

# The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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## THE SERVANT OF THE LORD MUST NOT STRIVE

*"The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient:" -- 2 Tim. 2:24.*

OF all people of the earth the children of God should be the true exponents of peace and good will amongst men. "Blessed are the peacemakers," said our Lord, "for they shall be called he children of God." The foundation principles of the Divine government, which center in the qualities of justice and love, are such that all loyal children of God will ever be found on the side of true peace; and their lives and ministry will be such as to contribute to the influences of harmony and good feeling amongst men. It will be just as true on the contrary that such lovers of peace will deplore everything in the nature of controversy, contention, strife, and ill-will.

Our great Leader has been most appropriately designated the "Prince of Peace," because through His administration of affairs in the future He will establish peace on earth; and He pronounced His benediction upon those who are real peacemakers, thus placing a premium upon the acts and conduct of those who would be instruments of peace.

### HARMONY OF TWO VIEWPOINTS

But while the foregoing presents one viewpoint, and very truthfully, yet the Master gave us to understand that after all, peace was not the most important thing. He taught this, not only in word, but in deed. His actions confirm His teaching that He "came not to bring peace, but a sword." (Matt. 10:34.) A paradox in the Master's teaching and example seems to be here in evidence; and yet when the two lines of thought are viewed in the light of all the facts and circumstances, and in the light of the development of the Divine Plan, everything is seen to be in full accord, and harmonious.

The sum of the matter is that our Lord, as Jehovah's chief representative, came, as He said, "to bear witness to the truth" of the Divine character and Plan, and as to the great principles of justice and righteousness that are at the foundation of the Divine government. Our Lord knew that as He appeared upon the earth, Himself the spotless One, a perfect representation of the spirit and mind of the Heavenly Father, that His faithful ministry would at once antagonize the powers of darkness operated by Satan; and the Savior could well appreciate

that after man's experience of four thousand years of falling, under Satanic dominion, the spirit of truth and righteousness in the world was considerably lost-the image and likeness of God badly effaced; and knowing that it was God's Plan to permit the dominion of darkness to continue on for a time (for at least nineteen centuries following His First Advent), Jesus could easily forecast what the results of His ministry would be, as well as that of His followers, who were likewise commissioned under Him to carry forward the work of teaching and of bearing testimony to the same truths.

### **THE TRUE LIGHT-BEARER**

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism to the light of truth, and consequently when His people lift up the light, "let their light so shine as to glorify the Father in heaven" who has called them "out of darkness into His marvelous light," the effect upon the darkened world is to awaken opposition, antagonism; because the effect of the light is to make manifest the evils of darkness which would not otherwise appear; and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin, in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel; they much prefer a measure of darkness. -- John 3:20.

It is in consequence of this conflict between light and darkness that our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God, and who had at least a little light. Our Lord was not maltreated by the Roman governor and the Roman soldiers of their own volition, for they were so totally blind as not to appreciate anything of the light which He displayed. His persecutors were those who had some light but who hated the brilliancy of the great light which shone upon them. Similarly, all the way down through this Gospel Age those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted, largely, we might say chiefly, almost exclusively, by those who had some light, but whose light was darkness in comparison to the great light of the Holy Spirit shining in and through the Lord's fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord's testimony, "If they have hated Me, they will also hate you." "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Lord's followers in the present time are called upon to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, not because it is either reasonable or proper, but because the Lord, wishing to test, prove, and polish His people, is willing to permit the evil, opposing influences to prosper,

and persecute and oppose His "members," and thus to serve His cause in the preparation of His elect for a future work of service. Thus the persecutors of the Body, like the persecutors of the Head, are co-operating to fulfil the Divine Plan in a manner they little suspect. -- John 15:18; 1 John 3:73; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thess. 2:14,15; 2 Thess. 3:4; John 16:2; Acts 14:22.

### **NOT TO RULE THE WORLD NOW**

We might multiply the Scriptural declarations that this is the call of the Church in the present time -- to let the light shine and thus to attract persecution, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and to be rightly exercised by it in patience, brotherly kindness, pity, and love-toward the persecutors and toward all men.

As it was the mission of our Lord not to rule the world, nor to judge the world, at His First Advent, but to lay down His life for the world, so it is the mission of the Church, the Body of Christ, not to rule the world, nor to judge the world now, but to "lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16.) Our Lord declares, "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47.) The Son of Man came to lay down His life for the world. (John 6 :51; 10:15.) "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18 :36. ) And so the Apostle Paul assures us that we are not to reign now, but on the contrary to suffer with Christ, if we would reign with Him by and by; that we are not to judge the world now, but on the contrary to judge nothing before the time; but He assures us that in God's due time the saints shall judge the world, and that to the world's blessing. He assures. us that it is our mission "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His Body's sake, which is the Church." (Col. 1:24.) He tells us, along the same line, that while we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, our service is to be specially to the household of faith. Our efforts that will go toward the world of mankind in general are to be only the side-glances, as it were, the overflow of our efforts expended chiefly and directly upon the members of the Body of Christ, the consecrated Church, expended in building one another up in the most holy faith. --- Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 4:5 ; 6:2 ; Gal. 6:10.

The reason is therefore manifest from the foregoing why the Lord's people at times appear not to be acting and ministering along lines that bring harmonious results, and why, just as in the case of our Lord and the Apostles, the faithful throughout the Age have appeared to be promoters of controversy, while all the time they have been the greatest admirers and lovers of peace. We see that though all true Christians must be lovers of peace, they do not love "peace at any price," for they are taught that the truth and the principles thereof are more important, and these must be defended and supported even

though it means that peace and harmony appear to be disturbed and broken at times.

### **CAN WE AVOID CONTROVERSY?**

It may have seemed to some that some of the presentations appearing these columns from time to time are of a controversial nature and such as might precipitate disagreement and contention; and some may be inclined to feel that the more prudent course would be to publish in the **HERALD** Only that which would be concurred in by all readers, and such as would not deviate in the slightest degree from that set forth in the writings of Brother Russell.

In considering this viewpoint we cannot but express deep sympathy with the earnest desire for unity and harmony which all true children of God love and seek for. More than this, we believe that it can be truthfully said that what has been presented in these columns has been entirely free from the spirit of controversy and strife. What we have been and are endeavoring to do is to get at the kernel of the Divine Message intended for all faithful watchers, and to place before the brethren such truths as would have a sanctifying influence upon the hearts of all. The brethren associated in this ministry have had no desire whatever to promulgate controversy or anything of that nature in what has been presented.

From one viewpoint, as has already been explained, all truth is of a controversial character during the present dark time of the reign of evil; and we presume that no truth could be presented whatever but what would be disputed and rejected by some people. Hence, if we were to decide to publish only that which all could agree to, it would mean that we should cease our efforts altogether, and preach and publish nothing. We cannot believe that this attitude and policy would please the Lord. In fact, we have the instruction to the contrary, to persist in the proclamation of the Truth in the face of opposition and even at the expense of suffering, persecution, and death. It then becomes a question of Christian judgment and the exercise of the spirit of a sound mind in what we shall teach and publish before others; and the question to be decided is, What are the truths that have a sanctifying influence on the minds of the Lord's people and assist in their upbuilding in the most holy faith? Surely all must agree that prophecy and the time features as well as those sublime pictures contained in the book of Revelation, are of a character to stir up the pure minds of the brethren to faith and good works. Indeed experience has proved it so.

As has been seen, the subject of the times and seasons, the subject of prophecy, the history of the Church, and the consummation of the Divine Plan as contained in the book of Revelation, occupy great prominence in the Bible. To these themes, the most pious and

sanctified men of God throughout the entire Age have devoted much valuable time, and in dealing with them have consumed a great deal of space in many volumes and journals. Indeed, how many hungry hearts have been nourished and made satisfied, and have been enabled to give an answer for the hope that is in them, as a result of having read and studied the expositions of these great themes set forth in Holy Writ! Many indeed can testify to the truthfulness of the solemn admonition: "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy"; also, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book."

### **GREAT NEED OF TOLERANCE AND FORBEARANCE**

In presenting in the columns of this journal what has seemed to us to be the truth along one line or another, it was with the consciousness of course that all would not be able to see every detail of interpretation just as presented; but the position taken is that this should not deter us from setting before the brethren that which to our mind and judgment was of a wholesome and a comforting character, and such as we believe would build up in faith, hope, and love, and assist them in living the new life; as long as we have this treasure in earthen vessels and tabernacle in this imperfect state it is impossible for our minds to see exactly alike, and for this reason a great deal of love, tolerance, and forbearance should be exercised amongst the brethren; for this reason also we have repeatedly urged upon the friends to exercise their fullest liberty in accepting or rejecting what is herein presented, assuring all that any honest difference of opinion shall not disturb our feeling of brotherly love and our privilege of fellowship as brethren in Christ.

The true light-bearer as he examines his own heart and motives should have a deep desire to promote only peace, harmony, and love among the brethren; and should deplore everything in the nature of strife and contention, seeking ever to keep before his mind the Apostle's admonition: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men." Such an one will also necessarily deplore everything in the nature of anger, hatred, malice, evil-speaking, etc., believing that such characteristics are of the darkness and the great prince thereof.

In the initial issue of this journal, published nearly six years ago, it was stated that the purpose of this publication was to edify the Lord's people in holy things, and not for controversy; and that we would not enter into any quarrel with others. We believe it can truthfully be said that this position and attitude have been fully and consistently maintained up to the present time. Many voluminous manuscripts have come to our office with request that they be published, and that any contrary views that we might hold should also appear. Thus it has been a very easy matter all along to fill up this journal with matter that would be purely of a controversial character and would seem to be

productive of nothing but contention and strife. The earnest desire therefore of the brethren still is to enter into no quarrel, nor to perpetuate any controversy whatever-our earnest desire and purpose remaining unchanged, namely that this journal shall be dedicated to a holy ministry only, for the building up of the saints and for the glory of God.

### **PROGRESS STILL THE WATCH WORD**

As for printing in these pages only that which was published by Brother Russell and only that which would be in fullest accord with every item of teaching as he presented it, we cannot think this would be the ideal course to pursue, nor productive of the best results; neither would it be to the highest profit of the friends in general. This suggestion does not appeal to us as being a reasonable one either, not because we think that any of the brethren endeavoring to serve the Truth since Brother Russell's death are superior to him, nor even his equal by far; yet the voice of wisdom seems to speak to all, that time and events most unmistakably cast their reflection upon the testimony of the Divine Word, making more luminous from time to time certain statements thereof. Hence we are urged to walk in the light, to watch, to take heed to the more sure word of prophecy, etc.

It is recalled that Brother Russell set forth in his writings that others than himself were entitled to their personal liberty in the study of the Bible, and he repeatedly urged others to prove all things by the inspired Word.

Amongst the servants of the Church of Christ during the past nineteen centuries we find some of the most worthy characters -worthy because of their Christian courage, uprightness, humility, and love: whose service and minis cry on behalf of fellowmen, and especially on behalf of fellow-members of the Church, have been of inestimable value. Such special servants of the Church have possessed, not only great ability as teachers in spiritual things, but they have been examples of unselfishness and true piety, of love, and of loyalty to God. Indeed, all such, the various members of the Church are to regard with true appreciation and esteem.

But no one of these is to be considered as having received all the light in his time, that was due the Church unto the end of her career. No, the light has continued shining on brighter and brighter down the stream of time; and the history of the Church shows that wherever there has been the disposition to gather around a favored leader and close the eyes to all further effort and progress in the path of light, it has meant spiritual stagnation, resulting in sectarianism and loss of much of the spirit of truth already received. The children of God have been counseled to guard against this condition of affairs by diligently and

earnestly seeking a larger measure of the Lord's spirit and a fuller acquaintance with Him.

It is well remembered that Brother Russell realized and also taught, that the path of the just was a progressive one, and that as he expected to see matters more clearly himself as time went on, so surely he thus allowed that, subsequent to his death; brethren who would be serving fellow-members of the Body should be accorded the same liberty that he himself desired to have, namely the liberty of an "open Bible," and of individually studying it with the object of proclaiming whatever was seen to be the true message of the Lord from time to time. It is in accordance with this spirit and policy that our brethren have proceeded and will continue to serve in this ministry.

We believe it will be conceded by all that the true minister of God, while earnestly desiring conditions of peace and unity, and striving in his labors and communion with the brethren to that end, will have before his mind first of all the pleasing of his Heavenly Father. Hence his great desire will be to preserve in his own heart the essence of true humility and godly fear, and to keep himself as far as possible free from all disposition to run ahead of the Lord or to speak where His Word does not speak. The faithful ambassador of the Lord, who is concerned and engaged in a holy ministry, will ever keenly appreciate his own weakness and insufficiency, and will continually rely upon the assistance of the Lord's promised grace, upon the wisdom from above and guidance by a wise and loving providence. Such an one is sure to be misunderstood by some. But there is only one course open to him, and that is to diligently persevere in following the leading of the Lord's spirit as He sees it, and in being faithful in doing the Divine will.

## **TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES**

ST. Paul's admonition to the brethren at Ephesus perhaps was never more worthy of earnest consideration than at the present time: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to shepherd the Church of God, which He hath purchased with the blood of His own Son." (Acts 20:28.) Knowledge of Divine things indeed means an added responsibility, but it will avail us nothing except as it is combined and active with Love, which is the bond of perfectness, the fulfilling of the Divine law or requirement. How many blessings the Lord has granted us, and opportunities to put on the whole armor of God that we might be able to withstand the very trial now upon us!

Wisely did the Apostle first say, "Take heed to yourselves." That is our first responsibility. We should each first examine our own hearts to see whether we are to any degree moved by jealousies, or ambitions, or



any selfish motive. To do this effectively we must not measure ourselves with others, nor yet by our own imperfect standards, but by the Lord's standard -- Perfect Love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor [and especially thy brother in the Lord] as thyself." Oh! what brotherly-kindness, what tenderness of word and act, what sympathy of thought for each other's weaknesses, what appreciation of each other's better traits, what long-suffering kindness and patient forbearance in love, what care for each other's welfare, rights and liberties, as for our own, this would imply and produce!

"Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith!" writes the same Apostle. Doctrinal soundness is very important, but not enough; we must also be "in the faith" in the sense of exercising faith in the Lord -- in all of life's affairs, and especially in all the affairs of His Church. If ever we allow expediency to swerve us from the Scriptural program in the affairs of the Church it manifests that we are not "in the faith" as God designed. For confidence in God and His overruling wisdom and power would never permit expediency to say, "Let us do evil that good may follow" -- Let us take an unscriptural course for the best interests of the Lord's cause. The faith dictates that to obey God is better than sacrifice, and that He is able to make all things work for good to all who love and serve Him.

Dearly Beloved, let us, then, remember that this is our test and now our testing time; and let love for the Lord and His brethren and His Word be constantly in command of our lips, of our conduct and, above all, of our hearts. "If ye do these things ye shall never fail, but so an entrance shall be granted us into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

## **THE CONVENTION AT SPRINGFIELD**

DEAR BRETHREN

"HOW excellent is Thy loving kindness, O God!" (Psa. 36:7) was surely the sentiment of many hearts at the close of the three-day Convention of Associated Bible Students, "Believers in a Ransom for all," held at Springfield, Mass.

At 10.30 a. m. on Saturday, Aug. 30, the Lord's children from various points began to arrive at the Memorial Hall on State Street, the regular meeting-place of the Springfield Ecclesia. Loving hands had already transformed the speakers' platform into a floral bower. The beaming faces of the dear ones in the Lord as they entered the hall in little groups or singly during the day were an inspiration to all, and especially did they cause the hearts of the Springfield brethren to go



out in gratitude to the dear Heavenly Father as they began ,to realize the fulfillment of their earnest prayers for these many weeks.

The Lord's people gathered there represented Ecclesias in Canada, New England, New Jersey, New York, and elsewhere -- not a great company in all, but all seemed filled with the sweet spirit of the Master. As they entered they read over the door, "Welcome in the Name of the Lord," and inside the hall their eyes fell upon a banner behind the speakers' desk -- "One is Your Master, Christ, and All Ye Are Brethren." And surely this spirit seemed to pervade the entire Convention from the opening hymn on Saturday morning to the close of the Love Feast on Monday afternoon. Indeed, brotherly love seemed everywhere in evidence, and the sweet spirit of harmony and accord in the dear Head seemed to suggest anew His earnest prayer to the Father -- "That they all may be one, even as We are one." The Master's badge of discipleship seemed to be worn by all present.

