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## HAS THE WORLD OF SIN AND DEATH ENDED?

### HAS THE KINGDOM OF GOD BEEN ESTABLISHED? WILL MULTITUDES OF THE PRESENT LIVING GENERATIONS ESCAPE THE TOMB?

*"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." -- 2 Pet. 3:10.*

*"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." -- Hag. 2:7.*

THUS do the Scriptures explicitly declare that the second great dispensation of man's history, termed by Jesus "this world," and by St. Paul "this present world," is to be of temporary duration, that its bounds and limitations have been pre-determined; and the Divine decree has gone forth that it is to end in disaster and will be succeeded by an altogether different dispensation or world. Believers in the Bible, and particularly devout prophetic students, have for centuries and especially in these latter days, devoted much time and patient labor in searching the sacred Scriptures and the history of human events to ascertain if possible a clearer vision of the Divine purpose concerning the changes that will usher in the last great dispensation.

### Changes Foretold

As the ancient Prophets have written profusely respecting these great changes to come in the transition period between the second and third worlds, it is not to be wondered at that present unparalleled conditions and developments amongst men, involving, general social disorder and confusion and unheard of changes, are regarded by the thoughtful as most ominous, if not indeed the very fulfillment of the inspired messages uttered many centuries ago. Certain of the Apocalyptic visions also clearly depict the concluding scenes of this Age, and carry us over the stormy era of the transition into the "new heavens and new earth" epoch, designated "the world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness."\*

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\*See "Revelation of Jesus Christ," Vols. I and II.

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The question before us is, Can it now be said that the old world has passed away, and that we are already living in the new dispensation, or "world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness"?

Has the Kingdom of God come and been established on the earth? Following up this thought, Is it now due time to proclaim to all men that the world of sin and death has ended; and that therefore vast multitudes, even millions of humanity of the present living generations, will never enter the tomb? What do the facts of life teach?

Devout and reverent students of the Divine Word, possessed of the Holy Spirit, the' spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of sobriety and humility, will of course adopt the Divine viewpoint and earnestly seek to reach conclusions that are well supported by clear and positive statements from the inspired Word. The spirit of presumption, the spirit of worldly wisdom that seeks to be wise above what is written, is not approved by the Lord, and should be avoided by all those who desire to be in harmony with God.

### **Still in the World of Sin and Death**

As pointed out on the Chart of the Ages, the working out of the Divine Plan spans three great periods or epochs, known as "the world that was," "this present evil world," and "the world to come"; the word "world," as we have seen, being used to designate the dispensation, the state or general order of things existing among men. All- agree with St. Peter's testimony: the first world, the character of which was evil, ended at the flood-a period of 1656 years, and there commenced what the same Apostle terms "the world that now is" -- "the heavens and earth which are now." The second epoch, like the first; represents an evil order of things, and therefore is to have an end. Its time of duration is from the flood to the establishment of God's Kingdom at Christ's Second Coming. The testimony of the Scriptures agrees with the facts of history that the second great dispensation of human history has been evil throughout, and sacred prophecy, points out that it will continue to be so to its very end. In other words, this second world represents the continuation of the reign of sin and death. As Satan, the one who rules throughout the second epoch, is himself possessed of evil and is. in opposition to the Divine government, so the world or order of things, human government, etc., over which he presides is a sinful one. The following facts therefore concerning the present dispensation should be carefully noted and borne in mind:

- (1) The second epoch or world is presided over by Satan, the Adversary of God and man. -- John 14:30; 2 Cor. 4:4.
  
- (2) During the second dispensation under Satan, who has usurped the controllership of the world, man is permitted to, endeavor to govern himself and to rule the earth. -- Dan. 2:31-43; Rom. 13:1; Dan. 5:17.
  
- (3) During the second dispensation the arrangement of things on earth; human government, order of society, etc., under Satan's influence is described as being unrighteous, evil, out of harmony with God, and therefore ordained to come to ruin. Dan. 2:44; Mal. 3:15; 4:1; 2 Pet. 3:12.
  
