that we be reminded of this exhortation of the Apostle, and of some of those truths which have been learned from the Word of God by the aid of the Holy Spirit, and which in times past have been the means of drawing together numbers of sincere Bible students who have rejoiced in their understanding and appreciation of God's character. It is sometimes well to allow the mind to go back to that time when an intelligent appreciation of the character of God was first received, and in gratitude to Him we gladly offered ourselves in full consecration. Those who have been enlightened with an understanding of the Divine Plan will clearly remember the time when they came to God and expressed their willingness to spend and be spent in His service. There may be some who can go back to that time, thirty or forty years ago; some can go back twenty years; others ten years, still others five, and some just two or three years; but however recent this experience may have been, or however long ago, let each one ask themselves the questions:—

- (1) What was it that first kindled my love for God, and made me determined that for the remainder of my life I would live, and speak, and toil for Him?
- (2) What was it that first implanted within me a longing desire to meet and associate with those whom we know as brethren?

The answer to these questions must surely be that it was a knowledge of the Plan of God which caused our hearts to go out in love and adoration to the great Creator, and made us long to meet together with those of "LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH." This understanding of the Divine Plan and of many of the prophecies of Scripture was called—"Present Truth."

The term "Present Truth" is a Scriptural one, and is found in the epistle from which our text is taken, *1 Pet. 1. v. 12.* There the Apostle writes "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye

know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance." The Greek word for "present" in this 12th verse means "to be alongside" and the Apostle, by using this expression "present truth" was referring to "truth which is now revealed" that is, at the time when he was writing his letter. Evidently therefore there have been various stages of revealed truth throughout the history of mankind, and Peter in his day desired that the brethren should be established in the truth as it was revealed at that time. It is, however, important to remember that "present truth," or the truth which had been revealed in Peter's time, did not detract from the value of the truth which had been revealed prior to his time, neither did it falsify the truth of previous ages. "Truth" is always "truth," and therefore if in God's own due time there is a further revelation, it must be of necessity be in harmony with the truth which has previously been made known.

As an example, let us recall the very first revelation of truth concerning God's Plan, after Adam and Eve had disobeyed their Creator. To the serpent, God said—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." That statement of God was "present truth" to mother Eve, and doubtless she rejoiced in it. Many centuries later the gospel was preached unto Abraham, who because of his great faith and trust in God received the promise that in him and his seed all nations of the earth were to be blessed. **THEN**, to be established in the present truth meant that one would believe in the promise to Abraham, but that did not do away with the value of the truth revealed to Eve. There was no contradiction but a further enlightenment, and the truth in which Eve believed still stood firm. So we come down the stream of time and see how the truth was more and more clearly revealed. It was revealed that not only would this seed which was to "bruise the serpent's head," come through Abraham, then Isaac and Jacob and then through Israel, but was to be of a royal line

descending from David the king. Still there was no need to cast aside the old truths in which faithful men of previous ages had rejoiced; it all fitted harmoniously together; but how blessed were they who were established in the "present truth." Coming further down the stream of time we hear the Apostle Paul saying **"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed WHICH IS CHRIST."**—Present truth. Here it was further revealed that Jesus Christ was the promised seed. We remember also Peter's bold statement to the Lord, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." In making this confession of faith did he cast overboard all that he had previously believed based upon the Law and the Prophets? Surely not. It was a further enlightenment and was harmonious. In his second letter he says concerning the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

It was round about the period of time which embraced our Lord's first advent and Pentecost, the truth was revealed to an extent far beyond anything which had before been made known. As we have already seen, it was "present truth" that Christ was the promised Seed through whom blessing was to come to all mankind. This was to be the foundation on which all truth rested as it concerned the human race. It is Paul who records that **"there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time."** What a revelation the Apostle had of God's justice and love, how that God could be just, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. When writing to the brethren at Corinth he explains that Jesus, by becoming a man, perfect as was Adam before the Fall, became a "corresponding price," and took upon Himself the penalty which had fallen on the human race through Adam. **"Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall all be made alive."** Through Paul also another wonderful truth was revealed; that all who now, during this reign of sin, believed in Jesus and offered themselves a living sacrifice to God, came into Christ, and thus became part of that promised Seed of Abraham. **"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise."** In Col. 1: 26, 27, Paul refers to "a mystery" or secret **"which hath been hid from ages and from**

**generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."** This was a truth which had never before been revealed, but now it became part of the "present truth" in which it was essential that the brethren should be established. Again in Eph. 3: 3-6, Paul explains that God by a revelation had made known unto him a mystery **"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body and partakers of His promise IN CHRIST BY THE GOSPEL."**

Notice the last five words—**"IN CHRIST BY THE GOSPEL."** In those words, Paul is careful to show that this revelation of truth which he had received in no wise did away with the truths previously made manifest, nor was it contrary to the gospel which had been preached to Abraham and all the holy prophets. Nevertheless, although quite harmonious, these further features of truth had been hid until this time. Note also the closing words of his letter to the Romans—**"Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, AND BY THE SCRIPTURES OF THE PROPHETS."** (Rom. 16: 25, 26). Yes, all these things had been written in the Old Testament Scriptures, but it was not until the "due time" that they were understood.

There were many other features of truth made known at that time, such as—the intimate relationship of all the members of the Christ, their fellowship in suffering as they walk faithfully in the footsteps of the Master; their call to the Divine nature, to be like their Lord and to see Him as He is. It was the knowledge and understanding of all these things which Peter was concerned about. He tells the brethren that Paul in all his epistles, had written of "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Then he goes on to say **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."** (2 Peter 3: 16, 17). Very evidently, Peter did not agree with those who say that doctrine is unimportant. It was most important and necessary that the

brethren should be established in "the present truth," and that they should not be "tossed about by every wind of doctrine." If it was necessary in the days of the apostles, is it less necessary in our day?

It was soon after the apostles fell asleep that the truth which had been revealed up to this time began to be hidden or covered up. Error began to creep into the Church, and the beautiful simplicity of the gospel was gradually lost sight of. Even before they died, the apostles warned the brethren of the danger which was growing in the Church of God. The Apostle Paul, speaking to the elders of the Ephesian church, said that after his departure grievous wolves would scatter the flock of God, that even in the Church itself men would arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Gradually, in order that Christianity might become popular, the truth was more and more compromised. Pagan beliefs and practices were adopted to entice the masses to embrace the Christian religion; and it is important to notice that as the truth was lost sight of, so also the high ideals which controlled the life and conduct were lowered, and men—professing Christians—were not so careful to keep themselves unspotted from the world. John said that "every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself." If the hope has become dim, then correspondingly the incentive to holiness and purity of life is lessened. So we come to what is known in history as "the Dark Ages." During the time when the great Papal system had brought every

nation of the Roman Empire under its control, darkness reigned over the earth. Error reigned supreme in the hearts of men, and even among those who claimed to be the priests of God there were very few whose conduct was not governed by the spirit of intolerance, persecution and wickedness. The advantages of education—which, by the way, were only generally enjoyed as a result of the Reformation period—were available only to a very few. The Word of God was written in a dead language which only a few even of the clergy understood, and the copies that were available were chained in the churches. It seems hardly possible in this twentieth century to realise that there was a time when it was illegal and punishable to be found at home reading the Bible. Men were compelled to believe what they were told by the Pope and the priests. No wonder the light of truth was darkened. What did men know of God and His Plan during this time? The festivals associated with the birth of Jesus, His death and resurrection, were made the occasion to introduce the pagan superstitions from which Christmas and Easter have descended to us. To-day it all sounds fantastic and unreal, and yet, during past centuries, to accept any other view of God and His ways was to bring upon oneself all the enmity and cruel persecutions of the Roman Church. Why did this condition of things get such a hold upon men? It was because those who lived immediately after the early disciples let go their hold of "present truth."