Precious indeed were the lessons learned, the heavenly instruction received and the encouragement and help given along the "narrow way," as for three days His people gathered about the Lord's table, so, richly spread with the "manna" from heaven-things new and old from the storehouse of His Word -- and gained renewed strength and zeal to "run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." The friends were told about "Fellowship -- Fruitful and Unfruitful," and reminded that "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ"; urged to have our "Hearts Established"; shown the value of "Praying, Pray"; had helpfully pictured "If Christ Came to Church Today"; told of the wondrous privilege and glorious reward of "Consecration" in the present Age; given a fresh view of His wonderful love in "Our Sufficiency is of God"; received practical help when "Surprised by Faults"; given a clear view of Scriptural "Baptism"; shown how to lay up "Treasures in Heaven"; and counseled to "Abide in the Light" through love of the brethren. The public address on Sunday afternoon presented a true Bible view of "The Judgment of the Great White Throne," and was listened to with deep interest.

The closing exhortations of the Convention were summarized in the mottoes on either side of the desk-"Let all your deeds be done in love," and "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

One of the special features of the closing session was the passage of a unanimous vote by which each Ecclesia or Class represented in the Convention sent a message of love and greeting in our Lord to every other Ecclesia represented.

At 3.30 p. m. on Monday the speakers who remained and the visiting and local elders formed a line in front of the palms and flowers and bide "God be with thee!" to each as the friends passed by, the Love

Feast and the Convention closing with the singing of "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

Surely it was a "sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," and it "was good to be there." The rich spiritual food provided and the lavish blessings which the dear Father bestowed upon His children were recognized as not given for present joy alone, but, as pointed out from the platform, constituted a larger stewardship and an increased responsibility the full fruition of which may only be known when in the kingdom we may be permitted to look back over the way He has led us, and praise Him for this further and special evidence of His great love.

THE SPRINGFIELD ECCLESIA

## **THE GARDEN OF THE HEART**

*"The sower soweth the word." -- Mark 4:1-20.*

ONE of the methods employed by the Savior to impress lessons of truth upon the hearts of His disciples was that of the use of parables. It is written also that Jesus spoke in parables in order that the truth might be concealed from another class -unbelievers who were not in a condition of heart to be admitted into fellowship with the Lord.

The Prophet had foretold that our Lord would open His mouth in "parables" and in "dark sayings" (Psa. 78:2); and the evangelists record that thus He did, and to those who inquired the meaning, our Lord answered, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without [outsiders -not disciples -not consecrated] all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted [turned to a proper course] and their sins should be forgiven them. -- Mark 4:11,12.

Briefly explained, this is not the Age appointed for the world's enlightenment; rather, this is the dark night in which humanity are having experiences that will prepare them for the knowledge of God when the Age of light and opportunity will come to every member of our race and the world is placed on trial for life. But those now being selected to be heirs of the Kingdom with our Lord, He is instructing in all the ways of righteousness to prepare them for their future office and work, as it is written "They shall all be taught of God."

A parable is defined literally as "a placing beside or together, a comparing; a similitude." The thought of a parable, then, is that it is a figurative statement, and is in the nature of a fictitious narrative of something which might, or might not really occur in life or nature, by means of which a moral or lesson is drawn.

One of our Lord's most interesting parables is known as the parable of the Sower, though more accurately perhaps it might be described as the parable of the four kinds of soil, representing the four kinds of human hearts. The parable is introduced by the word,

### **"HEARKEN" -- TAKE HEED**

This is an implication that an important lesson is contained in the parable. Nevertheless the world gives little heed to this or other of our Lord's teachings, and even His professed followers rarely give the Master's words that deeper, attentive thought necessary to their appreciation, and only he that seeketh findeth the true meaning, the true lessons.

The parable itself is a very simple statement of a matter familiar to His hearers: A farmer sowed good seed, a portion: of which fell on the pathway leading through the farm, where it was readily seen and quickly devoured by the birds. Some fell on stony ground, 'the soil of which was good enough but shallow, with the result that it sprang up quickly, made a good show at first, but soon withered under the heat of the sun. Other seed fell upon ground infested with the seed of thorns, and the two growing together, the thorns so choked the good seed that it became unfruitful. But some of the seed fulfilled the farmer's intention and brought forth much fruit, some thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold, because the soil was more favorable: it had been prepared by the plowing processes to receive the seed, it was deep enough to properly care for and root the seed, and it was not thorn-infested.

This picture, familiar to all farmers, was especially clear and forcible to the minds of those who heard Jesus, for several reasons: (1) The fields of that land are not fenced and the paths of travel frequently cross them. (2) The birds of Syria, including Palestine, seem to be much more numerous than elsewhere, probably on account of the climate; they are said to be one of the special pests of the farmer of that region. (3) Thorns abound there. A writer says, "There are no less than fifty genera and two hundred species of plants in Syria and Palestine furnished with thorns and prickles. There is probably no country on earth of the same extent which has so many. . . . Thistles grow to a height of ten to fifteen feet." As for the stony ground: Palestine abounds with limestone, which renders the soil very rich, but when shallow very hot. As for the hundredfold crop we are assured that this is not an exaggerated statement. One writer. remarks that at Geneva in 1855 he got from the field a single ear of barley containing two hundred and seventy -six grains.

## **WHY TEACH IN PARABLES?**

Our Lord concluded His parable with the words, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The majority of the multitude heard, wondered at His gracious words, thought of Him as a wonderful teacher sent of God, but took no deeper interest. They had not the ears to hear, they were not hungry for the Truth, their hearts were not prepared. There remained with the Lord not only the twelve Apostles but a considerable number of disciples or followers. These now crowded about the Master to ask the interpretation, of the parable. They had ears not only for the story but for the meaning, for the lesson they desired to know the will of God that they might do it -- they were consecrated to know and to do the Father's will.

## **HOW UNDERSTAND ALL PARABLES?**

Our Lord's words, "Know ye not this parable? How, then, will ye know all parables?" may be understood to signify, It is proper for you to understand this parable, as it will prove a key valuable in the interpretation of all parables. Our Lord then proceeded to give a very particular interpretation of the parable.

- (1) The "seed is the Word of God." (Luke 8:11.) The different kinds of soil represent different kinds of hearts coming in contact with that Word. By the Word of God we are to understand the entire revelation which God has made to us-the Bible. This includes, as the Apostle points out, "the word spoken by angels"-God's direct messages in the past to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, etc., including the giving of the Law. These angels represented God as His mouthpieces. It includes also the messages sent through the Prophets, "when holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21.). And it includes the teachings of our Lord Jesus and His Apostles, whom He authorized to speak in His name; as it is written, "God hath in these last times spoken unto us by His Son"; and the Son declared respecting the Apostles that those who received them, received Him; as those who heard and received Him, heard and received the Father. -- Heb. 1:2; Matt. 10:40.

It is well that we lay full emphasis upon this only proper seed, because much confusion has resulted from a mistake on this point, the using of improper seed. We are not limiting the seed to any particular translation of the Word of God, nor do we urge that religious writings which contain this Word are invaluable and good seed. We do urge, however, most emphatically that they are good seed only in proportion as they are thoroughly loyal to the Divine Word. To whatever extent they present human philosophies instead of the Divine Plan and philosophy, to whatever extent they mix the human with the Divine, to

that extent they are not the good seed. How careful, then, the Lord's people should be respecting the seed which they receive into their own hearts from day to day, and respecting the seed of truth which they in turn seek to scatter in the good ground of other hearts.

Alas that we must confess it, but nearly all of the theology and theological works outside the Bible are so mixed as to be untrue, misleading: hence they do not bring forth the intended harvest in the heart, in the life of the individual. This is the great trouble with nominal Christendom, Churchianity, today. Traditions of men have taken the place of the Word of God; the good seed, the Gospel of the Kingdom, is a scarce article outside the Bible, and even in the Bible presentation of God's Word there are difficulties and hindrances in the shape of mistranslations and interpolations which hinder its results. The earnest effort on the part of all faithful we trust today is to set forth the Word of God simply and without human tradition in any measure or degree. We should repeatedly, continually, and persistently scatter that Word by literal quotations and expositions of it -- presenting it cleared of the many misrepresentations and falsifications thereof.

### **THE WAYSIDE HEARERS**

Our Lord declares that the field is the world, but not all of the field or world is being planted at the present time. Vast areas of the world of mankind are already sown thickly with various human doctrines and are growing great crops after their kind. The field that the Lord is sowing first is a Jewish field, already prepared by Divine instructions and disciplines. And although the middle wall of partition has since been broken down, so that there is no longer a distinction made as between Jews and Gentiles, nevertheless the portion of the Gentile field that is being sown is but a limited one, namely the comparatively few amongst whom the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Word of God, has been declared.

So, then, we may say that Christendom is the wheat-field in which the Lord has sown His Word. In Christendom, therefore, and not in heathendom, where the Word has never gone, we are to look for the four kinds of results brought to our attention in the parable. In Christendom some are like the wayside, or paths hard trodden by life's experiences; sometimes, by too great prosperity and unprepared to receive God's message, unappreciative of it. If such hear the message it enters into the heart: it is to them merely a mental hearing, they take little interest in it. At first indeed they may appreciate the harmony and certain beauties and consistencies of the Truth, but it never becomes theirs, it never enters in, they are not open to its reception. Ere long the enemy comes; Satan the Adversary steals away from them every

element of Truth they once had seen or appreciated. The Truth is not for such, even though, being in the way, some grains fell on them.

This class of people may be found in every community, in almost every home. They are not specially to be blamed, though we may sympathize with them, regretting their inability to receive the comfort and grace of the Word of God. These hearts are not fit for the Kingdom under present conditions. What the Lord may do for them in the future--either through trials and sufferings and disappointments in the present life, that will plow them up and make them ready for the reception of the Truth -- or what He may do for them in the disciplines of the Millennial Age to fit and prepare them for the Truth, are different questions. All the parable says is that while in this condition they are not acceptable, not wanted amongst the Lord's people.

### **THE STONY-GROUND HEARERS**

We have all come across this class of hearers in Christendom; they not only see something of the beauty of God's Plan but they receive it with joy, they give every evidence of bringing forth much fruit. We say to ourselves, I believe that person is a true Christian and will be one of the overcomers. But we cannot see as God sees, we know not the heart, the shallowness of the nature is not disclosed until, opposition being aroused, the sun of persecution blights and withers the results. We are inclined to feel discouraged, especially if we helped to plant the seed and had expected great results. The Lord in this parable cautions us against discouragement by assuring us that He knows in advance that considerable of the seed will fall upon stony-ground hearts, where, having little nourishment backed by little character, it will soon wither and bring no fruitage to maturity.

This should not signify to us that the case is a hopeless one as respects the future. Under new conditions character will be deepened and good results will be proportionately obtained, or else, if the heart will not come under the influence of the Lord's dealings in the future, it will be utterly discarded as useless ground. If any of the Lord's people who have received the Truth find in themselves this shallowness of nature, this superficiality represented in the parable, he or she should at once appeal to the Lord for such a deepening of the soil of their hearts as would enable them to bring forth fruitage to His praise.

An interesting commentator has remarked: "Let the thorns remain, and the soul, like the wheat-stalk, will only grow from weakness to weakness. Root out the thorns, and the soul will grow 'from strength to strength.' Root out the thorns, and then there will not only be 'first the blade, then the ear,' but what is best of all, 'the full corn in the ear.'"

It has been said that "No true disciple will be contented with a thirtyfold increase of faith, and patience, and humility, and love, and

usefulness in his heart and life for the Lord if through prayer and watching -- if by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts -- if by sternly crucifying the flesh and trustfully walking with God, he may rise from thirty to sixty, from sixty to a hundredfold in that holy obedience which grows on living faith."

The matter of development in the Christian life is largely with the individual. "Improving his heart soil is the life-work of the Christian, and he may deepen the soil every day, by Bible reading, by prayer, by meditation, by the reading of inspiring books, by Christian conversation, by joining in religious activities. And each step in the process will render the next step easier and more blessed."

### **THE THORNY-GROUND HEARERS**

The soil that brings forth great thorns is rich, and if devoted wholly to the production of wheat would bring forth large crops. So it is, our Lord explains, with some who hear the message of God respecting the Kingdom -- they are good, strong, deep characters; they would make noble Christians and bring forth much fruitage to the Master's praise and to their own honor if they were fully devoted to the Lord. But alas! their talents, influence, means, time -- the strength of their hearts, the strength of the soil, is absorbed in another direction -- in the bringing forth of earthly projects and ambitions whose interests conflict with the interests of the Kingdom. The parable shows that where the thorns are permitted to remain, the Kingdom interests will suffer. This is another way of saying that those who have heard of the Lord and love Him are mistaken when they suppose they can love both the Lord and the world; it is another way of telling us that we cannot serve God and Mammon, that we cannot bring forth both thorns and wheat. Our hearts must be single, wholly given to the Lord; we must love Him with all our heart, soul, strength, mind, else we cannot bring forth the fruitage which He requires of disciples.

Alas! of all the disappointing ones who hear the Gospel of the Kingdom during this Age, the thorny-ground hearers have the most conspicuous place. Not much could be expected from the wayside heart, not much could be expected of the shallow hearted, but great possibilities are lost in those in whom the seed of Truth is choked by the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches -- the thorns. All of the Lord's people who find these thorns mingling with the Truth in their hearts should learn from this parable the impossibility of bringing forth two crops --of being prosperous, successful and prominent and honored according to the course of this world, and also growing prosperous in the spiritual interests and in association with their Lord in the Kingdom. We cannot serve God and Mammon. The Lord seeketh not such as are double-hearted to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom. We must love Him with all our hearts in order to bring forth



the proper fruitage, and eventually to hear His, "Well done, good and faithful."

### **THE GOOD-GROUND HEARERS**

Thank God that in His providence and grace some of our hearts have been plowed deeply by the plowshare of experience, trouble, disappointment in respect to earthly affairs and conditions. Thanks be to Him, too, if the soil of our hearts is deep and able to receive and appreciate the Truth, the Word of the Kingdom. We praise Him if we have learned the necessity for the establishment of His Kingdom and have heard the invitation and received the seed of Truth which invites us to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, and which makes known to us the terms and conditions of fellowship in His sufferings if we would have fellowship also in His glory to follow. Thanks be to Him also if our hearts have been in the attitude to respond to these things and not infested with the double mind of business care, household work, etc.

Doubtless in the very best fields seeds of thorns and thistles may be found. O, that we may receive the good seed in such abundant measure as to choke out the thorns, as to separate us fully from the world, its spirit, its ambitions, its aims, and to sanctify us wholly to the love and service of Him who hath called us from darkness into His marvelous light.

Let us, dear brethren, not only be sure that our hearts are of the good-ground sort, and be sure that we have received and are developing the good seed, the Word of the Kingdom, but let us seek also to bring forth much fruit. Seeing that some of these may bring forth thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold to the Master's praise, let us determine that by the grace of God, which we know is ours and will assist us, we will be of those who bring forth fruitage an hundredfold -- to our largest possible capacity and measure of service to our King. How may we increase our faithfulness? We answer, by increasing honesty of heart, which prepares us for increased measure of the seed and which enables us to bring this forward to perfection. Let us give diligence, therefore, while still there is opportunity, that the Master may find us fruit-bearing to the very largest degree of our possibilities of nature, surroundings, and opportunities.

### **FEAR NOT**

"Thou, O most Compassionate!  
Who didst stoop to our estate,  
Drinking of the cup we drain,  
Treading in our path of pain.

"Through the doubt and mystery,  
Grant to us Thy steps to see,  
And the grace to draw from thence  
Larger hope and confidence.

"Show Thy vacant tomb and let,  
As of old, the angel sit;  
Whispering, by its open door:  
'Fear not!' He hath gone before!"

## **DEFENSE OF FAITH DELIVERED TO SAINTS**

### **"DESPISE NOT PROPHESYINGS"**

*"The holy Scriptures . . . able to make thee wise unto salvation."  
-- 2 Tim. 3:15.*

THE word "prophesyings" has a very much broader meaning than is usually understood. At the time this exhortation was written, the Church had prophets who were specially delegated and empowered by God to give instruction, and in some instances to foretell things future. The Apostles Paul, Peter, James, Jude, and John were of this class. These men wrote letters at various times to different churches, and in these letters are found the doctrines of the Christian religion. The service that they gave to the Church was foretold by the Lord Jesus in the words addressed to His disciples: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." -- John 16:12,13.