- (4) The second dispensation represents a world of pain, sickness, sorrow, weeping, sin and death. -- Psa. 30:5; Rom. 8:19, 22; Job 14:1-12.

### **Satan Still Prince of This World**

Now with these facts before our minds, we inquire:

First, Is Satan, as the adversary of God and man, still presiding over the affairs of men? What do the outward evidences show along this line? We reply that all the signs and evidences indicate most clearly that Satan is still, as Jesus termed him, "the prince of this world," or as St. Paul represented him, "the god of this world." Are there not still great and gigantic forms and systems of superstition deeply entrenched in the earth, and are not the masses of our race still held in bondage to one or another of the forms of idolatry and heathen worship? Even in those portions of the earth that have come under the civilizing influences of Christianity, what do we find? General ignorance of God and the Divine Plan; and instead of the Truth, various shades of misbelief and superstition prevail; thus making most applicable the prophetic picture: "Darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people." (Isa. 60:2.) May we not, therefore, regard the proof as conclusive in this first proposition alone, that we are still living in the old dispensation. But we will pass on to the next point

Second, Is it not still true that mankind are permitted to try various forms of government in the endeavor to rule themselves and the earth? Our answer without hesitancy must be in the affirmative. The governments of the earth, or what the Scriptures call "the

kingdoms of this world," are still intact, many of them still in well organized form, still exercising general control of the affairs of the people. It is indeed true, the World-war constituted a very severe shaking, so that several of the European powers were compelled to change their form from that of kingdoms or monarchies to one or another of the socialistic or democratic forms of government; but they still are organized governments, and represent human attempts to rule the earth after much the same manner that has prevailed all along in the past. Not only so, but the words of the Prophet are not yet fulfilled -- "the desire of all nations" has not yet come. The nations are not yet in a state of mind to desire the new government, not until the whole symbolic earth has been devoured with the fire of His jealousy will the pride of man be sufficiently humbled; then He will turn to the people a pure language and they shall call upon Him with one consent. Then the desire of all nations shall come. Thus we have in the second consideration strong evidence that we live in the old dispensation. But let us note further:

### **Overthrow of Satan's Empire Not Yet but Soon**

Third, The proposition set forth in the Scriptures that the arrangement of affairs, governments, etc., upon the earth during the second epoch are of an unrighteous character, and though ordained or permitted of God, are doomed to destruction and ruin. Surely, no one of right mind would assume the responsibility of proving that the "powers that be" have been transformed and have become Godlike and righteous. All the evidence is to the contrary--the spirit of greed, avarice, and selfishness continue to rule the nations and peoples of the earth. The spirit of strife and blood-shed is still abroad everywhere, and the Daily Press overflows with evidences convincing us beyond the shadow of a doubt of the wickedness and unrighteousness of the present order of things, and proves beyond any question that though the Divine counsels have passed the solemn asseveration that the order of things in the second epoch shall end in ruin and be utterly removed, and though everything about us speaks of the close proximity of that time, it has not yet come to pass; leaving us to believe that we are living under the reign of evil, and therefore in "this present evil world."

Fourth, Are we not still living in a world of pain, sickness, sorrow, weeping, sin, and death? Surely in the frightful sights of wretchedness, misery, sorrow, and death that confront us on every hand we have the most incontrovertible proof that we are dwelling in the same epoch in which our forefathers have lived and died, and the poet has well said the truth:

"Now the world is full of suffering,

Sounds of woe fall on my ears,

Sights of wretchedness and sorrow

Fill my eyes with pitying tears."

Yea, verily, it is the same world that dates back to the ante-deluvian period, the world in which faithful Abraham and other ancients of his class sojourned as pilgrims and strangers, labored and struggled, trusting in the promises of God and hence looked forward to a "better country" (the new order of things on earth), a city (kingdom) whose builder and maker is God; the same world in which sorrow and death reigned when Jesus lived, suffered and died nineteen centuries ago; the same evil dispensation in which faithful followers of Christ have borne the cross from the days of the tragedy on Calvary even unto this day. Moreover, the same crimes, the same wickedness, the same sins that blackened and cursed the earth in the days of the Pharaohs, in the days of the Caesars, and throughout the long and weary centuries in which the Apocalyptic woman sat enthroned upon the scarlet colored beast -- the same horrible sights and sounds still darken and curse the ways of the sons of men, leaving therefore no room for doubt that we are still living in the second great epoch of human history--the world of sin and death.