*(To be concluded).*

## PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

### THE RICH MAN IN HELL

Luke 16, 19-31

It is not difficult to understand that this story is a parable. To take it literally would involve the absurdity of supposing that all beggars go to heaven, and that all wealthy go to hell; for the parable says nothing about character—either that the poor man was good or that the rich man was bad. Viewed as a parable, it is seen that the thing said is not the thing meant. Thus in other parables wheat and sheep represent children of God and tares and goats represent those dominated by the Adversary, the god of this world.

In the parable under consideration the rich man represents a class, and the poor man,

Lazarus, another class. The rich man was the Jewish nation, which has been in God's favour for more than sixteen centuries. To the Jew had been given the promises, the Prophets, the blessings and privileges of the Law Covenant. These symbolically were their purple, fine linen and sumptuous table. The fine linen symbolised their typical justification through typical sacrifices. Their purple raiment symbolised royalty; for they were the typical Kingdom. Their sumptuous fare represented the Divine promises, as St. Paul's words imply (Romans 11; 9).

In Jesus' day Jewish favour began to wane.

They were completely cut off in A.D. 70, as all Jews will admit. During the interim of forty years, the rich man, the Jewish nation, sickened, died and was buried. Nationally, they went to Hades, to the tomb; and their resurrection has not yet been accomplished, although Zionism is the beginning of it.

But although nationally dead and buried, the Jews individually have been very much alive during the last nineteen centuries. They have had anguish of soul, as they have received persecutions—sometimes, alas, from those who profess the name of Jesus, but who deny Him in their practices. During all these centuries the Jews have cried out to God, who in the parable is represented as Abraham, the father of the faithful. The only answer that they have had is that there is a gulf of separation between them and God. Thank God, this cannot much longer be the case! The New Dispensation dawns, in which the rich man will return from Hades. Israel will be nationally rehabilitated, and God's favour will again come to those of them who will learn the needed lessons.

The poor man of the parable represents an outcast class. It included publicans and sinners who had alienated themselves from God's favour. It also included Gentiles, to whom Divine favour had never been extended—"aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel." (Ephesians 2: 12). These had no fine linen of typical justification, and no purple, no share in God's favour as part of His Kingdom. None of the promises belonged to them. All that they could have would be such crumbs as would fall from the rich man's table.

The Scriptures illustrate two such crumbs given to this class by Jesus. When He healed the Roman centurion's servant, it was done at the request of the Jews, who declared that this man was a friend and had done them good, by building a synagogue, and helping them in other ways. The healing of this servant was a crumb. Similarly, the Syro-Phoenician woman received a crumb when she came to Jesus entreating the recovery of her daughter, who was possessed of a demon. The Master answered, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and give it unto dogs." He here used the customary Jewish phraseology respecting Gentiles—Gentile dogs. The Syro-Phoenician woman was not a Jewess and had no claim on God's favour but she replied: "Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the children's table." Jesus honoured her faith and gave her the crumb which she desired.

As the Jews died to their favour, so the outcast publicans, sinners and Gentiles died to their disfavour; such of them as desired the favours of God, hungering and thirsting for His Word of promise, were received by Him. The early Church was made up of this "Lazarus" class, rejected by the Pharisees as publicans, sinners and Gentiles. Instead of being any longer alienated from God, these became the children of God and heirs of His promises. In the parable they are represented as children of Abraham—in his arms.

The great gulf between Judaism and Christianity has been fixed for more than eighteen centuries. During all this period no Jew has been permitted to come near to God, and no Gentile permitted to take the former position of the Jew, or in any manner to claim favour aside from Christ. In the Divine Plan the gulf was fixed unalterably. "There is none other name given under Heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved"—whereby we may come into heart relationship with God. This gulf dates from the time that Christ came and offered Himself to Israel, and was rejected and crucified.

God's Word points us to another change of dispensation at the Second Coming of Christ. Then the Lazarus class, now children of God by faith, will be made actually and gloriously His children beyond the veil. In association with Jesus their Lord, they will be His Bride and Joint-heir in the Kingdom. What will happen to the rich man then? He is to have a resurrection from "Hades!"

Paul refers to this recovery of the Jews to Divine favour in Romans 11: 25-33. He there points out that as we who are now the people of God were not always so, but were received to Divine favour when Israel was broken off from God's favour, so in due time those Israelites cut off from the favour of God will receive favour through our favour. That is to say, when the Church shall have attained the prize of glory, honour and immortality, as Spiritual Israel. Coming to them through the glorified Spiritual Israel, it will extend through them to all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues of humanity during the Millennial Age.

The parable represents Dives as praying for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue. Symbolically, parabolically, this represents the Jewish people in great distress, asking God to allow Christians to give them some help for their troubles. Have the Jews ever appealed to God for help? Have they prayed for relief

from the persecutions which have come to them in the past and which still continue. Surely they have. Moreover, they have appealed to representatives of the Lazarus class—representatives of Christianity—desiring that their release and relief should come through them.

The parable goes further and develops the fact that the rich man had five brethren in danger of joining him in the trouble that was upon him. Who were his five brethren? We reply that the Jews of Palestine in Jesus' day represented chiefly the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, while the majority of the other ten tribes were scattered abroad in other lands. Did this trying experience affect merely the Jews of Palestine, who had enjoyed most of God's favours, or did it include also the Jews scattered abroad? The answer is given in the

parable, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them." This proves that Jews only were referred to; for no Gentile had Moses and the Prophets. Whereas two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were represented by the one rich man, so proportionately the other ten tribes would be represented by five brethren.

And so it was. The Message of the Gospel, which began with the Jews in Palestine, was extended to every land; and the Apostle Paul, in going to any cities amongst the Gentiles, preached first to the Jews, saying, "It is expedient that the Gospel should be preached first to you, but seeing you reject the grace of God, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13: 46, 47). In other words, the test upon all Israelites was the same, and neither did they believe, though one (Jesus) did rise from the dead.

## THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Matt. 13: 45-46.

Pearls were much more in vogue in ancient times than now. Pearl buyers traded in these gems and carried them to the market, where they were highly estimated. The parable represents one of these pearl merchants as coming across the finest pearl he had ever seen. He considered it so priceless that he was quite rejoiced to sell or trade all of his other pearls and property that he might become the owner of that pearl.