The words of St. Paul, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16,17), have special reference to the Old Testament writings. Concerning certain portions of these, the Apostle Peter says, "We have a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do' well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn." As we examine closely the words of our Lord Jesus and the Apostles, we believe it is a reasonable conclusion that the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, are to be understood as given by God to unfold the doctrines, precepts, and predictions of future things which are necessary for the Church to have, that its members may be built up in their most holy faith.

## **WHAT THE EXHORTATION COMPREHENDS**

It is in this broad sense that the exhortation "despise not prophesyings" applies. To us the "prophesyings" comprehend all the declarations of God's truth contained in the Bible -- history, prophecy, and precept.

Another has said that the exhortation refers to "the varied formulas in which that truth is conveyed, whether in Scriptures or in-sermons. If in the written Word, that is one way, and the best way; if *in* the preaching of the Gospel, that is another way; if in tracts and sermons, this is a third way. But in whatever shape God's Word is conveyed, the command is, 'Despise it not.'

However, in the exhortation that immediately follows this one, the Apostle is careful to guard the believer against imbibing the spirit of the blasphemous claims of the anti-Christian Apostasy to Divine infallibility. He does this in the words, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The thought that comes in connection with this solemn warning "despise not prophesyings" is therefore a very important one, not only to those addressed as Christian believers, but also to any who may come in contact with the Divine testimony. We have very many negative exhortations in the Scriptures that imply very decided, positive commands. For illustration, we are exhorted to "despise not the chastenings of the Lord," which implies that we should do the opposite, and highly value the same. Having this in mind we will see that the exhortation under consideration contains the important thought that we should highly value the Scriptures -all the Scriptures; that we should deeply appreciate the Word of God.

The words mean then that we not only should not despise the Scriptures by neglecting to read and study them, but that we realize that they contain a record of all that we need and must have to regulate our life and conduct in this world -- all that can possibly be desired to develop and ripen character and prepare us for the station we may occupy in the world that is to come. The exhortation means, then (to use the language of another), to "never say, or think, or do, what is fitted to disparage this book, or to degrade it, or in any way, to dislodge it from that central supremacy that it ought to wield over every thought and affection of the inmost soul. The simple meaning of the prescription is, Receive the Bible; love it, read it, study it, reverence it, cherish it as a precious possession, entertain it as a life in the heart, and not as a mere direction outside."

## **THE RESPONSIBILITY OF REJECTING THE BIBLE**

It should be remembered that all that makes up Christianity comes from the whole Bible; therefore to reject the Bible as a Divine revelation is to cease, not only to be a Christian, but to disbelieve in

Christianity altogether. It seems impossible to conceive that any person who examines the multiplied evidences of the divinity of the Bible, and who in a sincere state of mind-seeks to discover whether the Bible in the original, is of God, could reject it. We will not deny that there are many sincere men who reject the Bible as a Divine revelation; but we believe it will invariably be found that these have never sufficiently examined the evidences. If we meet a skeptic parading his unbelief, glorying in it, and seeking to make converts to his unbelief, we have reason to suspect that his life is not in accord with his conscience; and "there is this shuffling, this display of bravery, this obtrusive bravado, to conceal if possible from himself-for such is man's self-deception -- the state in which he is living in the sight of God." A really sober conviction that the Bible is not true -- that it is a falsehood, must be to a right mind a very unpleasant thing, to say the least. To such it would seem to be a most terrible thing to "strike down from its pedestal that book, which its worst enemy will admit. has given freedom to the slave, dignity to the poor, a sense of duty to the rich and the great!"

If the Bible is not from God, all sensible persons must come to the conclusion that mankind is altogether without a revelation from God. To come to the conclusion that man has no knowledge of a God who has an interest in him, and thus to be deprived of all knowledge of a life beyond this present one, which has been so filled with afflictions and adversities, would be most painful, most terrible. To think that man goes down into the deep shadow and solitude of the grave without a single ray of hope to penetrate it and reveal to him a life beyond, would be "so dreadful a conviction that surely one must hesitate before accepting it; and if any one come to entertain it sincerely, surely it must be with pain and sorrow that he feels constrained to admit or pronounce it."

### **WHY SOME REJECT THE SCRIPTURES**

It should be remembered that the Bible was not given for the intellectual merely, but for all who hunger and thirst after truth; and wherever it has gone, proclaiming a life beyond the tomb, while its sublime teachings have been both misunderstood and misrepresented, there still exists among the common people, a belief in its Divine authority.

The unbelieving skeptics we meet today and have to deal with, are largely those that love infidelity for the license it gives them. In discussing the evidences of the inspiration of the Bible, these skeptics prefer to evade reasoning on these evidences, and affect a contempt for it, admitting that it contains some good things, but showing plainly by their wise looks and manner that they despise it as a whole. However, the chief, the principal reason for its rejection, if we except the

misrepresentations of its teachings by its professed friends, is man's deep sense of his own sinfulness, which is condemned in the Bible, and his own consciousness of the existence of a supreme Being, from whom he is alienated because of sin.

Fallen man loves sin; and he is aware, even without a Divine revelation, that God condemns it. Man *will* not renounce his sin, neither can he justify himself as a sinner, nor will he give up his sinful conduct. And while the masses in civilized lands, although knowing little of what it contains, believe in the Bible, they prefer to forget it, to cease to think about it, and to get rid of its remonstrances, that make them feel unhappy, the best and quickest way they are able.

In spite of the desires to forget the Bible, men cannot help but come in contact with many things that remind them of the Bible and of their responsibility to its moral teachings. It is an undeniable fact that in some way, whatever that may be, the Bible has so rooted itself into the very texture of all society, and man's memories of childhood, that however he may try to forget it or flee from its moral teachings, he finds these at some time ringing in his ears, showing that they still linger as echoes in his heart, reasoning of righteousness and self-control and judgment to come.

We have in the words following, a reason why men who say they believe the Bible, despise or flee from its teachings: "He cannot answer it; he will not obey it; he dares not, therefore, manfully meet it. He flees from it and attempts not, even to his own satisfaction, to treat with supercilious contempt the prophet that prophesies only evil continually about him."

### **SOME LOVE DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT**

Even when some men hear of the great and glorious Plan of God, that so wonderfully reveals His love to them, while they testify that they admire it, yet knowing that to receive this knowledge, in the sense of acting upon it, will require them to give up their sins, and to live a life contrary to that they and the vast majority are living, they turn away and fail to seek or to obtain any more light or knowledge. It is only the few now that are "feeling after God if haply they may find Him," that continue their search after heavenly wisdom. The words of the Savior, "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd," are true of all except those who are desirous, at any cost, to know God and His plans and purposes. This is evidenced by the further words of the Savior, "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." As one has truly said: "Few can conceive what a serf and drudge the intellect becomes when passions that want to be

indulged, and conscience that desires to exclude light, muster behind it and urge it on to subserve their purposes."

Many claim that there is insufficient evidence that the Bible is Divine. It should be remembered by such that while insufficient evidence is a thing that needs to be dealt with in any matter, dissatisfaction or revulsion to the purity of truth, and anxiety to escape its responsibilities, should be overcome before one can be prepared to appreciate the many evidences that are all-sufficient to prove the inspiration of the Bible in its original tongue, and its preservation from injurious errors, in the translations that are available today.

### **THE MORE CONVINCING TESTIMONY**

The greatest evidence of the truthfulness of the Bible is an experimental one. Its great object or design, as revealed in all its pages, is to enable man to come into harmony with God. Let a man seek diligently to attain this object and he will discover the impossibility of doing this by works of righteousness of his own. His best and most strenuous efforts in this direction will only cause him to discover more and more the requirements of righteousness, and his own deficiency therein. Indeed this is what the Bible professes to have men see first of all. It is when they come to see and acknowledge this, that they come into the right condition of mind and heart to seek forgiveness, and find Him who is the "end of the law for righteousness." The law, whether the written one on tables of stone, or whether that which remains of the original law written in human hearts, is employed by Divine providence and revelation to lead to Christ, who died for all, that those who receive Him might have reconciliation. Any one who has ever come thus far in his desire to have evidence of Divine inspiration, will find that he has come into possession of an experimental evidence that is the most valuable and convincing, and if he continues, will not be denied further knowledge—all that he desires.

We hear it often said, I accept every thing in the Bible that is reasonable, and no more, forgetting that it is possible to deify reason; in other words, they make reason a sort of intuition of truth. It should be remembered that reasoning on many subjects is beset with great difficulties, and often reaches wrong conclusions. Human reason, instead of being an authority to test truth, is rather a servant, an agent that may be made use of to discover where truth may be found and what it is. Those who take reason as an authority, and put it in the place of that which claims to be truth, do violence to both the reason of man and the revelation of God. It will be generally admitted that our reasoning powers are imperfect, defective; but some understand by the word *reasonable*, whatever happens to accord with their preconceived ideas, or peculiar prejudices. "Hence," a Christian writer says, "you go

to the Bible, not to say, Whatever is here, I accept, because God has said it; but to argue, My reason is now to be exercised; what my reason rejects, I reject; what my reason receives, I receive; and therefore your rule of faith is not the Bible, but it is reason, or your own mind, in some degree upheld and aided by the Bible. This persisted in, leads, of course, to disparaging the Bible; we make it a piece of wax, shaping it as we please, adding or subtracting, or making it answer and subserve any purpose we prefer."

Still another reason why many despise the Bible as a Divine revelation is that they identify it with the weaknesses, inconsistencies and oddities, and eccentric ideas of some Christian professors. Such fail to see, or at least to remember, that these things are rather the fault of the individuals, than of the Bible.

Pure Christianity bars out no class; all that is required is honesty of heart in accepting its great Head. It includes men of rude and uncultivated tastes, as well as those of refinement in tastes and manners. And of course all classes of people will be found among Christians, as well as among other sections of society. Those who continue to follow in the footsteps of Christ will gradually but surely be transformed; and those who are mere professors, because of a failure to follow on to know the Lord aright, never learn to speak courteous language; their conversation is interlarded with religious cant, using phrases that display bad taste. Then we come in contact with others who seem to have imbibed the idea that what is meant by Christians being a peculiar people is to display oddity in their conduct, give utterance to strange expressions, assume a peculiar tone in their speech, not thinking it possible that true Christianity can exist without such odd and grotesque extravagances.

Many people of cultivated tastes who are desirous of learning what true religion is, stumble at these things, and instead of remembering that these characteristics existed in these persons before, they unjustly attribute them to Christianity. It would be the proper thing to do, if it were right to judge at all, to find out not how much of corrupt human nature is left, but rather, how much of good, Christianity has wrought in the removal of evil.



## **WISDOM OF THIS WORLD OFTEN A SNARE**

Another thing that is causing many, very many, to turn away, after having once believed and accepted Christianity as a Divine religion, is seeing so many learned men rejecting the Bible as a Divine revelation. Because learned men are not believers in the Bible should have no weight, if that learning has not been employed to examine the evidences of the claims of that book. We find learned men everywhere. There have been and are today learned men among the heathen religions-among the Hindoos and Brahmins. Indeed, the fact that a man is talented, able and learned in material things, is worth nothing whatever as an argument that the Bible is not true because he is not a Christian, unless he has, in a very special way, used his talent, his learning, or his intellect, to discover the evidences of the truth of the Bible as a Divine revelation.

It is a fact that some of the most wise, intelligent and learned men the world has ever seen have made use of their talent to examine these evidences, and have given their testimony to the Bible's truthfulness as a Divine book. In support of this we have the following "

Sir Isaac Newton, who came down from measuring the size, the weight, the distance of the stars; who detected the laws that regulate the balance of the worlds, who unbraided the beautiful sunbeam, and separated it into its constituent films, sat down and diligently read this book; and he not only believed, and concluded in the exercise of his mighty intellect that it was God's, but he has written a commentary upon the book of Daniel that at this day is read by every student, and is one of the most able and learned that ever was published on the subject. . . . Therefore when you quote learned men as not being Christians, you must adduce learned men that have examined and concluded it is not true." It will not do to quote learned men who have studied mathematics, or astronomy, or some other science, and excelled therein, but who have studied and read nothing else. Let a just comparison be made, and it will be found that genius, and learning, and science, and mighty intellect, and soaring fancy, have all recognized this blessed book to be God's, and this religion to be Divine.

## **FALSE CHRISTIANITY HAS BROUGHT REPROACH**

Some appeal to the past history of Christianity, not distinguishing between the true and false, and attribute to it that which does not belong to it. Many are familiar with the occurrences of the Dark Ages, the long period of midnight darkness in Europe, when wickedness was rampant among professed Christians; when power was exercised by professed Christian leaders as an iron scepter; when fraud, and folly, and cruelty, and crime reigned almost supreme, and attribute all this to

Christianity. Such, either do not know, or forget that the Bible in those times was an interdicted book, a dead letter. Such should recall that when the Bible was recovered and took its rightful place in the Church, a change came over humanity.

It has always been true, and always will be true in this world, that men take the best gifts that God gives and debase and destroy them. The fact of the matter is, however, that while the Bible has exerted a powerful influence for good by its moral instructions, only a few have really understood its teachings aright so as to live for and follow after Christ, the Divine Author.

While we have given a good deal of attention in applying the text to the world, after all, the words are addressed to those who professedly are following Christ. As applied to these, the words have a much deeper significance, and will be considered at another time. However, because the Church and the world are so mingled at the present time, and there are many who want to claim everything that they think is good in the Bible, without giving due credit to its Divine source, and who even desire to retain and do retain the name Christian, it seems necessary for those who are still loyal to it, to stand up in defense of the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

It is still true that there is no book like the Bible, for childhood, youth, or age. It has ever been and will be in advance of any book in the world. Attacking the Bible is attacking Christ, the great Hero of the Bible. The cultured infidelity of today is not so reasonable as that kind of unbelief of over a century ago.

### **THE BIBLE'S ILLUSTRIOUS CHRIST**

One of the most conclusive evidences, indeed the most triumphant evidence of all, that the Bible is from God, is the portrait that it gives of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a portrait is beyond human wisdom, either before or since the Advent of the Savior. It is a portrait given in the simple language, in some instances, of the unlearned who all will admit were incapable of creating in their imagination such a character; or of inventing such a story.

"All antiquity, it is needless to tell the scholar, labored and studied to find Plato's just man, or to delineate a perfect character; and all antiquity failed. Sin had blotted out Eden; the ideal of a perfect man had disappeared from actual life, and had ceased to be recollected in the memories of mankind; all heathendom had failed to delineate, and was silenced. The illiterate fishermen, peasants, and tax-gatherers of Galilee took up and accomplished what all philosophy and science had given up in despair. And these peasants, these fishermen, had to sketch one that they said was 'God manifest in the flesh' [That is the

manifestation, so far as it was possible for God to manifest Himself in a human being].

"Now suppose that the fishermen and publicans of Galilee had to sketch this character unaided; if they had no original, the difficulty and the delicacy of depicting 'God manifest in the flesh', is incalculable; and no one can conceive how it is possible for human nature to do it [unless filled with the Spirit of God.] They must show in all his life, the power, the beneficence, the greatness, the grandeur of God; they must also show in his acts the tenderness, the sympathy, the sorrow, the joy, and the suffering of a man.

"To sketch this complex character is a problem too difficult ever to be placed to human account. And yet these rude fishermen, these humble peasants, followed this complex character [this perfect human] into the manger, into the cradle, into boyhood, into His home, into the temple, into the publican's house, to the seashore, to the garden of Gethsemane, to the cross, to the grave; and they sketch Him in each of these places; they portray Him in every light, at every angle, in every affliction, in every duty, in every place; and the portrait that these rude fishermen of Galilee have drawn, has been hung in the skies for [more than] 1800 years; the eyes of all nations have gazed at it; the Argus eyes of all critics have examined it; and what is the result? That the impression is deepening every day in the minds of the wisest, and the best, till it promises to be the unanimous verdict of all the wise, the great, and the good, that this Man was not the creation of His age, for He was the very opposite; this man was not sketched as a fanciful being by those rude fishermen; for that would be to suppose a miracle more stupendous, if possible, than any. But this Being is an original-, He must not only have sat for the portrait that the rough fishermen sketched, but He must have directed the pencils that sketched it.

"The evidence is irresistible here that Jesus is no imaginary person, but that He was an original Being; and human nature unsophisticated by priest, and scribe, and Pharisee -- for human nature in itself is far nobler than when corrupted by a false religion -- human nature, I say, gazing on the Original, declared with irrepressible eloquence, its deepest and innermost conviction, "Truly this was the Son of God." -- John Cumming.