### **The World of Righteousness and Life Future**

But let us turn our attention for a moment to another viewpoint, and consider the nature of the third world or dispensation:

(1) The Scriptures unequivocally teach that the third world or epoch is to be presided over by the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. -- Zech. 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:25, 26; Isa. 9:6.

(2) During the third dispensation, under Christ and His Bride, the human race will not be permitted to make any attempt at self-government, for the Kingdom of God will then hold sway even unto the uttermost parts of the earth. -- Psalms 72:7, 8; Isaiah 9:7; 2:2; Revelation 19:15.

(3) During the third dispensation, the arrangement of things on the earth, the organization of society under Christ's influence, is represented as being just and righteous, in full harmony with God and therefore ordained to abide forever. -- Isaiah 28:17; Isaiah 11:1-5; Psalm 98:9; 2 Peter 3:13.

(4) The third dispensation is represented as a world of life, joy, peace to all who will be permitted to abide; and pain, sickness, sorrow, weeping, sin, and death will flee away. -- Revelation 21:1-4; 22:17; Acts 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:55.

In the light of the Bible description of the "world to come" surely no one who is at all established in the Truth would for an instant claim that any of the above four propositions are fulfilled or are even to any degree in process of fulfillment at the present time. It would be folly to claim that Christ is now reigning on earth in the sense of His Kingdom being established here, governing in the affairs of men.

Again the fact that fallen humanity are still permitted to attempt to govern and rule themselves is proof that Christ's Kingdom is not yet established.

Moreover, none can claim with proof that the present order of things is, righteous, any more than it has been in the past centuries of the world of evil.

Now the fourth proposition: In the face of decay, ruin, and death, surely no sane mind will claim that we have entered a world of life and that pain, sorrow, and death are even to any extent in process of passing away.

Nothing in any of the statements foregoing is intended to disclaim or deny that we are living in, very close proximity to the third dispensation or world to come. As repeatedly pointed out heretofore, we freely and fully believe that the voice of prophecy, is rapidly fulfilling in our midst. The prophetic testimony without exception assures us that the present dispensation is to close amidst much confusion and disorder in human affairs, that this is the Divine method of rebuking the pride and selfishness of humanity and preparing men to see the need of Divine interposition in the establishment of the long-promised Kingdom in the third world. Indeed, faithful Watchers who in accordance with the Master's advice are observing the signs of the times and noting the developments amongst the nations, cannot avoid, the conviction that in the great chain of chronological events we have come close up to the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty; that for some time past we have been living in the Day of His Preparation; that many of the blessings of our day may properly be regarded foregleams of the New Day that is about to dawn but has not yet been ushered in, for a "dark night" must precede. Even some great minds of the world, not influenced by the "more sure word of prophecy," are describing in language, similar to that used in the Scriptures, what the present trend of events may lead to.

### **Earth's Millions Still on Road to Tomb**

Coming to the third division of our subject will vast throngs of humanity now living not die? It will be recognized that the items reviewed foregoing together with the facts and Scriptures presented, have a most important bearing upon this question and lead to the unavoidable conclusion that such a message to the world at the present time is entirely out of order. We cannot announce to men that the Kingdom is established when such is not the case. Though it be indeed true that there are signs of the approaching Morning, that

the day of Christ's reign cannot be far distant, yet none can definitely forecast the exact time when it will take place. That Adamic death will cease in the Millennial Age, we most firmly believe, for it will be the Age of life, but as to how early in the Age it will stop, we believe that none can know. There is nothing in the Divine testimony to indicate how soon Adamic death will cease after the Kingdom is established, whether one year, ten years, or a hundred years. We may indeed draw certain inferences that might be considered reasonably reliable, and we might derive a certain amount of comfort from those reasonable inferences, but as for forming those inferences into a positive message, and announcing our guesses as conclusive facts, this, we believe, would be displeasing to the Lord.