This parable represents the Gospel offer of a share with Christ in his Kingdom as being superior to all other propositions of the world. The honour of the world, of name and fame, position and wealth, are indeed desirable; as the Scriptures say, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches;" but when our eyes behold "the pearl of great price," the Kingdom offer of joint heirship with our Lord Jesus in his heavenly glory and the association with him in his work of blessing all the families of the earth, we realize that this is a priceless thing, worth more by far than all the honours and

dignities and pleasures of the world. Those worthy to buy this pearl will gladly exchange all earthly things therefor—even their good name, and this will be necessary, as the Master forewarned them, saying, "they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5: 11, 12). He that is not willing to have the Kingdom at such a cost is not worthy of the Kingdom. The Apostle has said, "Through much tribulation must we enter the Kingdom" (Acts 14: 22); and only those who willingly endure such tribulations for righteousness' sake—for the sake of the truth, in obedience to the Heavenly calling—are overcomers. And only to the "overcomers" has the Lord given "the exceeding great and precious promises." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—

Rev. 3: 21.

## GOD DOES CARE.

"The evidence is to be seen in Nature all around; in the wonderful adaptability of natural resources for human life and happiness; in the immense possibilities which are within the grasp of man. It is written on the pages of history, telling of events which move irresistibly toward the marvellous climax

which is the consummation of God's purpose. It is revealed in the words of God concerning that part of His Plan which, when it goes into effect, will cause sin to be no more and evil to flee away, and man to learn, and well learn, the lessons of this dark period of sin and death.

From "The Golden Future."

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## BIBLE STUDENTS' FREE REFERENCE LIBRARY

Books may be obtained from the Reference Library, by post, upon receipt of post card request, and may be retained for three weeks, applicant paying postage both ways. Postage stamps to defray forward postage may be placed in the pocket inside the book when returning same. A list of books available will be sent on request, and this list will be added to periodically. All requests and books should be addressed to Bro. C. G. Sears, 52 Huxley Road, Welling, Kent.

## BRILLE LIBRARY.

A list of works available in Braille will be found on the back cover, and the Braille Librarian will be glad to receive readers' names. Postage both ways is paid by the Committee. Short leaflets in Braille for distributing to blind people or to workers amongst the blind are available upon request. All requests and books should be addressed to the Braille Librarian, Brother G. A. Ford, 13 Cranleigh Gardens, Luton, Beds.

## THE "PEOPLES' PAPER."

This little paper is published by the Australian brethren and besides being devoted to news of the activities of our friends in that continent, also contains words of exhortation and exposition which are much appreciated by those who, in this country, read the periodical regularly as well as those for whom it is primarily intended. The subscription price is 2s 6d. per year, and the Committee will gladly receive remittances and enter subscriptions for friends in this country. Free sample copies will be sent upon request at any time.

## COLPORTEURS.

We would like it generally known that the Committee is able and willing to facilitate the work of full time colporteurs by the issue of permits and the supply of literature at appropriate rates. It is necessary that such colporteurs restrict the literature they handle to that published by ourselves and our Overseas friends (i.e. Pastoral Bible Institute, Dawn Publishers and the Berean Bible Institute) but if anyone interested to hear of this facility will write to the office we shall be pleased to enter into arrangements with them.

## STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Friends all over the country will be glad to hear that the six volumes of Scripture Studies are to be re-published by the Dawn brethren. No changes are to be made in the text, and the books will be comparatively small, about the size of the old "Karatos" edition, and attractively bound. The Bookroom will have the new books in stock as soon as they are available, but in the meantime orders may be placed for sets or individual volumes (no money should be sent at present), to be filled when the first consignment comes to hand.

Until the first thousand sets are sold, the price will be about 25/- per set. This will be a special presentation edition intended to help defray the initial cost of type setting, etc. After this the price of succeeding editions will be somewhat lower, probably about 15/- per set.

It is, of course, well known that we in England are still able to supply the original "Society" edition of Scripture Studies, new. In order to leave the field clear for the new Dawn edition, we propose to offer all our present stock at specially low prices and will hold this offer open only until the new "Dawn" books are ready. It will be a great help if brethren who avail themselves of this opportunity would do so at once and so assist us in reducing the quantity of stock we have on hand at present.

### Until further notice.

Set of 6 volumes, "Studies in the Scriptures" post free, 4/9  
Volumes 5 and 6 only, the pair, post free 2/-

## KINGDOM CARDS

One of the most effective means of awaking interest in the message of the Kingdom is by the use of "Kingdom Cards." These cards carry a short comment on the significance of world events and the Divine solution, and invite recipients to return them to the office with name and address, suitable literature being then sent to the applicant. Facilities are provided for any who are interested to be put in touch with local meetings. The cards may be distributed in any manner desired and friends can "follow up" enquiries resulting from their own efforts, if they so desire and make request to that effect. A proportion of the donations received by the Committee is set aside to meet the cost of this work in order that Kingdom Cards can be supplied in any quantity free of charge, the friends being perfectly free to contribute to the cost, or not, according to ability.

## "DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA."

We are now able to announce that the "Manna" book complete with the ruled pages for birthdays is available in two editions. The cloth edition is 2/6 post free, and the De Luxe edition 5/- post free. There are probably many brethren who would be glad of the opportunity to possess one of these books, and we shall be glad to despatch upon receipt of the requirements of these friends.

## BOUND COPIES OF THE B.S.M.

Will those friends who would like the twelve months' issues of the B.S.M. for 1939, supplied as one complete cloth-bound volume at a cost of about 4/-, please send us a postcard to that effect, in order that the possibilities of this suggestion may be considered.

## Christmas Cards

A selected assortment of Christmas Cards is in stock as follows:—

	Post free—s. d.
Special Packet 18 assorted cards with envelopes	2 0
A. Penny Cards Only Floral etc. pictures per doz.	1 1
B. ditto tasteful texts without pictures	1 1
C. ditto for children	1 1

Please state A, B, or C, when ordering penny cards.

### Calendars

Christian Art Calendar, monthly turnover sheets,	
with scripture picture	1 4
Daily block calendars will not be supplied this year.	

### Books for Christmas

Poems of Dawn	3 0
Daily Manna (with birthday pages)	Cloth 2 6 De Luxe 5 0
Daily Manna (pocket, without birthday pages)	Cloth 1 9 Leather 2 6
In Green Pastures	Cloth 2 6 De Luxe 3 6
Streams in the Desert	6 6
Youngs Literal Translation	11 0
Emphatic Diaglott	10 4

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\* \* \*

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" 8 "When shall these things be?"

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## SENNACHERIB & ISAIAH

A message for to-day

*An exposition of Isa. 33; 14-22*

The thirty-third chapter of Isaiah was called forth at a time when outward circumstances were very similar to the condition of Europe to-day. Isaiah's people, Israel, dwelt in shuddering fear of their greatest scourge, the hosts of Assyria under the leadership of Sennacherib. A gifted leader to his own people and one who did much for their benefit in the building of cities and vast irrigation works, he was nevertheless a ruthless and merciless conqueror to those whom he counted his enemies or fit subjects for plunder. The eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Second Kings and thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh chapters of Isaiah describe in detail his Palestine campaigns, and now in the time when this thirty-third chapter opens the children of Israel, having unwisely entered into a treaty with Egypt upon which they had relied for protection, were awaiting in terror the coming of their dreaded foe.

But Isaiah is not at this moment concerned with the possible fortunes of war. In point of fact the story ended happily for Israel, for after desolating the Judean countryside and setting his armies to besiege Jerusalem, Sennacherib suffered that mysterious destruction recorded in II Kings 19 which wiped out the invading host in one night and delivered Israel from the oppressor.