### **REMARKABLE TESTIMONY OF A NOTED UNBELIEVER**

The most eloquent, just and beautiful description of Jesus was given by an unbeliever, who used as a basis for his sketch the Gospel narrative. This man was the famous Rousseau, of whom it is said that his personal character is a puzzle to moralists, and that there is no denying the vices and meannesses which stained his character. The testimony to this is his own confession as set forth with copious and melancholy sincerity; and the very incidents that condemn him most,

are those that would never have been known by the world had he not voluntarily chosen to reveal them in his "Confession." He never sought to exculpate himself, but on the, contrary, he covers himself often with bitter and sad reproaches. Summing up the peculiar make up of the man, one has said

"On. the whole we are inclined to believe, that he was, at the bottom, an honest, warm-hearted human creature -- free from guile, but full of a feminine jealousy, aggravated by long persecutions into a species of insanity; volatile, but not faithless; an erring but within a lovable mortal. He was renowned not only for the singularities of his character, and the misfortunes of his life, but for the brilliancy, and sentimental enthusiasm of his writings." -- *International Encyclopedia*.

It was this strange character who, using the Gospels, particularly that of St. Matthew, as a basis, gave this sketch of the Man Jesus described therein. He says:

"I will confess to you that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers with all their pomp of diction; how mean, how contemptible are they compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and sublime, should be merely the work of a man? Is it possible that the sacred personage, whose history it contains, should be Himself a mere man? Do we find that He assumed the tone of an enthusiast, or ambitious sectary? What sweetness; what purity in His manner! What an affecting gracefulness in His delivery! What sublimity in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in His replies! How great the command over His passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato describes his imaginary good man, loaded with all the punishments of guilt, yet meriting the highest rewards of virtue, he describes exactly the character, of Jesus Christ; that resemblance was so striking that all the fathers noticed it. What prepossession, what blindness must it be to compare the son of Sophronious [that is, Socrates], to the Son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion there is between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was anything more than a mere sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just, before Socrates defined justice; Leonidas had given up his life for his country before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans were a sober people

before Socrates recommended sobriety; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men.

### **CHRIST AND SOCRATES CONTRASTED**

"But where could Jesus learn among His contemporaries, that pure, and sublime morality, of which He only hath given us both precept and example? The greatest wisdom was made known amongst the most bigoted fanatics, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues, did honor to the vilest people on earth. The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for; that of Jesus expiring in the midst of agonizing pains) abused, insulted, and accused by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates in receiving the cup of poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, in the midst of excruciating tortures, prayed for His merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a god. Shall we suppose the evangelical history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction; on the contrary, the history of Socrates, which no body presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty, without obviating it; it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one should furnish the subject of it.

The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel; the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."

In conclusion we ask, Who is the credulous man? Who is the man unworthy to be a guide to frail humanity? We answer, The man that rejects, belittles the Bible, despises it, or treats it with contempt. It requires prodigious credulity to be an evolutionist, to be an unbeliever in the Divinity of the Scriptures, after giving even a slight attention to evidences.

"It requires," as one has said, "but common sense, honest and impartial inquiry, to believe that this book is true; it requires the Holy Spirit [however], to apply it to the heart, and to make it the savor of life to all that read it." Then, "Despise not prophesyings."

### **HOW TO MEET THE STORMS OF LIFE**

*"Who then is this, that even the wind, and the sea obey Him?"*

*-- Mark 4:35-41*

THE Christian's journey through the varied experiences of this life has been most aptly compared to that of the journey or passage across the literal sea in which the voyager is subject to dangers from many quarters -- the storm and tempest, the rocks, the treacherous shoal. And as during the voyage across the literal sea one's assurance and peace of mind depend upon his faith in the captain, so in the mystical voyage across life's tempestuous sea our peace of mind, our courage, and the success of the voyage depend upon whether or not we have with us the presence of Him who is able at all times to make the storm a calm. Temptation is to be resisted, sin is to be overcome, self is to be vanquished; many lessons of great import are to be learned and character developed before we can be pleasing unto the Lord; and in the storms and trials and reverses of the way, all play a most important part in the entire program of life.

Another has asked: "You have a voyage to make, a momentous voyage over life's uncertain sea. In which vessel will you embark? Will you go on board of the lofty and, gilded ship which heaves its anchor so proudly, and issues from its port with strains of music and salvos of artillery and loud huzzas? Aye, it may start as bravely as it will; it is sweeping onward to destruction. Or will you go in the humbler vessel with Jesus? We do not promise you immunity from storm and tempest; but we do promise you help in your necessity, and a safe arrival at the fair havens of eternal rest."

Some one else has said: "There come times to us when the storms of doubt and trouble and sorrow beat down upon us, and we are in sore and dire trouble, and Jesus makes no sign of coming to our help. But the heedlessness is never more than in the seeming. He is watching all the time, and at the fitting moment He will come with help and succor. To have Christ with you is a pledge and absolute assurance of safety. 'No one shall pluck them out of My hand.' Have Him in your life's vessel, and the storm is yet to be born that can overwhelm your little bark. 'Row on, row on,' cried Julius Caesar to his boatmen as they were crossing the Adriatic in the teeth of a furious storm, 'you are bearing Caesar and his fortunes.' Well, I do not know that bearing 'Caesar and his fortunes' was any guarantee of safety; but if we are bearing Christ we need not fear. 'With Christ in the vessel, I smile at the storm.'"

## **JESUS AND THE DISCIPLES IN THE STORM**

Without doubt the narrative of our Lord and the disciples in the vessel on the Sea of Galilee during the storm, was intended to furnish a most valuable lesson. Our Lord's ministry is supposed to have covered two years at the time of the miracle of the calming of the sea. After the selection of the twelve Apostles and the Sermon on the Mount, etc., our Lord returned to Capernaum and soon after began His second tour of Galilee. It was during this interim that He awakened from the sleep of death the son of the widow of Nain -- the first recorded instance of its kind in our Lord's ministry. Then came teachings by parables, and in the afternoon of a busy day of teaching -- after three o'clock, while still sitting in one of the boats as on a former occasion, having concluded His teachings -- He directed that the boat be taken to the opposite side of the lake. The multitude, after being informed that the discourses were ended, were dismissed, and without delay the boat was started. From the various accounts we judge that all the twelve disciples were with Him, and apparently other "men" -- seamen, as Matthew's account implies.

Travelers tell us that the Sea of Galilee is quite subject to wind storms. Dr. Thompson, describing his own experiences on this little sea, says : "The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake; and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore the next morning the face of the lake was like a huge cauldron. The wind hurled down every wady from the northeast and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. To understand the causes of these sudden tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low, 600 feet lower than the ocean, that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of Hauran, and upward to snowy Mt. Hermon; that the watercourses have cut out profound ravines and wide gorges, converging to the head of the lake, and that these act like gigantic funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains."

### **"WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES"**

Our own opinion is that "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2) had something to do in the development of this storm-that it had more than natural causes, although the latter might have assisted or even been sufficient. We remember that the Adversary had already endeavored to induce our Lord to leap from the pinnacle of the temple, but had not succeeded. Apparently now he would drown Him in the sea. But the Lord, who declares Himself able to make the wrath of man to praise Him, caused the wrath of Satan or the wildness of the elements, which it was that induced the storm, to praise Him-to show forth His mighty power.



During the storm our Lord lay asleep in the hinder part of the vessel on a cushion. Evidently He was thoroughly exhausted from the labors of His journey and ministry. Meantime, as the storm increased, the boat with its precious load began to fill with water more rapidly than it could be bailed out. No wonder the disciples, fishermen and experts at sea though they were, were alarmed. We cannot avoid the thought that in some manner the Lord's providence had something to do with His prolonged sleep under such circumstances, and that the intention was to put the faith of the disciples to the test. They had seen His mighty work's, His healing of the sick, and His awakening of the dead, and they had heard His teachings and had taken a miraculous catch of fish under His direction where they had failed before, and by this time they should have had considerable faith in His power every way. The fact that they approached Him at all indicates that they did have faith to some degree, though not implicit faith.

The slightly different accounts of the event given by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, some one has paraphrased as follows -- Matthew: "Save, Lord, we perish." Mark: "Teacher, carest Thou not that we perish?" Luke: "Master, Master, we perish." All three accounts are correct -- one disciple cried out in one way and others in different words. Some one puts it thus: "Little Faith prayed, 'Save us'; Much Fear cried, 'We perish'; Distrust urged, 'Carest Thou not?' More Faith said, 'Lord'; Discipleship cried out, 'Teacher'; Faint Hope cried, 'Master, Thou with authority.'" Jesus arose (awoke) and commanded peace and quiet, which immediately followed. The record mentions the cessation of the wind and additionally the calming of the sea. Some one might claim that a storm *which* came up suddenly might happen to stop with equal suddenness, but this would not account for the calming of the sea. Waters thus lashed to a fury could not be calmed thus quickly except by superhuman power. This, indeed, we may assume to be a prominent feature of the miracle.

It is rather peculiar that the Greek word used for "Be still" in this text is the same word used by our Lord to the demon. (Mark 1:25.) This rather corroborates the suggestion foregoing respecting the storm being the work of the Adversary. In any event this miracle shows clearly that storms should not be accredited, as they frequently are, to Divine malevolence; for if the Father had caused the storm, the Son would not have interfered with it. We do not wish to intimate, either, that every storm is of Satanic origin; we do not dispute that many of them arise from natural causes; but we do hold that some of them are supernatural and of the Adversary, and as a Scriptural evidence along this line we cite the whirlwind raised up by Satan, which smote the house in which Job's children were feasting. -- Job 1:13,19.

That our Lord intended this experience to be a lesson to the disciples, along the line of faith in Him, seems to be borne out by verses 40,41.

He said unto them, "Why are ye fearful? Have ye not yet faith?" Has your faith not yet developed to such a degree that you can trust Me, and realize the Father's favor and power ever with Me for My protection, and that while with Me no harm could possibly overtake you-nothing that is not wholly under My control? No wonder the Apostles gained additional reverence for the Lord as a result of this miracle. Apparently it came just in the right time and order to be their appropriate lesson. In fact we may conclude that every item of their experience and every item of our Lord's conduct, teaching, and mighty works was especially for the instruction of these twelve, who were to be His witnesses to us and to the nations of the earth respecting that ministry.

### **SPIRITUAL LESSONS FOR THE SPIRITUAL HOUSEHOLD**

There is a precious lesson in this miracle for all of the Lord's followers outside of the apostleship, too. We also have need of faith and need of tests to our faith. Our daily experiences since we became the Lord's followers have been guided and guarded apparently by the power unseen, to the intent that as pupils in the 'School of Christ, we may all be taught of Him and develop more and more of the graces of the Spirit, and particularly more and more faith. How important this item of faith is we probably cannot fully appreciate now. It seems to be one thing that the Lord specially seeks for in those now called to be followers. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "With faith all things are possible." Proper faith is understood, of course, not credulity, not reliance upon the words of men, but implicit faith in the Lord for all that He has promised. "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

Another says: "What a chance that tempest offered! The disciples might have said, 'He is asleep, and we are with Him. Earlier in the day He said, 'The Son of man hath not where to lay His head,' but He. has found a pillow. Full of faith, He sleeps in God. With equal faith let us do what men can in such a gale, but no panic, no cry. Be still, and know that He who healed the leper and saved the Roman's boy will not forget His own servants! Let the storm awake Him, but we will be still. Let those keep watch whose turn it is, the others sleep as He is sleeping.' What a 'Well done, good and faithful servants' this would have drawn from the waking Christ!"

So important a grace as faith must of necessity require many lessons for its proper development, and it does not surprise us that in our individual experiences as Christians we find those which correspond to the experiences of the Apostles noted in this lesson. How suddenly the Adversary may at times bring against us a whirlwind of temptation or of opposition or of persecution. How at such times our sky seems overcast, dark, foreboding; how the waves of adversity or affliction

have almost overwhelmed us, and how the Lord seemed asleep and heedless of our distress and indifferent to our necessities! Such experiences are tests of our faith, as this one was a test to the faith of the Apostles. If our faith be strong enough under such circumstances, we would keep on with our proper endeavors to adjust matters corresponding to the bailing of the boat and the working of the oars; but meantime, with an implicit faith in the Lord's promise that "all things shall work together for our good," we would be able to sing as did the Apostle Paul and Silas after being beaten while in the stocks for their faithfulness to the Lord. They rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. So according to our faith will we be able to rejoice even in tribulation. We cannot enjoy the sufferings; we can enjoy the thought which faith attaches to them, namely that these are but light afflictions working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Each experience of this kind should be helpful to us. If at first we were fearful and cried aloud, by and by we received the succor, with perhaps the reprimand, "O, thou of little faith"; but as lesson after lesson has come to 'as, the Master will expect-and we should expect of ourselves -greater faith, greater trust, greater peace, greater joy in the Lord, greater confidence in His presence with us and His care over us, and in His power to deliver us from the Adversary and from every evil thing, and to bring us eventually in safety to the port we seek-the heavenly Kingdom.

### **THE CHURCH'S EXPERIENCES PREFIGURED**

Some one has suggested, apparently on reasonable grounds, that this experience of Jesus and the Apostles in the boat during the night pictured the experiences of the Church during this Gospel Age. The Lord assured His people, saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the Age," and "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also," and "nothing shall by any means hurt you," etc. The Lord's faithful people all through this Age have realized with more or less distinctness the certainty of these precious promises; they have felt that the Lord indeed is with His Church; yet it has seemed at times as though He were asleep; inattentive to the prayers of His faithful, and inattentive to their cries and groans. For eighteen centuries His dear ones have been tempest-tossed by the Adversary, persecuted, afflicted, buffeted-all through this dark night, in which the only light available has been "Thy Word a light to my feet." The experiences of others in the past are our experiences in the present.

We of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, etc.; and as the Apostle declares of his day, so it is still true that "we wrestle not with flesh and

blood, but with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high positions." The storms may seem to come from the world, but really beyond the world is the Adversary. "We are not ignorant of his devices"; our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the ship, and able to grasp the thought of His mighty power in His own time and way to speak peace to the world.

Soon the time will come for Him who careth for us to exert His great power on our behalf, to deliver His people, to say to the raging elements, Peace, be still. Then will follow the great calm, the great rest from the evil one for a thousand years, for he shall be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more. Then will come the eternal rest of the heart to all who are now in the boat with the Lord, and then will come the opportunity for all these to be co-laborers with Him in the great and glorious work of blessing the world. It must not surprise us, however, if a dark hour is before us if the time will come when the stormy winds will be so fierce that many will cry out in fear and trembling. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time, so that then our faith shall not fail us-so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

### **"THE END HE KNOWETH"**

"Know well my soul, God's hand controls  
Whate'er thou fearest ;  
Round Him in calmest music rolls  
Whate'er thou hearest.

"What to thee is shadow, to Him is day  
And the end He knoweth,  
And not on a blind and aimless way  
The spirit goeth.

"Leaning on Him, make with reverent meekness  
His own thy will,  
And with strength from Him shall thy utter weakness  
Life's task fulfil.

"And that cloud itself, which now before thee  
Lies dark in view,  
Shall with beams of light from the inner glory,  
Be stricken through."

## **The Herald of Christ's Kingdom**

## **SIGNS FROM ROME**

### **"VATICAN MAY ASK A PLACE IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS QUESTION FIRST RAISED AT EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS"**

BY HENRY WOOD

United Press Staff Correspondent

GENEVA, Sept. 17 (United Press) -- According to information at the secretariat of the League of Nations here, the latter will eventually be called upon to pass upon the question of the admission of the Holy See as a member of the league.

"It is not expected, however, that the movement now under way to this end will culminate in the Vatican's application for admission to the league for two or three years yet.

"Following the public launching of the movement by the Argentine delegation at the recent Eucharistic congress at Amsterdam, where it was endorsed not only by the congress itself, but by Monsignor Cerretti, papal nuncio at Paris, the Vatican, according to information received at Geneva, will re-organize its entire diplomatic service to this end.

"Following the recall from their present posts and their elevation to the Sacred College of cardinals of Monsignor Cerretti at Paris, and Monsignor Pascelli, the papal nuncio at Munich, the chancellery of the Vatican will undertake a general shifting of its diplomats in order to place in the more important capitals of all countries, members of the league, diplomats best qualified to work for the Holy Sees admission to the league.