The words of the Master have been quoted, as authority for this message of the present generation escaping the tomb: "He that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." Let it be remembered that Jesus spoke these words nearly nineteen centuries ago, and applied them then, but that did not signify that the dying process stopped in any of our race. The words fulfilled in this Gospel Age have meant that all obedient believers in Christ have escaped the condemnation of death: (Rom. 5:1.) Such have passed from death unto life. (1 John 3:14.) As justified believers, new creatures, such are never counted of God as going into death extinction and annihilation. They live unto Him, and in this sense, therefore, never die. Again the words "He that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die," may be also applied to humanity, in the Millennial Age, after the kingdom is established, when the new order has come in, with its life-giving and healing forces and influences. But as we have not yet entered the Age of life, we cannot promise the world immunity from death while it is still reigning.

### **"Except Those Days Be Shortened"**

The statement of our Lord given in this connection as frequently urged, "Except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved," implying that the days will be shortened and that there will be flesh saved, or pass through the time of trouble without dying. But even in this remark made by Jesus, we see nothing to warrant the startling proclamation to the world at the present time that many of them will not die, for none can know just when the time of trouble will end, and as already intimated, it, cannot be determined with absolute certainty that some of the flesh that is saved or passes through the time of trouble might not thereafter pass into the tomb. We trust not to be misunderstood with regard to any of the statements we are now making. When pressed with the question, Should we not think it a reasonable inference that some who pass through, the time of trouble to its end might not need to ever die, we would reply that we might regard this as a reasonable inference, that on account of the Kingdom then being established; it would be a reasonable supposition that those who were obedient might not need to pass into the tomb; but what we are endeavoring now to say is that there is a vast difference between a mere supposition or inference and that which is known to be positive fact and truth. We must, therefore take the position that we are not to preach what we might think are reasonable inferences and give them to the world as facts or established truths.

### **Bible Silent on This Question**

Another text urged upon us for consideration as bearing upon the above proposition is that found in Zeph. 3:8, 9: "After this will I turn to the people a pure language," etc. This text is urged as proving that vast numbers of humanity now walking the streets will never know what it is to die. The reply is that the language of the Prophet must be viewed in the light of; what we have just said foregoing. None can know the end of the time of trouble, and even though we could locate that, there is no positive testimony as to how soon men will cease dying after the Kingdom is established. The inference would be that it would not be long, but in view of the fact that the Bible is silent on this question as to just how and when Adamic death will cease, surely it cannot be acceptable to the Lord that we proclaim to men that they will never die, when as a matter of fact all around us, the race is dying. Fresh graves are to be found in every cemetery: The druggist, physician, hospital, undertaker, are all actively engaged, each in his own line. The headlines of the Public Press are constantly announcing the reign of death and contain lists of those who have suffered death through some dreadful calamity, storm, or accident. Whatever message we give to men must be according to the facts as we know them; and the facts -as they are apparent all around us are that the reign of sin and death continues on.

### **The Christian's Message Unchanged**

We conclude, therefore; that there is nothing in the messages of our Lord and the Apostles or Prophets to warrant Christians today in supposing that they should inject some change into the Gospel Story. Our Lord instructed that the good word of the Kingdom was to be preached unto the end of the Age. He announced His theme and the Message that He was authorized to give, saying: The spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn. These words in brief embody the entire kernel of the Gospel theme, from the days of Jesus down to the very end of the Age when the last members of the Church would be concluding their pilgrimage. We may include with this, the forecast of the more sure word of prophecy which explains the meaning and the necessity for the general trouble in the end of this Age termed "the day of vengeance of our God." We may point to the signs of the times which, in the light of prophecy, make manifest the close proximity of the end of the long winter-time of the reign of sin and death. We may and should assure the world that the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," will signify that all the millions of the dead, as well as all the millions now dying, will come forth from the tomb-they will hear the voice of the Son of Man and will have opportunity to be uplifted and blessed and to attain eternal life in Paradise on the terms of obedience then offered.