The theme upon which Isaiah is dwelling in the chapter now under consideration is the attitude to be adopted by those who had put their trust in God, who had not "gone down to Egypt for help" (Isa. 31; 1) nor relied upon carnal weapons and the arm of flesh to be their protection, but had looked up to the God of Heaven who promised that while they trusted Him He would ever be their defence.

So in verse 14 Isaiah cries a challenge. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites (Heb. chaneph—profane). Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" A heart-searching question indeed, for who, seeing the rapid sweep of the devouring Assyrian host across their fair land could hope to abide in peace when all their world was being swept away and consumed before their very eyes? Isaiah answers his own question. "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that

despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood and shutting his eyes from seeing evil." These are they who, though caught up in the tide of battle and perchance suffering as would all men, are yet enabled to rise above the tribulations of the moment because they have embraced the standards of another world and put their trust in One Who is more powerful than all this world's armies. Therefore it is that although still subject to the trials and tribulations of the flesh, these are promised that they "shall dwell on high. His place of defence shall be the strongholds of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

Precious promise, the inheritance of all who in every age have put their trust in their God when wrath of man had raged against them. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are "seated with Christ in the heavenlies." Constant is the exhortation to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." (II. Cor. 4; 17-18) "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." (Psa. 91; 1). In that hallowed sanctum of the Rock of Ages shall he find sustenance, the bread of life and the water of life indeed. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" said Jesus "and all these things shall be added unto you." At a time when the advent of abnormal conditions of life amongst us threatens in so many cases the loss of a normal livelihood, good it is to remember the Divine promise "Bread shall be given you. Your water shall be sure."

Now comes a word of assurance. In the midst of this troubled time let the believer but trust in his God and rest secure in that confidence, and (verse 17) "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." Critical scholars render the latter phrase "the land of far distances." Who is there amongst us whose heart does not thrill at the prospect of even now, by faith, seeing our King in His beauty, "the chiefest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely" (Cant. 5; 10, 16) and gazing entranced at the glorious vision of the land of to-morrow, a good land, a spacious land, one stretching into all eternity, truly "the land of

far distances?" It is only when the thoughts are turned to the eternal promises of God and the heart relies fully upon him that this glorious prospect of future Ages, both for the Church and the world, can be seen stretching into the illimitable future. Why focus our eyes and thoughts upon the black clouds of trouble to the exclusion of that fair land which awaits all men on the other side?

Now in verse 18 the prophet turns for a moment from his lofty station and brings his thoughts back to the present. **"Thine heart shall meditate terror"** he says, or more correctly "Thine heart shall muse on the past terrors." Most translators agree that this is the true sense of the Hebrew. The believer in God, after having firmly established his faith in the unseen things and in the promises of God, looks around him as it were, and asks **"Where is the scribe? Where is the receiver? Where is he that counteth the towers?"** The "scribe" was an Assyrian official accompanying the conquering armies and whose duty it was to decide the nature and amount of tribute to be paid by each conquered village or community. The "receiver" (more properly "weigher") was a companion official who received the tribute as it was paid, whilst in the "counter of towers" the reference is to a military officer who surveyed the countryside as hostilities proceeded and laid plans for the capture of villages and the siege of walled towns. Still in the land, still executing their dread work, but for the faithful child of God they are shorn of their terrors. Fresh from the vision of Divine overruling power he looks around and asks "Where are they? What power have these man-made forces in face of the protecting care of my God? Clear from heaven the answer comes, as in Leeser's vivid rendering of verse 19 **"The barbarous people shall thou not see any more, the people of a speech too obscure to be understood, of a stammering tongue, without meaning."** To the Hebrews the Assyrians were barbarians, a people notorious for their ruthlessness and cruelty, men of a foreign and unintelligible speech. But here they were in the land of Israel, ravaging its gardens and vineyards and destroying its villages and towns. How then could it be said "the barbarous people shalt thou not see any more?" What use uttering such words when the sad fact was only too obvious to those who looked on things around them. Ah, therein lay the answer. **"We look"** says Paul, "not on the things which are seen,

but on the things which are not seen." So with us, if in the midst of our troubles and perplexities we fix our gaze upon the unseen things of the Spirit, and our hopes upon the promises of God, the glorious vision of "things to come" will blot out the fear and terror of present distresses from our minds, leaving us in calm and undisturbed possession of that peace which passeth all understanding, that peace which converts the wildest storm into the calm of a placid lake, which takes full account of all that the wrath of man can do and finds it of no account in comparison with the overruling power of God. That is why Isaiah, in a fine flight of prophetic vision, exhorted his fellows to turn away from the contemplation of present troubles. **"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down. Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken."** Here is a picture of the New Jerusalem, the city of God which shall indeed fulfil the meaning of the archaic name, **Urusalim**, the City of Peace. The old Tabernacle in the wilderness was often taken down and moved from place to place. In very truth the children of Israel had here no abiding place, and there no continuing city. Time and oft their enemies destroyed and defiled their sanctuaries and in all its forty odd centuries of history that city set in the tops of the Judean hills has never been a city of peace. Yet the time is to come when both literally and spiritually Jerusalem shall speak peace to the nations, and many people shall go up unto its walls to learn of the law of the Lord (Isa. 2; 3). A tabernacle that is at last a permanent dwelling place for the Lord God of Hosts; a sanctuary whose posts and cords shall not be removed any more for ever. **"But there"** cries the prophet exultantly (vs. 21) **"the glorious Lord shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."** It is said that the 46th and 48th Psalms were composed at this time of national stress; and how fitly they mirrored the situation is proven by the constant appeal to those same Psalms when, as at the present time, the storm clouds of trouble loom more darkly and threateningly than is usual. But there is one great difference between the rivers of the city of God and those streams which Isaiah had in mind. **"No galley with oars," "gallant ship shall not pass."** What is the meaning of such seemingly out of

place allusions?

The prophet was thinking of the rivers and canals (mistranslated "streams") which were in that day such a feature of their enemy's country. Mesopotamia is to-day largely a desert—but that is only because the gigantic irrigation system which had been constructed and maintained from earliest times was destroyed and laid waste in the early centuries of this Christian era. The land is flat and the two great rivers—Tigris and Euphrates—bring down great quantities of water which at certain seasons of the year overflow the banks and turn the whole countryside into a vast inland sea. At other times the rivers are shrunken and the land is dried and parched by the heat of a tropical sun. In the days of Sennacherib these flood waters were controlled by a marvellous system of canals, dams and reservoirs which stored the water and made it available all the year round, in consequence of which the entire land was covered with wheat fields and fruit trees—almost a Paradise on earth. To dwellers in the mountainous country of Judah such a land of "broad rivers and canals" was a most fitting example of the earthly prosperity promised to the faithful of God, and hence the force of the promise that the Lord Himself should be to them a "place of broad rivers and canals."