"In league circles the information is generally credited that this movement on the part of the Vatican for entrance to the Holy See is desired as constituting a basis that will render possible a reconciliation between Italy and the Vatican and the definite settlement of the latter's temporal status.

"Since 1870 when the new kingdom of Italy took from the Pope not only the papal states, which constituted the former's temporary kingdom, but also Rome, the capital, the popes have refused to accept the basis of temporal sovereignty guaranteed them by Italy.

"This temporal kingdom as recognized by Italy is confined to what is known as the Leonine City, or the little circle of territory embracing the Vatican palaces, gardens, and grounds, and various buildings connected with the latter, together with the papal summer residence of Castelgondolfo in the Alban hills some 10 miles from Rome.

"The Popes, however, refusing to accept this spoliation of their former papal states and above all refusing to accept the Italian law of guarantees, whereby Italy undertook to guarantee them complete sovereignty within the territory above described, have made themselves self-constituted prisoners within the Vatican, and no Pope has ever set foot outside the limits of the Vatican building and grounds since 1870.

"All efforts to adjust the situation and to bring about a reconciliation between the Vatican and the Quirinal have been shipwrecked on the question of the Italian law of guarantees.

"The Vatican insists that it cannot accept this law of guarantees merely upon Italy's word alone, but that it must be backed and guaranteed by other foreign powers.

"Italy in reply declares that the question not only is a purely domestic one but that the calling in of foreign powers to underwrite her law of guarantees would not only be an infringement on Italian sovereignty but an unacceptable insult to Italy's national honor and dignity.

"In the latest negotiations, however, that have been connected more or less directly between the Mussolini government and the Vatican, it is declared that a formula has now been found that will be acceptable to both Italy and the Vatican.

"This formula is the Holy Sees admission to the League of Nations. The guarantees existing in the covenant, and which pledges every league member to respect, guarantee and even defend the present territorial status of the other leagues, would it is declared entirely satisfy the Vatican's claims that the Italian law of guarantees must be backed by the guarantee of other nations.

"As, however, this general guarantee embodied in the covenant would have no specific reference to Italy, but would be merely the general pledge and guarantee which every leaguer has taken and made, Italy would have no grounds whatsoever for feeling her national dignity and honor were being slighted.

"The recognition thus of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope by all the leading nations of the world, would render possible a final adjustment with Italy that would put an end to the present situation of the 'papal prisoner in the Vatican.'

"The only question on which uncertainty still remains is whether or not the Holy See comes within the qualifications set down in the covenant for admission to the league. This it is conceded is largely a matter of interpretation and a point on which the league assembly would have to pass.

"However, as the covenant merely stipulates that 'and self-governing State, dominion or colony, not named in the annex, may become a

member of the league if its admission is agreed to by two-thirds of the assembly, and as the Catholic countries of the world. embracing the numerous Latin-American block have at their command enough votes to assure this two-thirds majority, no doubt is felt that at whatever time the Holy See's application may be presented it will meet with general approval."

Considering the fact that the Roman Papacy is said to rule more than three hundred millions of the earth's population, and that it occupies such an important and prominent place in history and sacred prophecy, we may very properly feel a keen interest in all movements of the nations that would have to do with the elevation of the Roman Pontiff to a place of distinction and authority in their midst; especially as we believe that certain portions of the Revelation seem to clearly depict the coming into prominence of the Papacy in connection with the closing scenes of this Age. To be accorded a place in the League of Nations would place the Papacy in a position to exercise a great influence, if indeed it would not become a dominant power amongst the nations.

## **THE BEST OF CONVENTIONS**

THE three days recently spent at Ulster Park, N. Y., September 19-21, by a company of the Lord's people, will long be remembered. This Convention surely came up to, indeed exceeded, the highest expectation of the one hundred friends who were privileged to attend. It was indeed good to see so many of the friends together, representing a wide area of the Eastern States and Canada.

It was a beautiful, quiet, resting place indeed, where we gathered. The general environment -- the beautiful lake, the natural woodland about, the vines laden with luscious fruit -all contributed materially to the success of the Convention and of the fellowship.

### **THE LORD HEARKENED AND HEARD.**

The Convention really commenced on the evening of the day previous to the time set, as a considerable number of the friends had gone by boat from New York on the preceding day, while others had gathered that same evening, some coming from long distances in automobiles; and that evening was spent in songs of praise and speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. From the beginning, the words of the Prophet seemed to have been remembered, "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:10.) Truly, the Lord hearkened and heard, and according to His promise a great blessing was poured out;



indeed we could have wished that all the Lord's dear people the world over could have been present and shared this blessing.

We believe there were good reasons why so many of the friends in the closing sessions of the Convention said this was the best Convention they had ever attended. "Draw nigh to God," the Apostle admonishes, "and He will draw nigh to you." (Jas. 4:8.) No doubt the secret of the highly spiritual character of this conference at Ulster Park was due to the fact that the thoughts of the friends were continually directed by the Chairman toward the Lord; an earnest effort was made throughout each day to draw nigh to the Lord. Each day was begun with a special session of prayer, and continually the hearts of the friends were uplifted to the Lord in thanksgiving and in earnestly seeking the Divine blessing. All the Lord's dear people throughout the world were remembered in these earnest devotions. The examples of holy ones of the past were recalled -- their faith and perseverance in prayer; and how down through the ages as His trusting children have waited upon Him in prayer, the Lord has repeatedly manifested His good pleasure, upholding, sustaining, and keeping them in the midst of sore trials, distress, and adversity.

On the other hand it was also recalled that failure to trust the Lord, neglect of the privilege of prayer on the part of many in the past, lost for them the blessing they so much desired - "they entered not in," says the Apostle, "because of unbelief." Thus in those far off days the children of Israel wandered those forty years seeking the land of rest and finding it not until the vast numbers who had left Egypt had fallen in death. Alas, the story of unbelief and its sad consequences has been repeated all along down the stream of time. And may it not be true in these days, when the Lord is dealing with Israel after the spirit, that many fail to enter into the promised rest because of unbelief-because of failure to exercise that faith that will enable them to consecrate and abandon themselves entirely to the Lord and permit Him to work in them all the good pleasure of His will! It would appear that it may be so. We judge none; but it is most evident that large numbers of those naming the name of Christ and professing to follow the antitypical Moses do not experience that rest that remaineth for the people of God. With what solemnity the words of the Apostle come to us in these days. "Let us therefore fear lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest any of you should seem to come short of it." -- Heb. 4:1.

The keynote of the Convention seemed to be well represented in a hymn copied from one of the old hymn books, which was repeatedly sung during the various sessions, entitled,

## **"HIGHER GROUND"**

"I'm pressing on the upward way,  
New heights I'm gaining every day;  
Still praying as I onward bound,  
'Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.'

"My heart has no desire to stay  
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;  
Tho' some may dwell where these abound,  
My prayer, my aim is higher ground.

"I want to live above the world,  
Tho' Satan's darts at me are hurled;  
For faith has caught the joyful sound,  
The song of saints on higher ground.

"I want to scale the utmost height,  
And catch a gleam of glory bright;  
But still I'll pray till Heaven I've found,  
'Lord, lead me on to higher ground.'

### **Chorus:**

"Lord lift me up and let me stand,  
By faith on Heaven's table-land;  
A higher plane than I have found,  
Lord, plant my, feet on higher ground."

Thus the days spent together in the large, spacious Golden Rule Inn and auditorium where we dwelt together as one large family, and where the friends enjoyed and appreciated so much the hospitality of Brother and Sister Greiner, were days of real rejoicing, thanksgiving, and of drawing closer to one another and to the Lord.

The proceedings of the Convention were much according to the usual order. The discourses of the brethren who served, gave assurance that the burden upon their hearts was that of encouraging fellow-members of the Body to lay hold more fully of the favor of God, even as the Apostle Paul admonished Timothy, "Lay hold on eternal life whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." (z Tim. 6:r2.) Amongst the themes that were more or less reviewed and considered were those of Faith, Consecration, Our Relationship to God, Temptation, The Holy Spirit, Prayer, Christ-likeness, Self-examination, Discerning the Lord's Body, etc.

Two evenings of the Convention were spent by the friends looking at the Photo Drama of Creation, much to their enjoyment, and we believe, to their edification. Seeing the pictures not only brought before them vividly Brother Russell's last years, but reminded them

afresh of many of the sacred stories of the Bible and of various of the great truths which go to make up our faith structure; in fact as we all are aware, the Photo Drama tells the story of Redemption, the story of that infinite love all other love excelling, and reminds us so forcibly of the glorious day promised when sin, sorrow, and death shall be no more.

Finally, we are confident that as a result of the stirring up of the pure minds of the brethren by way of remembrance during this Convention, the good resolves of all were greatly strengthened to follow more closely if possible in the footprints of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

## **ANOTHER VISITOR FROM GREAT BRITAIN**

WE are gratified indeed to be able to announce that the friends in America are to be favored with another visit from abroad; this time the visitor is to be Brother Alfred A. Hart, and he will be accompanied by Sister Hart. Their home has been in Great Britain for some years past, but just at this time they plan to take up their abode in Australia, and it, is in connection with their removal from Great Britain to Australia that they are to visit America. Though they had already secured their passage by another route -- all the way by water, they were able to make the change of passage on receiving our invitation to visit a number of Classes in America as they pass across to the Pacific Coast.

A word of explanation is perhaps in order here: On learning of the possibilities of our Brother and Sister coming this way, our INSTITUTE communicated with a number of Classes throughout this country requesting an expression of their mind on the subject, and in reply received very encouraging words from nearly all, that they would be glad indeed to co-operate in making this visit possible.

Making the change in their passage involves considerable extra expense: First, the cost of going to Australia by way of America is much higher; second, it was found that in order to get released from the passage they had already secured, they were required to suffer the loss of ten per cent. discount off the full fare. These points we mention now, as in extending the invitation to the Brother it was but proper that we assure him that the friends in America would be glad to co-operate in bearing the additional expense of routing this way and of making special visits in this country.

Though Brother Hart is not specially known amongst us here, he is well recommended as a very competent and capable Brother to minister in holy things, and sound in the faith; and is in high repute among the brethren in England. Just prior to Brother Russell's death Brother Hart was appointed to have charge of the work in India. The

American brethren who visited England in 1920, 1922, and now again this year, met Brother Hart on all three occasions, and believe that his ministry here will bring a rich blessing to the friends in this country, and be warmly appreciated.

Indeed, how much like the order in the early Church is the Lord's provision in these days! In the primitive Church there were those brethren whom the Lord raised up, and whose circumstances permitted them to be more freely used in the service. Some of these traveled from place to place, calling upon little groups of Christians, "confirming the souls of the saints, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter the Kingdom of God." How apparent it is that the object of such meetings was that of building up the saints in faith, hope, and love. And so it is today. The work of the faithful minister is to call attention to the Lord, in such a way that the truth may have free course, and the name of the Lord be glorified. The brethren everywhere today need encouragement, need to have their faith strengthened, and need to be built up in those qualities of the Christian life that will make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Brother and Sister Hart are to reach New York about October 18, and the Brother's ministry among the friends will commence at once. The date of sailing from San Francisco is December 3. Thus there will be about six weeks to spend with us in America. The itinerary in part is shown on the second page of this issue.

We know the brethren everywhere will join us in the earnest prayer at this time that the blessing of God which alone can make rich, may be very manifest in connection with the visit of our Brother and Sister, and that in a special way the Lord's benediction may rest upon his ministry to the brethren of our land.

## **REPORT OF THE RECENT VISIT TO GREAT BRITAIN**

TO THE DEAR BRETHREN OF AMERICA:

WHEN we were approached about three months ago and invited to undertake the responsibilities of pilgrimage across the ocean to visit the brethren of the British Isles as a representative of the Lord, and the brethren of America, our feelings were a mingling of pleasure and reticence. From a purely human aspect it was an unexpected opportunity to gratify an almost lifelong desire to visit the old land. But when the tremendous responsibilities associated with such an undertaking were taken into consideration, we felt fearful, being very conscious of our very limited abilities and of what would naturally be

expected of one who would attempt such a mission. Realizing all this our decision to accept the opportunity was certainly made in the faith that the Lord would undertake for us, and bless and guide throughout the entire journey; and it was in this confidence we went.

Now that the Lord in His kind providence has brought us safely back to home and loved ones, a brief report of the pilgrimage may be of interest to the dear brethren on this side of the Atlantic. Our hope is that the visitation and all its attendant privileges of personal contact may serve as another link in the bond of love that binds the brethren of Great Britain and America together.

First of all we would express our appreciation of the fervent prayers of so many of the Lord's dear people who so faithfully remembered us before the Throne of Grace. A knowledge of this interest in our efforts was a source of strength, and we have no doubt that when all is over and every righteous act or holy service receives its sure reward, it will then be seen that whatever of success attended our efforts was in very large measure due to the effectual, fervent prayers of interested brethren on both sides of the water. Assuredly the help of God was realized in great measure, bringing much blessing to my own heart, and I am happy to believe that in various ways special encouragement and help was experienced by others. To the Lord all the praise is due, and to Him we render heartfelt thanks. May the labor, the fellowship, and the rehearsal of the things that belong to our eternal interests be of lasting profit to us all and serve to assist in the experiences yet before us.

It would be a joy to relate all the happy experiences that crowded the days of our pilgrimage, but a report of such length would scarcely be appropriate. We will therefore be content to give a general review of some of the most important experiences. This being the first time it has been our privilege to cross the ocean, perhaps a few of the many impressions made on the mind while enjoying this new experience may be permitted.

### **THE VOYAGE**

On July 19, at eleven o'clock, we sailed from New York on the magnificent Steamship Majestic of the White Star Line, a very wonderfully equipped boat, affording the traveler with about all that could be expected in the way of speed and comfort. Leaving the pier on the Hudson we were not long in gliding out into the broad waters of the Atlantic. A realization that we had broken the last connection with the land that held home and earth's dearest treasures, and had committed ourself to a step that would carry us hourly farther from them, brought a feeling of sadness; but in faith we turned to God whose power is not limited, but may be experienced everywhere and at

all times, to keep and to protect those who are His, and our consolation was in committing all to Him.

Our second day at sea being Sunday we attended the religious service provided on the boat, but we were not greatly edified thereby since the order of service was chiefly reading from a book that we were quite unacquainted with. The more spontaneous worship rather than the mechanical kind appeals more to our heart.

The six days of the voyage were days of fair weather; consequently the time passed pleasantly and we experienced no illness to interfere with the enjoyment of the trip. The wide expanse of water stretching away to the horizon in every direction naturally turns the Christian's mind to the great Creator of whom it is written, "He holdeth the seas in the hollow of His hand" -- a beautiful picture of His unlimited power. As one watches the ceaseless rolling and surging of the waters, the aptness of the Scriptural symbol of the sea representing restless humanity seems most appropriate. One also has opportunity to recall the former days when ocean travel was so different from that of today, and we marvel at the heroism of those brave men and women who blazed the way to the new land of America, facing the dangers and the immensity of this unbounded expanse of water, in vessels that seem so inadequate and that today are obsolete. Succeeding generations have often failed to remember the difficulties and hardships endured by those who have gone before and to show due appreciation of their indebtedness to these early pioneers. Just so we find it in the progress of religious light and liberty. So many seem not to realize that the blessings of freedom and enlightenment which we enjoy today have come to us through the endurance of privation, suffering, and heroism on the part of noble men and women who were fired with a love and zeal for truth in days when gross darkness almost obscured the light. Alas, that today we see so little appreciation of the struggles and hardships endured by those who purchased for us the freedom we enjoy! And how doubly distressing it is to see that some so far forget these things as to depreciate the noble characters who were chiefly instrumental in piloting the Church out of ignorance, superstition, and priestcraft, into our present liberty.

### **GREETINGS ON THE OTHER SIDE**

On July 25 our boat arrived safely at Southampton, and another hour and a half brought us to Waterloo Station, London, where we found Brother Shearn awaiting us, and we were soon domiciled in his home, happy to find ourselves with brethren once more. The following morning we were sent to Cardiff, Wales, where we enjoyed a few happy hours of fellowship with dear Brother and Sister Hart. This was an especially happy privilege since it was through Brother Hart that we had first heard the precious Truth some fifteen years ago. Remem-

bering the many trials through which we have passed during those years we were particularly gratified to find ourselves still united in heart to the Lord and in happy unity with each other, rejoicing still in the things we have learned and been assured of, and determined to hold fast our confidence.

The next day, our first Sunday in Britain, we spent with the brethren of Pontardulais. Wales. This happy day of fellowship with the Welsh brethren was very encouraging. We appreciated the evidences of sincerity found amongst them, and the sweet influence of our association with them went far to give us assurance for the responsibilities we were just beginning to undertake. A brief visit at Bristol next day and pleasant fellowship with the friends there, brought us back to London district; visiting Bishop Stortford and Romford during the few days preceding the London Convention.

### **THE CONVENTION AT LONDON**

The gathering in convention at London was in accordance with the usual yearly arrangement of the Bible Students Committee, being the time of their annual election of officers. The dates this year covered the week end of August 4, 5, and 6. The convention gatherings were not large, but the Lord's blessing, which is never dependent upon numbers, was very manifest, and the three days passed quickly, with encouraging evidences that the discussions on holy things, and the personal contact with others of like mind had strengthened all with fresh desires to hold fast their precious heritage in Christ. In their efforts to serve the scattered brethren, particularly the isolated, the Bible Students Committee feel encouraged to continue on, since they find sufficient evidence of the Lord's approval to justify the existence of this simple arrangement of service. While perhaps these evidences may not be quite so pronounced as some would desire, yet remembering our location on the stream of time, and the many peculiar developments of these last days, there exists no special ground for discouragement. All things are in the Lord's hands, and whatever the results may ultimately be, the willingness to labor on, depending solely on the Lord for His approval, is the chief end in view, and constitutes sufficient incentive to spend and be spent as His providences may seem to lead and as opportunities afford.

### **THE JOURNEY AMONGST THE BRETHERN**

Following the Convention we started on the longer itinerary the brethren had arranged for us. This occupied most of the remaining time up to the date of sailing for home, a few days being left open here and there to give opportunity for visiting a few of the many places of interest along the way. And perhaps we should incidentally remark that some of these days were intended for rest. Thanks are due to the



brethren of the Committee for this consideration. They realized that there would be considerable strain connected with traveling alone in a strange land, wrestling with the different dialects and a different monetary system-pounds, shillings, and pence-and other incidental details. We appreciated this thoughtfulness, even though we did at times work in an extra call not scheduled in the official program.

The itinerary began with Glasgow, Scotland, and included Greenock, Stirling, Dundee, Arbroath, and Edinburgh, thence by way of an additional Yisit with Glasgow brethren to Belfast, Ireland; then back again in a few days to England, where we visited Newcastle, Briggs, Grimsby, Barnsley, Doncaster, East Kirkby, Mansfield, Manchester, Wallasey, Walsol, Leicester, Oxford, N. E. London, Dunstable, Letchworth, Luton, Forest Gate, and Ealing. A farewell service with brethren of the London Church and nearby places on the evening preceding our departure concluded our pilgrimage. Every visit made seemed well worth while, and we repeatedly gave thanks to God for the evidences of His blessing as different individuals testified to their having received some help and encouragement for further effort.

### **AT GLASGOW**

We would make special mention of the splendid days of fellowship enjoyed with the Glasgow Church. This is one of the largest groups of brethren in Great Britain who have remained loyal to the principles of that liberty so prized by rose who are free in Christ. Some peculiar experiences associated with their stand for truth and freedom might be related, but it is better that these be largely forgotten rather than enlarged upon. Nevertheless they demonstrate that even today the loyal soldier of the Cross may still experience many bitter trials by remaining true t® the one great Head of the Church. Such experiences simply serve to prove that after all, people are not so different today, in spite of superior advantages of enlightenment, from what they were in darker days. Methods of excommunication, etc., may vary with the passing of time, but the spirit of error will always remain the same, and will manifest itself in the same deplorable fruitage -- the works of the flesh and the devil, which is so foreign to those controlled by the spirit of the Master.

Four meetings were held with the dear brethren in Glasgow, with a varied attendance of from 150 to 250. How like the olden days of addressing so many of one mind and heart! The memory of those happy days of fellowship will linger , in mind for many years. True to their proverbial character we quickly discovered that element of caution for which the Scotch people are noted, but instead of finding in this something to regret, we appreciated its need, and recognized it as being commendable to a large degree. We felt no little satisfaction in observing later that we had gained their confidence and scored a

victory. But perhaps the reason is not difficult to find, for our discussions were not an effort to uphold any peculiar personal interpretation of Scripture, neither was there any effort made to preach a human organization as being necessary to fellowship, or necessary in order to have the Lord's approval. Rather the things of more vital importance were the chief subjects of discourse and conversation. With these subjects upon our minds we met together in happy, profitable fellowship, and enjoyed the blessing of the Lord.

### **AT BELFAST**

At Belfast we spent two very happy days of sweet fellowship and met a good number of the Irish brethren and found them delightful characters. Upwards of eighty brethren attended our final service here, and as we discussed the advantages and present blessings which accrue to us even now, and by faith catch a little of the eternal joys awaiting the faithful, the pure in heart, beyond the veil, the Lord seemed near and precious, and the farewells and expressions of encouragement proved His presence. We were particularly rejoiced in heart to know that some had been encouraged to renew their vows of consecration; some who, because of present day trials, had become more or less disheartened, and who had found other things crowding into their lives, seemed encouraged to lay hold of the eternal things with a firmer grasp, and we pray for them a large measure of that all abounding grace promised to those who feel their special need.

From Belfast we crossed over into England, where we had many profitable seasons of fellowship with the different Classes visited. Most of these gatherings were small in numbers, ranging from four and five to twenty-five and thirty, but whether with the smaller or the larger numbers, we noticed the same spirit of piety and earnestness. Perhaps it may be due to a difference of temperament, and perhaps because of having been for so many centuries a people so closely associated with the stern realities of suffering, etc., for truth's sake, or because of the lasting memories of more recent experiences in the great War, but somehow we seemed to find in the British brethren a greater spirit of reverence and sobriety than is displayed in America. The habit of taking one's seat in the spirit of quietness, and bowing the head in a moment's prayer, waiting expectantly for the Lord's blessing, is beautiful in comparison with that of engaging in conversation and general exchange of thought until called to order by the chairman, thus also distracting the attention of others who may desire these preceding moments for meditation and preparation for the service. We were favorably impressed also with the additional manifestation of development observed in their abilities as students of the Word. The experiences enjoyed at the remaining appointments being so similar in character to those already described, the foregoing will suffice for any further individual reports.

## **FOUND MUCH APPRECIATION OF THE MINISTRY**

A word might properly be said regarding the spirit of appreciation we found everywhere for the HERALD and the Revelation volumes. The regular visits of the HERALD are proving very helpful to the brethren overseas and its continuance greatly desired. The absence of any dogmatism, and the encouragement given to individual study and the proving of all things by the Scriptures has won for the HERALD many warm friends. The same may be said of their attitude toward the two Revelation volumes. Here and there we heard some divergent opinions expressed, bearing on some points of the exposition these volumes contain, but everywhere we found real tangible evidence of appreciation of the spirit shown, and of the labor represented in the preparation of such an elaborate elucidation of Revelation; and the friends are deeply grateful for the help received through the study of the volumes.

We found increasing evidence of the Lord's blessing on the efforts of the INSTITUTE and rejoiced in this further assurance that the service of the dear brethren who are glad to support the INSTITUTE has not been in vain. Brethren are being encouraged and strengthened by the ministry, and doubtless many from whom we seldom hear are finding assistance that means much to them. It would be a cause of real satisfaction if others might view the effort in this same light, but we need have no dispute with any. We are glad to hope that all are sincere, and at heart anxious to act in harmony with the mind of the Lord in this as in all matters, and we need feel no anxious care. The whole matter may be left with the Lord, and prosperity or adversity will be in accord with His will; and every sincere effort made will not have been in vain, but will result in blessing to those who thus demonstrate their zeal and love in this day of small things. Perhaps when the mists have rolled away and we know each other better, we may find that in all these varied opinions and conclusions there is a hidden purpose all unseen by us. If we let charity and patience rule in our hearts, beyond a doubt the experiences will be of tremendous value to us, and so long as we have these imperfect minds to use, our opinions will always be measurably faulty; so it remains for each of us to do with our might what we find to do. He shall be greatest who has been servant of all.

## **VISITED POINTS OF INTEREST**

One would feel disappointed if not permitted to make some comment upon the many places of interest seen while touring in these old lands. The native of a country as recently discovered as ours, where a very few years, comparatively, will carry us back to the savage Indian, cannot fail to be impressed with the evidences of age and of ancient history preserved in England and Scotland. Most of the places of interest visited were such as had a religious history -- Westminster

Abbey, some old cathedrals in Glasgow and Edinburgh, the history of which runs back into Reformation days. Some old castles in Stirling and Edinburgh were also visited, monuments of by-gone days when political strife and jealousies were closely associated with continual war and bloodshed. Their dismal dungeons where guilty and innocent victims were confined, often for long periods, were striking testimony of man's inhumanity to man.

At Bedford we visited the old building in which John Bunyan with his burning zeal declared the truth as seen by him. We stood behind the old pulpit and sat on the old bench reputed to be the identical one upon which he sat. His little home by the side of the winding road is still standing, but only in part as he left it. At different times repairs have been necessary, consequently much of the original material is gone; but some may still be seen. The site, style, and general aspect, however, remain the same. The iron door that stood between him and liberty for twelve long years, while he was confined as a prisoner in old Bedford jail, is still preserved amongst other relics of those darker days. John Knox's home in Edinburgh we also visited and saw much of interest there.

As one to whom the records of these faithful servants of God has always been of interest, it touched a very responsive chord in our heart as we looked upon these tangible witnesses of the price of loyalty in those lamentable times. To look upon these things preserved in memory, of those who sealed their witnessing by their martyrdom, or who, like Bunyan, spent so many long years in a dismal prison, one instinctively feels a sense of unspeakable gratitude and admiration, and also a rejoicing in the knowledge that their sacrifice was not made in vain. What striking evidence we have of that wonderful promise wherein X111 things are assuredly declared to work for good. Had Bunyan not been imprisoned, Pilgrim's Progress might never have been written. He might have been an influence for good in his own immediate community, but under God's providence his trials indirectly made him a power for good and an angel of comfort to saints throughout the civilized world.

### **INTOLERANCE AND BIGOTRY OF THE PAST YET HISTORY IS REPEATED TODAY**

Our heart was moved with such mingled feelings as in one place we found a memorial erected and inscribed with words of praise for those who suffered under the despotism of Papacy in the early days of the Church of England; then passing along we beheld a monument erected, in memory of those who in later years died at the stake or were beheaded or otherwise martyred at the behest of the Church of England bishops, because these faithful souls dared to translate the Scriptures and refused to bow to the dictates of a politically controlled

Church. Poor humanity! What a history! Yea, how true the words of Solomon, "There is nothing new under the sun." As the succeeding generations come and go, lessons written on the pages of history by the groans and anguish of the actors then living seem of little avail, since those who live and read in after days continue to repeat the same mistakes of the past, and oftentimes add thereto further inconsistencies.

How deplorable the history of Christianity as it is associated with so-called Christendom! The persecuted of today become the persecutors of tomorrow. The Puritans forsake the shores of the old land to find a haven of religious freedom in the new land of liberty, arid in after years leave a record of religious intolerance and bigotry. And who cannot see that even today history continues to repeat itself in the experiences of the faithful living in the midst of sectarianism.

These records of faithfulness under the excruciating experiences of the past should serve to keep us humble. Indeed we are led to wonder at times how it can be that we should be found worthy to share with such faithful characters the rewards of the Kingdom. Like the Ancient Worthies of the Jewish Age they form a great cloud of witnesses, whose noble example beckons us on to faithfulness at any cost.

Our final service, as already stated, was in the nature of a farewell gathering arranged by the London brethren, others coming in from nearby districts. . Here our final farewell was said to the British friends, aside from the few who saw us off the following morning. Occasions of this kind are solemn moments, since we know not what a day may bring forth. The possibilities of all the number meeting again on earth are very improbable; and even us we think of the gathering on the other side of the veil, we realize that it will be truly wonderful if we should all find ourselves together there. The many expressions of love and good wishes extended to us were fully appreciated and we trust that we succeeded in assuring all that the depth of love and gratitude experienced in our own heart were very real. All were most kind. We wish to express special appreciation for the many kindnesses extended to us by Brother Shearn and his family, who so faithfully supplied our needs.

On Wednesday, September 10, at 12 o'clock, we began the long journey homeward. We were favored most of the time with fair weather, arriving in New York about noon on Wednesday, September 17. We render thanks to God for all His love and care, and are happy to be the bearer of many messages of love from the brethren over the water. Many of these messages were in the form of very appropriate Scripture texts, particularly expressive of the love and interest felt by the senders for the brethren over here; such Scriptures as the following: 1 Cor. 16:13, 14, 23 ; Jer. 9:23,24 ; Jer. 17:5-8.

The brethren of Great Britain will hereafter be just a little closer to our own heart, since the personal contact has endeared them the more. It is our fervent hope that under the Lord's blessing the additional link with America may have served to strengthen their confidence and love.

In conclusion we can only express our thanks to God for the wonderful privilege enjoyed. May it have been to His worthy praise in all its results. Additionally, we would take advantage of the occasion to express our appreciation of the love and confidence of the brethren who sent us forth, and also of all who in spirit and prayer accompanied us and to whom we fain would impart a share of the blessings enjoyed.

Gratefully, Your brother in Him,

J. J. Blackburn.

## **THE REFINER'S FIRE**

Malachi 3 :3.

He sat by a furnace of seven-fold heat,  
As He watched by the precious ore,  
And closer He bent with a searching gaze,  
As He heated it more and more.

He knew He had ore that could stand the test,  
And He wanted the finest gold  
To mould as a crown for the King to wear,  
Set with gems of a price untold.

So He laid our gold in the burning fire,  
'Tho' we fain would have said Him "Nay,"  
And He watched the dross that we had not seen,  
As it melted and passed away.

And the gold grew brighter and yet more bright,  
But our eyes were so dim with tears,  
We saw but the fire -- not the Master's hand,  
And questioned with anxious fears.

Yet our gold shone out with a richer glow,  
As it mirrored a Form above,  
That bent o'er the fire tho' unseen by us,  
With looks of ineffable love.

Can we think that it pleases His loving heart,  
To cause us a moment's pain?  
Ah! no but He saw thro' the present cross  
The bliss of eternal gain.

So He waited there with a watchful eye,  
With a love that is strong and sure,  
And His gold did not suffer a whit more heat  
Than was needed to make it pure.

## **THE FATHER OF MERCIES**

*"I will arise and go to my father." - Luke 15:11-24.*

THE story of God's love and sympathy toward poor, fallen, degraded humanity becomes more and more precious to all those who grow in the knowledge and grace of the Lord, and who come to realize the real value of true sympathy and love. The Apostle John writes that it was because we learned of God's love for us that we were first drawn to Him, and our love went out to Him. Nothing could give us cause for thankfulness more than the information imparted to us that we have a sympathetic Father in Heaven, who loves us and who is carrying forward a purpose that will result ultimately in relieving our race of its terrible affliction of sin and alienation from Him. And many are the lessons given us in the Divine Word setting forth the fact. of heavenly love and compassion.

### **THREE GENERAL PICTURES**

The picture that the Savior gives us in the parable of the prodigal son, is one of three teaching the same general lesson. These three parables were spoken to the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who, while admiring the Lord Jesus, were indignant with Him because He did not, like themselves, spurn the lower classes, the publicans and sinners.

In one of the associated parables the word -picture is that of a shepherd with an hundred sheep, one of which goes astray: the shepherd leaves the ninety and nine to follow the straying sheep, and, recovering it, rejoices greatly, more than over the ninety and nine which went not astray. The picture here seems to represent God's entire .creation as His flock, the one sheep which went astray seeming to portray Adam and his race, lost in sin. The pursuing of the lost sheep was the heavenly Father sending His Son to redeem Adam and his race, to bring back all or so many as are willing to come back to the fold -to fellowship with God and the enjoyment of His favor, everlasting life. This picture was one which would appeal to the people of that country, many of whom were shepherds or acquainted with the customs of shepherds. It presented the Heavenly Father in a new light, as interested in the straying ones with a love that is in no sense selfish, but sacrificing.