Now with Assyria in the height of her glory and power it was inevitable that the two great rivers should play their part in the conduct of military operations. Through the peaceful countryside ever and anon the war-vessels of the Assyrians came ploughing their way along the waters—galleys rowed by slaves or larger ships with sails. The expression "gallant ship" is from a Hebrew word which is applied in the Scriptures to war-vessels rather than merchant ships, being used in this connection in Num. 24; 24, Ezek. 30; 9 and Dan. 11; 30, in each of which cases war vessels are referred to. It was almost at the time that Isaiah penned these words that Sennacherib, desiring to consolidate his power to the south of his dominions, built a great war fleet at Nineveh, sailed down the River Tigris to a point where it flowed near the canal system of the Euphrates, along the great Babylonian canals into the Euphrates and down that river to the Persian Gulf, from whence he successfully attacked the Elamites and eventually returned to Nineveh. The news of these naval operations would reach the ears of the Israelites and

cause them to reflect that whilst vessels of war sailed the rivers of Babylon those smiling fields and sparkling waters could know no true peace. Hence the force of the promise which declared that no warships or galleys would ever sail on the rivers of the city of God. To us in this day comes the same cheering reflection. The instruments of the wrath of man will perish with the downfall of man's power—they will find no place in the coming kingdom of righteousness.

**"For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us."**

There is the answer of supreme faith. We are the servants of the Most High God, the "high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity." (Isa. 57; 15). We have devoted ourselves and our lives to His glad service. We are His ambassadors, His representatives to a world in which we move as aliens; for it is true that here have we no continuing city." (Heb. 13; 14). Surely then we can have confidence that whatever betides us is known to Him and in fullest harmony with His Will. When the three Hebrew men were threatened with the fiery furnace they made this stirring reply to the Babylonian monarch "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . But if not, (if He does not so deliver) be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Dan. 3; 17-18). The young man with Elisha was terrified at the apparent certainty of death at the hands of the Syrian armies, but when Elisha prayed and the young man's eyes were opened he beheld the hosts of the Lord—horsemen of fire and chariots of fire—encompassing them in the mountains round about. So it is with us. The invisible legions of God are fully able to divert from us all the dangers and distresses which it is not His will should come our way, and as for the rest, as for those disasters and trials which are permitted to come, shall we not say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." (Job 13; 15).

Let our consideration of this eloquent passage in Isaiah's prophecy be a source of strength and comfort in the coming days. Though darkness encompass the land and fears be on every side, though there be the terror that flieth by night and the arrow that flieth by day, the pestilence walking in darkness and destruction wasting at noonday (Psa. 91; 5-6) let it always be true of us that "I have made the Lord my refuge, the Most High my habitation" and so doing, we shall not be greatly moved.

### THE LAW FROM ZION

The shattering impact of this clarion call to righteousness and equity resounding through the civilised world will awaken all men to a realisation that some strange new power has taken control of earth's affairs. Many there will be, men and women of goodwill, who will at once hail this proclamation with eagerness and range themselves upon the side of these new "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45: 16). Some there will be who will stand aloof, suspicious, sullen, not willing that the searching light of Truth shall reveal the darkness of their own lives. Those who are by nature degraded and brutalised, and have lost the finer instincts of humanity, will cry out that they want none of this new life; whilst without any doubt at all some whose lives have been spent in preying upon their fellows and in gratifying their own pleasures and desires at the expense of others will fiercely oppose this threatened invasion of their vested interests. Yet this first reaction in favour of the new administration, even if confined to a relative few, will produce an immediate effect throughout the world such as no revolution or reformation in all past history has ever approached.

The next development will be even more startling; for men will begin to discover that vice and abuse of right principles no longer escape retribution; moreover that the very attempt to injure or destroy another will be frustrated at the outset. The psychological atmosphere created by the strangeness of such events; the missionary zeal of teachers who will already be at work amongst the people; but above all the evident operation of Divine power in a totally inexplicable manner will begin to render it literally true that "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." (Isa. 65: 25). The maliciously-minded and the evil-doer may injure themselves; others they cannot injure; and when this realisation sinks into the minds of men, that dread enemy, fear, which holds all men in thrall, and shadows almost every life, will be swept away. "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (Isa. 32: 18). In such an atmosphere of confidence there will be possibilities of rapid development in the knowledge of the Eternal laws, and the writing of those laws in the hearts of men.

(The "Golden Future.")

### "THANKS TO GOD."

Thanks to God for my Redeemer,  
Thanks for all Thou dost provide;  
Thanks for times now but a memory:  
Thanks for Jesus by my side.

John 3; 16-17

Thanks to Him for flow'rs in spring-time;  
Thanks for dark and cheerless days;  
Thanks for tears by now forgotten:  
Thanks for peace through all my ways,

II. Cor. 1; 3-4

Thanks for prayers that Thou hast answered,  
Thanks for what Thou dost deny;  
Thanks for storms that I have weathered,  
Thanks for all Thou dost supply.

Psa. 23

Thanks for pain and thanks for pleasure,  
Thanks for comfort in despair;  
Thanks for grace that none can measure,  
Thanks for love beyond compare.

II. Cor. 12: 9

Thanks for roses by the wayside,  
Thanks for thorns that crown our heads;  
Thanks for home and thanks for friends,  
Thanks for hope, that sweet reward.

I. John 3: 2-3

Thanks for joy and thanks for sorrow,  
Thanks for heavenly peace with Thee;  
Thanks for hope in God's tomorrow,  
Thanks through all eternity.

John 14: 27

Translated from the original  
by C. E. Wesleyman, 1949

# THE QUIET TIME



My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

## THY KINGDOM COME.

God has allowed His dear people to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," for many centuries. Why has He not answered the petition sooner? Why did He suggest that we should so pray, if the answer were to be so long delayed?

We reply that the Lord had a plan, including the time for the Kingdom, already mapped out before He taught us to pray for it; and that the prayers of now some nineteen centuries, going up from the hearts of His people, have been blessings to their hearts, and have led them to appreciate and long for the Kingdom far more than if they had not thus prayed. The longing for the Kingdom has been a blessing of itself and has been an encouragement, and so we are praying to-day, more earnestly perhaps than ever before, "Thy Kingdom come" because we appreciate the need of God's Kingdom more and more as we get down to the time when it will be ready to be given to us.

### UNDER HIS SHADOW.

Sit down beneath His shadow,  
And rest with great delight;  
The faith that now beholds Him  
Is pledge of future sight.

Our Master's love remember,  
Exceeding great and free;  
Lift up thy heart in gladness,  
For He remembers thee.

Bring every weary burden,  
Thy sin, thy fear, thy grief;  
He calls the heavy laden,  
And gives them kind relief.

His righteousness "all glorious"  
Thy festal robe shall be;  
And love that passeth knowledge  
His banner over thee.

A little while, though parted,  
Remember, wait, and love,  
Until He comes in glory,  
Until we meet above.

Till in the Father's kingdom  
The heavenly feast is spread,  
And we behold His beauty,  
Whose blood for us was shed.

## EXPERIENCE.

In the olden time when the government of England had resolved to build a wooden bridge over the Thames at Westminster, and after they had driven a hundred and forty piles into the river, there occurred one of the most severe frosts in the memory of man by means of which the piles were torn away from their strong fastenings and many of them snapped in two. The apparent evil in this case was a great good; it led the commissioners to reconsider their purpose, and a substantial bridge of stone was erected.