The other associated parable 'as that of the lost piece of silver. The women of those times usually wore a bracelet on which was fastened



ten coins. Such a bracelet was generally the gift of the bridegroom at the time of marriage, and the bracelet and each piece associated with it was highly esteemed by its wearer. The parable pictures the loss of one of these pieces, and shows the diligence with which a woman would search and sweep to find it because it was valuable in her eyes, and how she would rejoice at the finding. Our Lord's comment on this is that much more would the Heavenly Father have an interest in humanity in its lost condition, and search for and rejoice in finding the lost. Both of these parables bore specially upon the attitude of the Pharisees toward the masses of the people—the common people, including the publicans and sinners. These parables showed that their attitude was not the proper one.

### **PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON**

Then follows the parable of the prodigal son. A father has two sons. It was the custom of that time and country that the elder son should inherit the principal part of the estate if he chose to remain at home with his father. The younger sons were usually given some portion, and allowed to embark if they would in some other business or profession. The parable opens with the proposition of the younger son that he would leave home, taking with him whatever the father was willing to give him. His request was granted; the father gave a portion of his means to each of the sons. We do not understand the parable to teach that the father unwisely retained nothing to himself, but contrariwise, that he merely gave a reasonable individual portion to each son, retaining the remainder, which, however, was intended for the elder son, if faithful, at the father's death. Incidentally we remark - that experience shows that it would be unwise for a father to take any other course than the one here suggested.

Rehearsing the story briefly: the younger son used his father's gifts riotously, wastefully, and soon came to want in a foreign land. In his degradation he became a swineherd, an especially demeaning occupation amongst the Jews at that time. He got down to the level of the swine in many respects, and yet he felt a longing for better things that he had known before. He was not satisfied, and determined to return to his father and to seek to be a servant in the household, claiming nothing further as a son, realizing that he had dishonored the relationship. The loving father is pictured as seeing the prodigal a long way off and hastening to him, embracing him and kissing him repeatedly. The prodigal attempts to make his statement of contrition, but is interrupted by the father's expressions of love and directions for the best robe, the ring, the feast on fatted calf, and general rejoicing that the dead had come to life, the lost had been found, the wayward had returned.

The parable shows the elder son offended, refusing to enter into the joys of the occasion, and complaining that his loyalty to his father had less demonstration than was given to the return of the prodigal. The father urges the elder son to come and rejoice also, to enter into his spirit in the matter, assuring him that this meant no less love for himself, and points to the fact that as the loyal son he may still be the heir of all his possessions - "All that I have is throe"-is for thee.

### **A REASONABLE INTERPRETATION**

No interpretation of the parable is given, but it might be explained in harmony with itself and in harmony with other Scriptures in two ways:

(1) We might interpret it as we have done the parable of the hundred sheep, that the elder brother represented those who had always been in harmony with God, the holy angels; that the younger brother was mankind, etc.

(2) Another interpretation seems much more appropriate and fitting. The elder brother well represents the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who outwardly and theoretically were in harmony with God. Paul, who had been one of this class, declared that with all good conscience he had served the God of his fathers as a Pharisee. Doubtless there were others of the class whose intentions and desires were to remain loyal and obedient to the Heavenly Father -who sought daily by obedience to the Law to remain at home with God, and who did remain at home up to the time that our Lord addressed them this parable. They had their good portion in this present life, as well as the promise of the great Oath-Bound Covenant in the future.

The younger son would represent that portion of the nation of Israel which, while aware of the Oath-Bound Covenant and of the blessings and privileges of relationship with God, had nevertheless wandered off into the ways of sin as publicans and sinners and careless ones. These realized in large measure their own unworthiness, and sometimes smote upon their breasts saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." These were all repudiated by the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who declared them to be in no sense of the word participants in the promises, regarded them as' prodigals, sinners, and would not eat with them nor salute them nor have any dealings with them. Our Lord, on the contrary, representing the Father, was willing to speak to these, willing to receive them, told them of the Father's love, of His provision to give them the robe of Christ's righteousness, justification; of His willingness to make them participants in the fat great feast of things, the Kingdom blessings; of s His willingness to give them the ring as a signet of Hi forgiveness, everlasting mercy, and love-the Pentecostal

The Pharisees, etc., as the elder son, noting this Divine favor to the poor common people, the publicans and sinners, were angry. They

rejected the message of the Father through the Son; they would not go to the same feast. They thus showed that they lacked a very important quality of heart -they lacked the spirit of loving-kindness, and hence were not at all prepared for the feast. They left the Father's house, left their share in the Oath-Bound Covenant and the wonderful favors connected therewith, because they had not the Father's spirit, because they lacked the spirit of brotherly kindness, love. The Lord as a result cast them off as a nation, and they lost the privilege of the chief blessing and were blinded.

Although the Heavenly Father has temporarily discarded the nation represented by this elder brother, nevertheless amongst those with whom He is now dealing (spiritual Israel) there are similar classes - some who are self-righteous and self-confident, moral and religious, but who, like the Pharisees, have not a sufficiency of the spirit of love to appreciate the Father's conduct and to abide in His love. On the other hand there is still the Lazarus class, still the returned prodigal class, to which the Father is pleased to grant riches of grace and mercy and truth, the robe of righteousness, the feast of fat things and the ring, symbolizing His eternal love and mercy.

### **"LOVE DIVINE ALL LOVE EXCELLING"**

With regard to the scope and import of this parable, it has been well remarked that it "illustrated, and illustrated for ever, in a rising climax of tenderness, the deepest mysteries of the Divine compassion -- the joy that there is in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Where, in the entire range of human literature, sacred or profane, can anything be found so terse, so luminous, so full of infinite tenderness-so faithful in the picture which it furnishes of the consequences of sin, yet so merciful in the hope which it affords to amendment and penitence -- as this little story? How does it summarize the consolations of religion and the sufferings of life! All sin and punishment, all penitence and forgiveness, find their best delineation in these few brief words."

The lesson for us all is that even after we have been favored of the Heavenly Father, been accepted as His children, there are two ways of departing from Him. One way is that of open sin and wantonness, the other a failure to attain to the Divine likeness in our hearts. The parable seems to imply that there is more hope of those who have gone into sin and degradation returning to God, being accepted of Him and received into His blessings and becoming inheritors of His future favors, than there is of some who, while outwardly moral and religious, fail to acquire the Lord's spirit of love and mercy. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of His"; and being none of His he will surely not be permitted to share in the fruits and graces of the spirit of the present time -- love, joy, peace, etc., nor in the

exceeding great and precious things of the Divine provision which are yet future -- glory, honor, and immortality.

The thought everywhere held out in the Scriptures is that God's mercy endures forever -- that is, "*olan*," or to a completion. A small portion of the world of mankind at the present time has received God's favor to the extent of being justified and made participators in the Divine favors and mercies of this present time. As in His dealings with these the Lord is very gracious, so is He to those who return from the ways of sin, and He is even patient with those who lack the spirit of love and forgiveness, and comes to them entreating them to join in His gracious plans and arrangements. This loving-kindness bestowed upon the believers of the present time illustrates the spirit of the Lord. It becomes an assurance to us of the fulfillment of His promise that in due time all the families of the earth shall be brought to a knowledge of His goodness, to an opportunity for knowing Him whom to rightly know and appreciate will mean to them everlasting life.

It is not in violation of the Lord's declaration of mercy that we find the Scriptures clearly teaching that when mercy shall have fully accomplished its work, when it shall have accomplished all it can accomplish in the interest of the fallen and sinful, its work will be at an end, and all those not favored -will be those who, despite their knowledge of the Divine character and the Divine will, and despite their opportunities for coming into harmony with the same, will have refused to enter into the Father's gracious arrangements and plans. For such willful sinners to be eventually destroyed will evidently be not only for their best interests but for the interests also of all those who are in accord with the Lord. Thus the Lord will eventually bring to pass the promise that every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall be heard acknowledging and praising the God of our salvation, for He is worthy. (Rev. 5:13.) No discordant note shall be heard throughout the universe of God. Every member of Adam's race shall through Christ be granted a full opportunity for return to the relationship of the sons of God, and all the willing and obedient will receive the great blessing. Indeed also it will be a blessing to the unwilling and disobedient that they should be cut off in the Second Death, rather than that they should continue perverse and unhappy and injurious to others as well as to themselves.

## **DANIEL THE BELOVED OF JEHOVAH**

SERIES XXXI

**THE ANTI-CHRIST DEPICTED**

*"Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all."  
-- Dan. 11:37.*

CONTINUING to give the historical evidence that the king who does "according to his will," of verse 36, refers to the Roman government, which gradually merges from a Pagan to that of a raised Christian form, and finally to that of complete apostasy in the Papacy. We note that the expression in verse 37, "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all," describes perfectly the Roman power—first, in its discarding the Pagan gods, so long worshiped by Rome; and then, after professing to embrace and worship the Christian's God, in Constantine's day, in its disregarding the teachings of the true God and of Christ.

The expression, "nor regard any god, for he shall magnify himself above all," is practically the same as that used by St. Paul in 2 Thess. 2:4 and by St. John in Rev. 13:5, 6. The words in Daniel do not mean, any more than do those of these latter, that an infidel Antichrist is referred to, as our Futurist friends believe; but rather that while claiming to represent the true God and Christ, this power would arrogate to itself powers belonging alone to God and Christ, and change, misrepresent, add to, and distort their teachings.

### **SETTING ASIDE LAWS OF GOD**

Rome's disregard of the teachings of God in one very important matter is described in the words of the revealing angel that follow, that he shall not regard "the desire of women." The word translated "women" signifies wives; and the word "desire," the conjugal affection. Mr. Mede says that the word "women" might have been properly translated "wives"; there being no other word used in the Scriptures to translate wives, except in one or two instances. The meaning, therefore, would be that of neglecting and discouraging marriage, as both the Greek and Latin Christians did, to the great reproach and discredit of the true Christian religion. "Forbidding to marry," was one of the erroneous features of the anti-Christian Apostasy, as noted by St. Paul.

Mr. Newton says of Constantine, that he repealed the Julian and Papian laws of Rome which encouraged marriage and showed special favor to those who had children, and that he allowed equal or greater privileges and immunities to those who were unmarried and had no children. The Historian Eusebius says that Constantine "held in the highest reverence those men who had devoted themselves to the Divine philosophy, that is, to a monastic life; and almost adored the most holy company of perpetual virgins, being convinced that God, to whom they had consecrated themselves, did dwell in their minds."

This emperor's "example was followed by his successors; and the married clergy were discountenanced and depressed; the monks, were honored and advanced; and in the fourth century like a torrent overran the Eastern Church, and soon after, the Western too. This was evidently not regarding the desire of wives, or conjugal affection. At first only second marriages were prohibited, but in time the clergy was absolutely restrained from marrying at all. So much did the power here described magnify himself above all, even God Himself, by contradicting the primary law of God and nature; and making that dishonorable which the Scriptures (Heb. 13:4) hath declared honorable."

That the above is the Scriptural use of the word "desire" in this particular, may be seen from the following passages. In Canticles 7:10, "I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me." In Ezek. 24:16, the Lord, informing the Prophet that He would take away his wife, says, "Behold, I take away from thee the *desire* of thine eyes." In verse 18, he says, "And at even [evening] my wife died." We see that to this very day the Lord's Word is disregarded in Rome's forbidding the clergy to marry. Such acts can never be applied to Antiochus Epiphanes; neither to Napoleon, as this feature could not be said of either of these men.

### **IDOLATRY OF THE PAPACY FORECAST**

The angel next says of this power, "But in his estate [place] shall he honor the God of forces; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." (Ver. 38.) The word translated "forces" is *Mahuzzim*; and eminent Hebrew scholars say that it should be understood, or taken personally. The margin of our King James Bible renders the word *Mauzzim*, gods, protectors, or munitions. Young gives as the meaning of the word, "stronghold, strength." Mr. Elliott says "Mahoz in the singular means a *fortress*. It is used literally in verse 7, of this chapter, and in Psalm 37:3, and elsewhere, is thus applied figuratively to God: "Thou art my rock, my *fortress*." It is rendered in the Septuagint: "And he shall glorify the god Maodizim\*" ; and in the Latin Vulgate, "And he shall worship Maodizim in his place." Hebrew scholars tell us that the word is derived from "a radical verb, signifying 'he was strong,' and the proper meaning of it is *munitions, bulwarks, fortresses*; but the Hebrews often using abstracts for coneretes, it signifies equally *protectors, defenders, and guardians*."

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\* The same word, only a different spelling.

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Mr. Newton thus translates the passage: "And with God, or instead of God, Mahuzzim in his estate, shall he honor with gold and silver and precious stones and desirable things. However it be translated, the meaning evidently is, that he should establish the worship of Mahuzzim-of protectors, defenders, and guardians. He should worship these as God, or with God, or instead of God; and who is there so little acquainted with ecclesiastical history as not to know that the worship of saints and angels was established both in the Greek and the Latin Church? They were not only invocated and adored as patrons, intercessors, and guardians of mankind;' but festival days were instituted to them; miracles were ascribed to them; churches were erected to them; their very relics [of dead saints] were worshiped; and their shrines and images were adorned with the most costly offerings, and 'honored with gold arid silver and precious stones and desirable things.'"

And that which makes the fulfillment of the prophecy still more complete is that these saints were celebrated and adored under the title or meaning of the word Mahuzzim, that is, of bulwarks and fortresses, of protectors and guardians of mankind. Mr. Mede and Sir Isaac Newton have proved this point by a great variety of authorities cited from the fathers, and other ancient writers. We quote from Mr. Mede on this point

"Basil, a monk, who was made bishop of Caesarea in the year 369, and died in the year 378, concludes his oration upon the martyr Mamas with praying, 'that God would preserve the Church of Caesarea unshaken, being guarded with the great towers of the martyrs.' In his oration upon the forty martyrs, whose relics were dispersed in all places thereabouts, 'These are they,' saith he, 'who have taken possession of our country, as certain conjoined towers, secure it from the incursions of our enemies': and he further invocates them, 'O ye common keepers of mankind, good companions of our cares, coadjutors of our prayers, most powerful ambassadors of God,' etc. Chrysostom, in his thirty-second homily upon the epistle to the Romans, speaking of the relics of St. Peter and Paul, 'This corpse,' saith he, meaning of Paul, 'fortifies that city of Rome more strongly than any tower, or than ten thousand rampires, as also doth the corpse of Peter.' Are not these the strong Mahuzzim ?

"In his homily likewise upon the Egyptian martyrs, he speaketh after this manner: 'The bodies of these saints fortify our city more strongly than any impregnable wall of adamant; and as certain rocks, prominent on every side, not only repel the assaults of these enemies, who fall under the senses and are seen by the eyes, but also subvert and dissipate the snares of invisible demons, and all the stratagems of the devil.'



"Hilary also will tell us that neither the guards of saints, nor [angelorum munitions] the bulwarks of angels, are wanting to those who are willing to stand. Here angels are Mahuzzim, as saints were before. The Greeks [Greek Church] at this day, in their *Preces Horarie*, thus invoke the blessed virgin, 'O thou virgin mother of God, thou impregnable wall, thou fortress of salvation . . . we call upon thee, that thou wouldst frustrate our enemies, and be a fence of this city'; thus they go on calling her, 'The Hope, Safeguard, and Sanctuary of Christians.'

"Gregory -Nyssen, in his third oration upon the forty martyrs, calleth them . . . guarders and protectors.

"Theodoret calleth the holy martyrs 'Guardians of cities, Lieutenants of places, Captains of men, Princes, Champions, and Guardians,. by whom disasters are turned from us, and those which come from devils debarred and driven away.'"

### **A GOD WHOM HIS FATHERS KNEW NOT**

We thus see that this superstition which began to prevail in the fourth century was foreseen and described by the angelic prophet long centuries before. The authorities quoted in the foregoing show, as the angel declared, that "not only Mahuzzim were worshiped; but that they were worshiped likewise as Mahuzzim," that is, as bulwarks, protectors, defenders, etc.

Mr. Elliott's remarks on these words of the angel are most worthy of consideration. Concerning the words, "a god whom his fathers knew not," he says that it "seems to have been from this prophetic clause that the general patristic expectation respecting Antichrist arose, that he would put aside, and be an enemy to idols, the gods of his Roman ancestors; 'idola seponens,' as Irenaeus says. Which indeed, the Papal Antichrist was, though a patron of image and saint worship: asserting somewhat paradoxically the total difference of the two things; and declaring that he who called images, idols, was anathema [accursed]. The real difference was this: the one was his creation, and under his management, in Western Christendom: the other was not.