How like seeming calamities in the life of a Christian, when schemes dictated often by his fleshly will are broken to pieces, if thus he is led to fly to the Lord Jesus and in the strength of His spirit is brought to build solidly for eternity. "Lord, if Thou sufferest my resolves and hopes to be carried away, grant that this blessed calamity may drive me to depend wholly on Thy grace, which cannot fail me."

### TINY TOKENS.

The memory of a kindly word  
For long gone by,  
The fragrance of a fading flower,  
Sent lovingly,  
The gleaming of a sudden smile,  
Or sudden tear,  
The warmer pressure of the hand,  
The tone of cheer,  
The hush that means I cannot speak  
But I have heard,  
The note that only bears a verse  
From God's own Word.  
Such things we hardly count as ministry  
The giver deeming they have given,  
Scant sympathy,  
But when the heart is overwrought,  
Oh, who can tell  
The power of such tiny things,  
To make it well.

"For we must share if we would keep  
That good thing from above.  
Failing to give we cease to have  
Such is the law of Love."

Some one has beautifully said, "You have noticed that all evening shadows point to the East, where the dawn will appear. So every shadow made by the descending sun of earthly prosperity points with sure prophecy to the better hopes which are kindled by the glowing promises of God."

## LONDON CONVENTION, 1939.

*An account of the discourses at Memorial Hall, London, August, 1939.*

(CONCLUDED)

"We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the House of God in company."

### Monday Morning—Bro. D. Stanley (Warrington)

"She hath done what she could."

Brother David Stanley gave an address on "She hath done what she could." There are many lessons in Jesus' life which all of His followers can take to themselves. It was the Sabbath day, and Jesus and his disciples were at the house of Mary and Martha. These two sisters had expected the visit of the Lord and had prepared for it on the night before, for there must be no work on the Sabbath according to the Jewish custom. We can imagine what delightful intercourse would be had in that company. The Master's words of wisdom, love and encouragement would administer rest and spiritual enjoyment to those who were in the right heart attitude. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things." This household esteemed Jesus very highly, for had he not demonstrated His Messiahship by calling Lazarus from the tomb, and that in Him alone was resurrection and life. This was the first visit He had paid them since that great event and Mary and Martha were desirous of showing their gratitude and appreciation to Him for all that He had done for them. On this occasion Mary was able and willing to spend a considerable sum of money in doing honour to the Lord by anointing Him with that precious ointment. The temporal blessings which the Lord has placed in our hands can be used to His honour and glory. Martha was serving at table and Mary was serving in a special manner. This precious ointment was only used very sparingly and usually it was only used on the head, but Mary anointed Jesus' feet with the precious ointment and wiped them with the long tresses of her hair. What a picture of loving devotion, loyalty and service. Mary had recognised in Jesus a most wonderful man, a great teacher, and knew that He was the Son of God, and she was showing in this act of loving devotion that she recognised His Kingship. She not only filled her own home with that perfume but yielded a tender fragrance for all time, for Jesus said that wherever the gospel was preached this also should be spoken of as a memorial of her,

and it was truly a memorial of a sweet character and life devoted to God and His service. Those who bring their alabaster boxes of perfume to the Lord generally have very little to ask or give, but they recognise that they are already debtors to such an extent that they can never thoroughly show their appreciation, receiving daily at the Lord's hands more than they could ask or think. Let us realise our Master's words as we put forth our humble efforts for Him, His Truth and His people. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." We cannot do anything permanently for the poverty and distress in the world now; the Kingdom will remedy that; but we can be one of the "Mary" class now and do all we can to help our brethren even at great cost to ourselves. There are many who are mourning in Zion and who need comforting, and these little acts of kindness which are our alabaster boxes of perfume that we can render one to the other, will never lose their value, their sweetness, in the estimation of our Lord. Let us break our alabaster boxes until the whole house is filled with the perfume—until the world shall take knowledge of how we Christians love one another. If Mary had waited one more week she might have used the ointment on herself, but not on the Lord, for in that week He was buried. How much better that she took the opportunity to show her devotion to her Lord and Master while He was still in the flesh. Let us break our alabaster boxes here and now while we have the brethren with us. It does not matter whether they appreciate and notice it or not. Let us consider one another now, and we shall have the Master's "Well done," and receive an abundant entrance into that glorious Kingdom."

*"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them; the kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say them before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes."*

fore they leave them. If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them when I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Post-mortem kindness does not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way."

**Monday Afternoon—Bro. B. Harrison,**  
(Hambleton)

"Some Old Testament Cameos"

Brother Harrison gave a series of pictures from the Old Testament. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honour of kings to search out a matter." The purposes of God have been hidden, but we are anointed to be kings and priests and it is our privilege to search the Scriptures for Divine knowledge and guidance. At the beginning of the Christian Church it came to the knowledge of the believers that Gentiles were being admitted to assemblies where hitherto they had not been recognised. They thought then that the blessings were for the chosen people of Israel alone, and so they came together to discuss the matter. Peter said that it had been shown to him that God had given the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles also. James said "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name." To this agree the words of the prophets. So these disciples searched the Old Testament prophecies and seeing that God had shown that all nations (Gentiles) would seek after Him, they extended the right hand of fellowship to the Gentile Christians whom they met. We learn from Job the answer to the question "If a man die, shall he live again?" and see in prophetic language that all shall live again when the heavens and earth are no more; and in Revelation we see the fulfilment of this—"And I saw . . . the heaven and earth fled away, and there was found no place for them, and I saw the dead stand before God."

From the two faithful spies that were sent out to spy the land (Joshua and Caleb) we get a

lesson to follow our Lord fully in order to receive the promised blessing. "The Lord said, But my servant Caleb . . . because he hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land . . . and his seed shall possess it." We should be willing to overcome. Caleb also testified to the care the Lord had over him when he said, "Forty years old was I when Moses . . . sent me . . . to spy out the land . . . and now behold the Lord has kept me alive, as He said . . . lo, I am this day eighty-five years old, and yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now." This is encouraging to us and shows the Lord's keeping power and strength given for work which the Lord has given us to do. For us the way is prepared if we follow the Lord wholly. We see in the life of David the anointed of God the wonderful training he went through before he became king. He was hunted by King Saul who sought his life, but he was wonderfully preserved and delivered out of Saul's hand many times. God had a purpose for David, and David had the overcoming spirit in all of his difficulties and at the close of his life praised God and ascribed all greatness and majesty to Him, testifying that "He giveth strength to all." We have been invited to a great calling by God and if we are devoted wholly to Him He will see that we have the necessary experiences to fit us for our great future work. We see in the Word that all things are for our sakes, "that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." So we get great encouragement by seeing how God dealt with those Old Testament characters, foreshadowing His dealings with the Church in their time of preparation.

**Monday Evening—Bro. W. Knight,**  
(Cheltenham)  
'The Trees of God'

Brother Knight declared that God the creator of Nature has so ordered Nature that it shall reveal Himself. Constituted as we are we cannot afford to miss one of these lessons which Nature teaches us, from the tiny flower to the perfection of plant life—a tree. God sees our need and supplies that need in providing nature with myriads of illustrations to reveal His gracious purpose, and the Divine planter of trees has many wonderful things to tell us of the trees, their branches, leaves and fruit. We are told in Psalm 1; 3 that the "righteous shall be like a tree" planted under favourable con-

ditions. Its branches would be spreading over the running stream and drawing moisture from its cool depths by its penetrating roots, affording shelter for all who come beneath its boughs. Its fruit appears at the right season, showing that nothing is forced or artificial. Its leaves spread out to receive the genial influences of the atmosphere and drink in new life at every pore. It repeats itself in every blossom and multiplies itself in every fruit. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters." To the natural trees the soil, air and rays of the sun are essential. To the trees of the Lord the soil is the everlasting Truth of God. The air is a genial influence to the heart overflowing with love to God and man, those quickening rays that come streaming down from the Sun of Righteousness, and the dew is the influence of heaven ever descending on His dear little ones. The trees of the Lord are described also as the goodly cedars, the cedars of God, the tall cedars and the cedars of Lebanon. The trees of the Lord are lovely, clothed with branches of wide spreading sympathy, budding and blossoming with beautiful human affections and adorned with that love that beareth all things and endureth all things. They offer their shadowy foliage and refreshing fruit to the weary and tired, for they are members of a Royal house and heirs of a Royal Kingdom. We have before our minds two trees, the palm and the cedar, the one useful for food and the other for shelter, and the trees of the Lord are compared to these two trees. They exhibit their usefulness in thousands of ways. Like Jesus they go about doing good. They are useful in their prayers—"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." They are useful in conversation. "The lips of the righteous feed many."

They deliver the poor and fatherless and see eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. The cut-down timber becomes a pillar in the temple. It is firm in the grain, capable of a lovely polish, diffusing a perpetual fragrance; no worm will destroy a book which it protects, nor moth attack a garment which it guards. Thus when the trees of the Lord are cut down and their work on earth completed their influence will widen as the years roll on. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works to follow them." The palm tree has no branches on its trunk. It reserves its strength for its upward growth. How inspiring it is to hear a brother or sister who says, "This one thing I do." Their inclinations are not continually sidetracking, like the branches of some trees, but their time, talents and strength are reserved for their upward growth. They have some things afar off. If you injure the roots of some trees they will perish, but not so the date palm. Their most vital organs are contained in the plumes at their summits. Cut off the lofty head and the tree will die. How true of us—"We are growing up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ," and if we become disconnected from the Head we will die. The date palm thrives in the burning sand of the desert, but only because under the sand there is a hidden spring. It is characteristic of the palm to grow erect when man pressed down; even so the Lord's people exclaim "Blest be the tempest, kind the storm, which drives me nearer home."

*"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3: 17, 18.*

#### FROM GLORY TO GLORY. (2 Cor. 3:18).

'From glory unto glory.' Be this our joyous song,  
As on the King's own highway we bravely march along!  
'From glory unto glory.' O word of stirring cheer,  
As dawns the solemn brightness of another glad New Year.

Our own beloved Master hath many things to say,  
Look forward to His teaching, unfolding day by day;  
To whispers of His Spirit, while resting at His feet,  
To glowing revelation, to insight clear and sweet.

'From glory unto glory.' What great things He hath done,  
What wonders He hath shown us, what triumphs He hath won.  
We marvel at the records of the blessings of the year,  
But sweeter than the Christmas bells rings out His promise clear—

Oh, let our adoration for all that He hath done  
Peal out beyond the stars of God, while voices and life we own  
And let our consecration be real, and deep, and true,  
Oh, even now our hearts shall have, and vocal songs renew—

'In full and glad surrender we give ourselves to Thee,  
Thine utterly, and only, and evermore to be,  
O Son of God, who lovest us, we will be Thine alone,  
And all we are, and all we have, shall forever be Thine own.

Now, onward, ever onward from strength to strength we go,  
While 'grace for grace' abundantly shall from His fulness flow,  
To glory's full fruition, from glory's foretaste here,  
Until His Very Presence crown our happiest New Year.

(S. R. Haverhill)

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PRESENT TRUTH.

PART 2.

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also . . . fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

II Pet. 3 : 17-18.

In the previous consideration of this subject of "present truth," its development through the ages until Pentecost has been noted. It has been seen that after the Apostles fell asleep the understanding of Truth was gradually darkened until during the "Dark Ages" there seemed to be little remaining of the true gospel in its simplicity. During this period of the Christian era the teachings of Papacy were generally accepted as the one true faith, and few there were who dared to question those doctrines which were intended to uphold the supremacy of this great system which held in subjection the rulers and peoples of the earth.

Centuries passed by and truth once again began to be revealed. Luther and other sincere men of God searched the Scriptures, and once more the light of the gospel began to shine. The result of this was the great Reformation movement which changed the history of the world. "Present Truth" now made known that this great Papal system was the "Man of Sin" spoken of by the Apostle Paul; the "abomination that maketh desolate" referred to by Daniel; called "Babylon the Great" by John the Revelator. "Present truth" also taught that salvation was not obtained by works, but by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. It was only a beginning, but the work of revealing truth had recommenced. However, there were not many who embraced the truth; in fact, even although large numbers left the Church of Rome and formed other sects and divisions of Christendom, yet so entrenched had erroneous doctrine become in the hearts and lives of men that even to-day great numbers of "Protestants" zealously defend those doctrines which the Papal system first incorporated with the Christian Religion. The majority of these denominations had, hidden among their creeds and dogmas, some truth, the beauty of which was lost in the maze of error and superstition.

As a result of the Reformation the Bible began to circulate more freely among men. It was translated into languages which the common people could understand; knowledge began to increase until gradually the time came when very few homes did not possess a copy

of the Holy Scriptures. But, as has always been during the reign of sin, Satan, the god of this world, continued to blind the minds of men, lest they should see the glorious light of the gospel. Truth is not popular among men; it never has been, and only a very small minority of sincere searchers throughout the ages have appreciated the truth which God has revealed. Let us then be careful not to test the Truth by the number of adherents to a particular exposition.

The widespread dissemination of the Holy Scriptures, translated into the language of the common people, enabled men to read and study, for themselves, the Word of God. In the over-ruling providence of God the early years of the nineteenth century saw an awakened interest among Christian people in the subject of the Lord's Return. The numerous references to this great event caused many to look forward to the return of Christ with mingled feelings of joy and dread. To such the Bible seemed to teach that the Second Advent of Christ would herald the end of the world; that this planet upon which we live would be destroyed by fire. It also seemed to teach that the Lord, when He came, would suddenly return in a glorified body of flesh, visible to all the inhabitants of the earth. At that time, the faithful followers of Christ then living would be bodily taken from the earth and caught up to meet the Lord in the air, while conditions on the earth would be such as would fill the remaining "unsaved" ones with terror as they awaited the great and awful judgment. Such was the general conception among Christian people concerning this matter, and to the sincere Bible reader the indications seemed to be that the time for the fulfilment of these events was near at hand. Many were the disappointments which came to the earnest watchers as the years passed with their expectations unfulfilled. Nevertheless interest in this subject continued unabated, and with the increase of knowledge which made available to all the various translations of the Bible from the early manuscripts, which were then being issued, together with the concordances and helps of learned and pious men, perplexity and disappointment began to give way to joy and

gladness. Diligent study and renewed searching of the Scriptures began to be rewarded. The promise of the Lord—"seek and ye shall find"—was fulfilled to numbers of earnest Bible students. Truth was revealed to them which began to disperse the mists of error which hitherto had veiled their eyes—the Second Advent of our Lord had already taken place, and the Lord was now present. Their previous misunderstanding concerning the manner of His coming was based upon a mistranslation of the Greek word "Parousia" in the New Testament. "Present truth" now taught that the many Scriptures which referred to our Lord's "coming," such as the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew chap. 24, applied to His "presence," and not to the act of His arrival. This wonderful revelation urged these sincere students to a further investigation of the Scriptures concerning the manner and object of our Lord's return, and the result has been what many in recent years, have been pleased to term "Present Truth."