"It seems to me to have been well explained by reference to those saints, and their relics and images, which the [Romish] Apostasy from its first development regarded and worshiped as the *Mahuzzim, or fortresses*, of the places where they were deposited; saints which the Papal Chieftain of Antichristendom, on the grant of the Pantheon at Rome, solemnly adopted as tutelary deities, including the Virgin Mary as their head and Eloah; (he consecrated it to the honor of all the saints in place of all Pagan gods of his Roman ancestors' worship; and to the Virgin Mary, as their head, in place of Cybele, the mother of the gods), which in the second Council of Nice he prevailed to have recognized

as fit objects of worship, with apostate Christendom's most solemn sanction: It was under Adrian, then Bishop of Rome, that the Council was summoned and held: and very mainly through his influence and authority, that the iconoclastic\* decrees of the previous Council of Constantinople, which had stigmatized the saints and their images (by the very Greek word here used [in the Septuagint] to express the Hebrew *Mahuzzim*), were reversed, the worship of saints and their images restored, and punishments awarded to those who maintained that God was the only object of religious adoration."

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\*Iconoclast is "the name used to designate those in the Church from the eighth century downwards, who have been opposed to the use of sacred images -- that is, of statues, pictures, and other sensible representations of sacred objects -- or at least to the paying of religious honor or reverence to such representations. The iconoclast movement had its commencement in the Eastern Church." -- International Encyclopedia.

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### **POPE CLAIMED POWER TO CREATE SAINTS**

It was after this, in Western Rome, that the Roman bishop canonized the saints as Mahuzzim, "as his own peculiar prerogative, and by his own solemn authority. As to the historic fact, it was at first the, office of Provincial Councils, with a bishop presiding, to settle which of the more recently departed might be regarded as saints and mediators, the demand for new saints having become large in corrupted Christendom; and the Pope was the only referee on appeal in the matter-then at length the Pope claimed it as his peculiar prerogative to create saints."

"Mosheim's words, 'The judgment of the Roman Pontiffs was respected in the choice of those who were to be honored with saintship' till 'The Church of Rome engrossed to itself the creation of these tutelary divinities, which at length was distinguished by the title of canonization' -- are like a comment on the prophetic words [of the angel], 'Mahuzzim whom he shall acknowledge and increase with honor' and (if my reading be correct) 'He shall make into fortresses, Mahuzzim.'"

As further bearing on this matter we note that in a work designed for the worship of Roman Catholics in England, called the Litany of Loretto and edited by the Rev. P. Gandolphy, we have these words which are designed as a prayer to the virgin Mary: "We fly to thy patronage, O holy mother of God! Deliver us from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed virgin, Tower of David, Tower of ivory, Ark of the covenant, Refuge of sinners, Help of Christians, Queen of Angels, Queen of Prophets, Queen of Martyrs, Queen of all saints! We fly to thy patronage, O holy mother of God! Despise, not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers !"\*

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\*Mr. Cunningham has given it in full.

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### **SHALL DIVIDE THE LAND FOR GAIN**

Concerning the revealing angel's words to Daniel, "He shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain," it is well known that by the authority (so called) of the Roman Pontiff each country, town, monastery, and church, has its own patron saint. A quotation from Mr. Mede is to the point here: "He shall distribute the earth among his Mahuzzim: so that besides several patrimonies, which in every country which he shall allot them, he shall share whole kingdoms and provinces among them: Saint George shall have England; Saint Andrew, Scotland; Saint Denis, France; Saint James, Spain; Saint Mark, Venice, etc.; and bear rule as presidents, patrons of their several countries."

Mr. Newton thinks that it seems more natural and easy to understand that the worship accorded was to the teachers and propagators of the worship of Mahuzzim -- the bishops, priests, monks, and other religious orders -- rather than to the saints and angels, etc., represented or described by the word *Mahuzzim*. The expression has certainly had its fulfillment in both ways; for we know that these religious officials "have been honored and revered, and almost adored in former ages, and that their authority and jurisdiction have extended over both the purses and consciences of men; that they have been enriched with noble buildings and large endowments, and have had the choicest lands. These are points of such public notoriety that they require no proof, as they will admit of no denial."

Thus, in these four verses (36-39 inclusive), we have described this Roman power as it has had to do first with the Jews, and next with the Christian Church. The prophecy has had its fulfillment more especially in the eastern part of the Roman Empire; although many of its features apply to Papacy in the West. Concerning the Papacy itself, which rose up among the ten kingdoms in the West, the vision of Daniel 7, as we have seen, describes it more particularly. In the verses that follow, its punishments are described; especially those that fell upon the eastern part of the empire. Verses 40-45 describe this, and bring the history down to the events of the closing days, portraying its end.

### **THE LIVING BREAD FROM HEAVEN**

*"I am the bread of life." -- John 6:1-15, 35.*

THE miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, stands prominently before us as the only miracle that is particularly described in all four of the Gospels. John's account of it brings to our attention some features not so clearly presented in the others.

From other accounts we learn that our Lord's crossing of the Sea of Galilee at this time was for needed rest. His preaching and teaching and traveling were practically continuous; His hearers, going and coming from morning until night left Him little opportunity for privacy and rest, and He was quite willing thus to lay down His life in feeding the sheep -- not only exhausting His vitality through the healing of the diseases of the people, but also through the exhortations and public speaking, which are particularly enervating in the open air and when prolonged.

"After these things" -- how long after the items recorded in the previous chapter, depends on which feast is referred to. If it was Purim, only a month had elapsed; if it was Passover, a year. John's Gospel written after the others, was evidently designed not so much to give a history of our Lord's life as to mention incidents omitted in the other Gospels.

### **SEEKING THE MESSIAH**

Another account tells us that when the multitudes who had been listening to the teachings of Jesus, seeing His miracles, etc., learned that He had gone to the other side of the lake, some of them went afoot and some in small boats in the general direction in which He had gone, seeking Him. At this particular season many had their arrangements so made that they were on a holiday journey, going up to Jerusalem to the feast. On such occasions there was an unusual concourse on all roads leading to Jerusalem, and the people -- excited by the conduct of Herod and bewildered and wondering respecting the Messiah -- turned aside from their journey to hear more from the lips of this great Prophet, Jesus, and to see for themselves whether or not they thought He possessed the qualifications that would fit Him for the Messiahship, for the deliverance of their nation, for the establishment of the long-promised Kingdom of God. Jesus was sitting on the mountain side with His disciples when this large concourse of people seeking Him came along; quite probably He and the Apostles taught the multitude for some time before the miracle of feeding them was performed. We must remember that the Gospel narratives are very brief and pass over small and irrelevant details.

Our Lord, who had already planned the miracle, had led the minds of His disciples up to the point by inquiring, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" This question was addressed to Philip, one of the Apostles who lived not far distant. He was the proper person on that account, but probably the Lord had another reason for questioning

him. Philip seems to have been of rather a calculating and business turn of mind, and although this disposition is an excellent one to have amongst the disciples of the Lord, it nevertheless is inclined to think of earthly means rather than to exercise faith in the Lord. Probably the Lord wished to awaken Philip's thought and specially to bring him profitable instruction and faith through this miracle. Philip's answer that it would require two hundred pennyworth of bread (about \$32.00) to supply the multitude even a light luncheon, shows his business trait. While all the various casts of mind are to be found amongst the Lord's people, the business head is amongst the most useful if it be kept under proper restraints of love and faith; love, that it may not allow business instincts to take sole charge of spiritual affairs; and faith, that it may be able to realize that although business methods are excellent in all the affairs of life, they must not be permitted to ignore faith in the Lord and the power of His might, and the loving interest which He takes in all the affairs of His Church, the New Creation.

### **THE USE OF MEANS**

Andrew, whose mind seems to have been less practical than that of Philip, suggested that one of the company had five little barley cakes and two small fishes, yet he had hardly offered the remark when he felt ashamed of it, and added, "But what are they among so many?" Philip was too practical, too much of a business man to have even thought of or mentioned such a morsel of food in connection with the supply of so large a multitude; but our Lord had use not only for the broader mind of Philip but also for the more simple and less logical mind of Andrew, and used the latter's suggestion by calling for the little supply. There is a lesson for us here: it illustrates what many of us have seen in connection with the affairs of the Lord's people, namely that all the good suggestions, all the helpful suggestions, all those suggestions which make for the interest of the Church, do not always come from one quarter-that often the Lord uses the stumbling lips and illogical reasonings of some of His followers as the basis of blessings to themselves and others, just as now He used Andrew's seemingly foolish remark.

Another thought in this connection is that our Lord seems always to have made use of whatever was at hand. He could have turned the stones into bread and thereby to have fed the multitude; He could have ignored the little supply on hand as insignificant; but this was not His method. All of His followers should learn from this not to despise the little things, but to use them so far as possible. There is a principle involved, too-as our Lord expresses it, He that is faithful in that which is least, will be faithful also in that which is greater.

Another lesson is that miracles are only to be expected after we have done all in our power with the means at hand. The man had the right

idea when, after expressing his faith in the Lord, some one said to him, "Now, George, if the Lord should command you to jump through that stone wall, would you do it?" His answer was that if he were certain that the Lord had commanded it, he would jump at the stone wall and leave to the Lord all that was beyond his power. If the Lord wished to make a miracle out of it He was able to do so, but the jumping part belonged to George. So it is with us in all life's affairs; we are to be sure that we are in the Lord's way, that we are following His directions, and then we are to leave all the results to Him, assured of His ability to work the greatest miracles. Nevertheless, the greatest miracles which any of us have to do with are of a quiet and unostentatious kind. In nature we see these miracles in the growing grain, which, under the Lord's providences, supplies our needs in response to our labor. The increase of the five barley loaves and two little fishes, we may be sure, was not more of a miracle than that which is continually going on in nature, only that it is a different kind, to which we are not accustomed. Nevertheless, as the Lord used the barley cakes and fishes as the nucleus for this miracle, so in nature He uses the seed wheat as the basis for the miracle of the crop gathered in harvest. In other words He always uses means to an end, and the fact that we may see and understand the means does not make the miracle either greater or less. A proper view of life connects the Lord with all the affairs of this life as well as with all that pertains to the life to come.

### **"WHEN THEY WERE FILLED"**

The multitude sat down in groups or companies of fifties and hundreds, we are told, and the disciples distributed to them the five little cakes and two fishes in pieces, which apparently grew as they were broken, much after the manner of the widow's cruse of oil, which flowed incessantly until all the pots had been filled. So this little supply under the Lord's blessing increased, not merely to give a light luncheon to the multitude, but until all were "filled," satisfied, wanted no more. Here was a miracle which not only astounded the disciples but also the thousands; it was what John calls a sign, an evidence and proof of our Lord's supernatural power and authority -- a proof that He was indeed the Sent of God, the Messiah. This was the object of the miracle -not the feeding of the multitude. At the very same time there were doubtless hungry ones in various parts of the world whom the Lord could have fed without any trouble to Himself; but He came not to feed the world, He came not to stop the pain and sorrow and dying, but to redeem the world and to give evidence which would allow the Apostles and all the Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile to accept Him by faith as the Messiah -- evidences also which, coming down to us and others of this Gospel Age, have been the foundation for our faith.

Some have said, O that we could have been there and witnessed the miracle of the loaves and fishes! Our faith would have been made so strong that we could have been the disciples of Jesus under any and all circumstances and conditions. What a wonder it is that any of those five thousand should ever have doubted our Lord's Messiahship! We answer that those who are truly the Lord's people have similar miracles today, because He communicates to us through the Word, and because in eating of the Word, we partake of the spirit of our Lord, the spirit of the Truth.

In view of this, which of the Lord's people can gainsay the fact that He is continually, in his own experiences and in the experiences of other Christians, performing a miracle greater than that recorded in our lesson? Which of the Lord's people who have tasted that He is gracious, who have hungered and thirsted after righteousness-Truth- and have had its assisting comfort time and again, could any longer feel that their preference would be to have lived in the days of our Lord's First Advent and to have seen and tasted of the miracles then performed? For our part we much prefer the higher miracles, and consider that we have a stronger basis for faith in these than the poor Jews could possibly have had in all the favors bestowed upon them, great as those favors were.

### **WEALTH AND ECONOMY BLENDED**

Although our Lord was rich before He came into the world, and although He realized that through the power of God in Him He could still have all that was necessary for His well being and could provide for His followers, too, as shown not only in the miracle before us, the increase of the loaves and fishes, but also shown when, on another occasion, He granted His disciples the great draught of fishes out of the very lake before them -- with, all this wealth at His command our Lord was a great economist; from His standpoint nothing should be wasted. It was in harmony with this, that after the multitude had been thoroughly fed, the Lord instructed the Apostles to gather up the fragments that nothing be wasted, and they took up twelve haversacks full--each of them gathered the full of his bag or satchel or haversack, called a basket.

There are two lessons in this for us, one a practical lesson on economy, that none of the Lord's blessings and mercies are to be wasted. To some this lesson may come easier than to others, but it is a usual experience in life that willful waste brings woeful want. Quite probably some of the Lord's dear disciples at the present time need to learn the lesson of economy as much as did the disciples and multitude on this occasion. This does not teach the lesson of miserliness either, for the Scriptures declare, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to



poverty." (Prov. 11:24.) The first lesson was generosity, the secondary lesson was economy. So it should be with us our generosity should be equal to our disposition to economize. The Lord is not stingy, but generous; and none of His followers should be stingy. The Lord was economical, and that also His disciples should be. It was those who scattered to others who had their haversacks filled in the end and gained the supply for themselves.

We can apply the same lesson to spiritual things: the Lord's people are to be distributors. We have received of the Lord's bounty, grace, and truth freely; we are to distribute freely. Those who distribute will have the privilege of gathering up for themselves, that each may have more than he gave away. How true it is that those who are most intent upon feeding others with the bread of life are themselves most bountifully supplied.. Let us see to it, then, that we have generosity in respect to the spiritual as well as the natural food. Let us give forth the Word of Life and the Water of Life. While we do so from good, honest, sincere hearts, with a desire to honor the Lord and to bless the people, and without selfishness or pride on our own part, we may be sure that He will give us more and more of a rich supply for our own spiritual growth and sustenance.

### **HIS FUTURE GLORIOUS MANIFESTATION**

The multitude took knowledge of the miracle and acclaimed our Lord the great Prophet. By many of them, however, the miracle was only partially appreciated. Doubtless they viewed it as an indication that if Jesus were proclaimed a king, He could supply His soldiers with food without a commissary department; and if He could thus supply the food to His supporters and followers, He would be able also to give them the victory under all circumstances and conditions. These things are true, but not true in the way that the natural Israelites supposed. Our Lord giveth us the victory now over sin and selfishness, and leads us on from one achievement to another as we seek to walk in His steps, and all the way He feeds us with the living bread from heaven. In due time He will become the great King over the world, and His power to control and to feed and to put down Satan and all the powers of evil will be fully manifested. Then many of the blind eyes shall be opened -- eyes which cannot see the things of faith, ears which cannot hear the message of faith. Let us give thanks to the Lord more and more. that our eyes see and our ears hear the message which as yet the world sees not, appreciates not. While this Gospel Age can bring special blessings only to those who have the hearing ear and understanding heart and eye of faith, thank God there is another Age to come in which all the families of the earth will be abundantly blessed and guided and helped by those who now are able to walk by faith.. Only a special class can now appreciate the bread which came down from heaven. By and by, under the blessed influences and

arrangements of the Kingdom, all may have the privilege of eating of the bread of life and thus attaining the life everlasting. How our hearts go out to those who are now starving for this very bread, not only the heathen who have never heard of Christ, but many in the lands of civilization who, although they have heard, know not, see not, neither do they understand, neither can they understand until in the Lord's due time their eyes of understanding and ears of appreciation shall be opened, as has been promised through the Prophets.-Isa. 35:5 ; 42:7; 49:9

"Only five barley loaves!  
Only two fishes small!  
And can I offer these poor gifts  
To Christ, the Lord of all?  
To Him whose mighty word  
Can still the angry sea,  
Can cleanse the lepers, raise the dead?  
He hath no need of me.

"Yes, He hath need of thee!  
Then bring thy loaves of bread;  
Behold, with them, when Jesus speaks,  
The multitude are fed."

## **BREAK THOU THE BREAD OF LIFE**

Break Thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,  
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea;  
Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord  
My spirit pants for Thee, O Living Word.

Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,  
As Thou didst bless the bread by Galilee;  
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall,  
And I shall find my peace, my All in All.

Teach me to live, dear Lord, only for Thee,  
As Thy disciples lived in Galilee;  
Then all my struggles o'er, the victory won,  
I shall behold Thee, Lord, the Living One.