Let us remind ourselves of some of those truths which have increased our love for God and His character. First and foremost is the doctrine of the Ransom which had not been understood since the Apostles fell asleep. Then there is the truth concerning man's mortality and the state of the dead. We have seen, clearly, God's purposes for the human race, that there is to be a glorious restitution of all things to the condition enjoyed by our first parent Adam in Eden before the Fall; that the earth, which is to abide forever, is to become like the Garden of Eden; the desert, the wilderness and the solitary place is to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Man himself is to be freed from the curse of sin and death, and those who have died are to come forth from the tomb and have a full and free opportunity to walk in the ways of God, and thus to live forever on this earth in perfect accord with their Creator and with their fellow-men. Nothing will hurt nor offend in that day, and man, restored to physical, mental and moral perfection will be king over all the earth. Do you remember how these things rejoiced your heart when first you heard the joyful sound—the gospel which was preached to Abraham—glad tidings of great joy? Yet there were still further truths revealed. We have learned how God desired a Bride for His Son, and that during this Gospel Age He has not been endeavouring to convert the world, but has been calling out from among men a class who would,

because of their sincere love for Him, gladly surrender all human hopes forever and be willing to follow in the footsteps of their Lord and Master. Such are called to be partakers of the Divine nature, to reign with Christ as kings and priests during the world's Judgment Day; but first of all they must suffer with Him, and be buried with Him by baptism into His death, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ—for His body's sake which is the church." Col. 2: 24. These are just a few of the many portions of truth which have been made clear to us. There are many others, such as the truth of the Ages and dispensations, an understanding of God Himself, of His Son Jesus, and of the truly Scriptural appreciation of our Father's great love and care in the preparation of the Christ as seen in the typical nation of Israel. Did we just accept all these things in blind credulity? We were exhorted to "prove all things" and like the Bereans of old we searched diligently to see if these things were so. All these things were in harmony with the truths previously revealed throughout the ages and yet have we not been more privileged and highly favoured than any who have lived before? Why?—It is because we are living in the time of our Lord's presence. In no other way can this great light which has shone into our minds and hearts be accounted for. To the Laodicean Church our Lord said—"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3: 20). What a feast has been provided. Do we appreciate it as we ought, or has our first love grown cool? Does it really matter little what we believe? "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make ready to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." (Luke 12: 37). This is the explanation of the spiritual feast which has been provided during the last sixty years. This also is in harmony with the Lord's words to the prophet Daniel. In Daniel chap. 12, where we read of the time when Michael shall stand up, when many shall run to and fro, and knowledge be increased, Daniel says that he heard but understood not. "Then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, God thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed TILL THE TIME OF THE END. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and

none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Dan. 12: 8-10).

Now comes the question, "Is the light of 'present truth' growing brighter—is it clearer than it was when first we believed?" Yes, it is clearer than ever it was to "the wise who understand," but it is the same light—it has not changed. "The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The Christian's pathway has been likened to a ship sailing across the ocean. Away in the distance ever so dimly can be seen the light from the lighthouse which indicates that the ship is nearing the homeland. As the ship draws nearer, the light is more clearly discerned. It appears to be brighter; but it has not altered, it is the same light shining all the while. The light which is shining to-day is the same light which began to shine six thousand years ago, and which mother Eve saw so faint and dim across the ocean of Time. But as the days, the weeks and the years pass by, the glorious truth becomes more bright and clear. We are nearing the homeland, and as we continue to study the Word of God and at the same time seek to grow in grace, we note how various prophecies have been fulfilled, and other prophecies are being fulfilled before our eyes; yet it is the same truth we rejoice in all the while.

What is the purpose of this brief review of the many features of Truth which have brought enlightenment to the mind? Is it in order that there may be displayed a pride and boastfulness in the knowledge and understanding which has been so graciously vouchsafed to the Lord's people in these latter days? Is the Truth, an end in itself in which one should rejoice? True are the words of Paul, that great philosopher and exponent of God's Truth—"Knowledge puffeth up," and "though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge—and have not love, I am nothing." Such a spirit of pride, however, and failure to manifest forth the love of Christ, is the result of knowledge which has not been rightly applied. Yet how necessary it is to be reminded that only Truth can sanctify the heart and make it possible for God's will to be done in the lives of His people. The Lord Jesus prayed—"Sanctify them through Thy Truth, Thy word is truth." The Apostle Peter also exhorted "them that have obtained like precious faith," to grow in grace and knowledge. Surely indeed, the brighter our hopes, the greater our appreciation of God and His Plan, the clearer our understanding concerning the work of God

during the present time, the more zealous will be our efforts to make our calling and election sure, and the more earnestly will we strive to be conformed to the image and likeness of Christ.—"He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

The words of the Apostle Paul written to 'his beloved son,' Timothy, contained a timely warning and exhortation to the follower of Christ in the closing days of this Gospel dispensation—"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own desires shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. 4: 2-4). When Peter in our opening text referred to "the error of the wicked," he did not have in mind men who were unrighteous and debased, for it would hardly have been necessary to warn the brethren to beware of the error of such men. The word "wicked" in the seventeenth verse means "unsettled or lawless," and does that not remind us of the Apostle's words concerning those who are "tossed about by every wind of doctrine"?—unsettled? Let us see to it that we are settled, established in the faith, for only such will stand in the shaking, when everything that is unsettled will be shaken. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," and while holding fast to the truth which we have learned and have been assured of, may we see to it that we have not received it in vain, but strive more earnestly by God's grace to bring our lives and conduct into harmony with the light which has enlightened our minds and shone into our hearts.

In conclusion, we would quote the words of Paul found in 2 Thess. 2: 13-17. "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

MY PRAYER

Shew me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths; lead me in Thy truth and teach me. According to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness' sake, O Lord. Mind not my weakness. Thou knowest *Thy strength* is made perfect in my weakness. Don't mind my failures; make me like Thyself, like Thine own self, dear Lord, in *any* way, at any cost no matter whether I like it or not. Thou knowest best and I want Thee to have Thine own way in me; *not my will*, but *Thine always*. Probably I shall not like

the process; it will hurt; I may even feel discouraged and almost ready to draw back. I may be weary of the conflict and sigh for rest and cry for deliverance before the work is done. Never mind, dear Lord; finish the work Thou hast begun, for Thy Name's sake and for Thine own glory; and stay not Thine hand until Thou seest clear and true and perfect Thine own image and likeness in me. And to Thee and to Thee alone shall be the praise for ever. Amen.

(Brother Benjamin Barton).

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