### **"Hold Fast the Form of Sound Words"**

The Apostle urges the brethren in: Christ to let their moderation be known unto all men.. Surely, if ever there was a time when the Lord's people needed to be moderate, conservative, and reasonable, it is at the present time, when there seems to be such tendency to indulge in that which is speculative and spectacular. It was to counteract this very tendency that the Apostle Paul admonished Titus, saying: "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." (Titus 2:1.) Again, the same Apostle exhorted Timothy, saying: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 1:13.) Again, we have St. Paul's most timely admonition, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." (2 Tim. 3:14.) Surely all of these faithful admonitions bid us exercise great carefulness as we attempt to -handle the holy things of the Lord's Word, and to realize the responsibility in connection therewith. Such careful concern for the Lord and for His Message, we believe, will lead all faithful brethren to see to it that all their conclusions, as well as all of the messages they proclaim, no matter from whom they may emanate, are squared by the Word of the Lord and proved to be positive and established truths before they are proclaimed.

## **HOW TO KEEP OURSELVES IN GOD'S LOVE**

THE Apostle Jude admonishes, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." He is addressing those who by obedient faith have passed from the condition of the world into this special love of God -- those whom He has brought into His family, as His children by adoption, through Christ Jesus. God does not love us because we are doing great and wonderful things. His special love for us began when He begat us, because of the consecration we had made, because we had entered into the covenant of sacrifice. And the Father delights in all those who desire to be sealed with His Spirit who desire to become His children. He began thus to love us as babes in Christ, and He loves us as we grow stronger, and He will love us to the end.

The Apostle John says, Whoso keepeth God's Word will as a result find that God's love is perfected in Him. (1 John 2:5.) The question arises, What is God's love? and in what-sense can it be perfected in us? The Apostle John evidently refers to that love which is most perfectly represented in God -- that love which is pure, free from all selfishness, from all stain-God's love, because it is the right principle, the very underlying principle of His character. And all those who 'are keeping God's Word must have the same kind of love. that He has.

The Apostle intimates that there is a growth in us. (1 John 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:2:) We are babes at first, and then children, then young men, then more fully developed. As we learn the principles of justice which permeate the Heavenly Father's character, we are to rejoice in these, and to have no other standards before our mind. We are to say, That is our Father's instruction, our Father's standard. So we become transformed more and more, and all standards other than those of the Heavenly Father become more and more displeasing to us.

As we journey along, we need to keep ourselves in the love of God. It is necessary as babes that we should keep ourselves in His love; it is necessary as children; it is necessary when still further developed. How can we do this? By keeping His commandments. Thus we

bring the body into subjection to the perfect will of God in Christ. Whoever does this finds himself growing. Day by day we are to grow and increase and become more and more God-like so we are more and more transformed as the days go by. Thus are we to keep ourselves in His love.

But if at any time during the race we should drop out and cease to cultivate these qualities, cease to be obedient to God, then we would cease 'more and more, to have His love, until finally we would cease to be in His love, and the curse, the wrath of God, would abide on us. Thus we would be in a far worse condition than at first, because in the second case it would be a matter of knowledge, whereas in the first case it was a matter of ignorance, a matter of heredity. In this worse condition God would have no sympathy for us at all.

To have then this love of God perfected in us would seem to indicate that we would have the very highest ideal-that we love as God loves. As we recognize that God loves all humanity so as to provide for the well-being and good of all the willing and obedient, and as He is multiplying blessings toward humanity even in the present life far beyond their deserving, so should we who become partakers of the love of God be exercised by this grand benevolent disposition. We should rather help our neighbors forward than do anything which might hinder their progress in any way. As Jehovah is not an envious, jealous, selfish, and hateful God, but a God of love, so should all His children be like unto their Father in heaven. We see that it is the Divine Message, the Word of God that gives us this comprehension of His sublime attributes, His Word gives us the necessary instruction and guidance. As the child of God thus comes to see the character of God more clearly, as he is desirous of being taught of God, he will come under the influence of God's spirit.

So, then, the Divine purpose concerning the children of God; those who are to be Christ's joint-heirs, and in fact, concerning all who shall ever have eternal life, is to develop in them this love -- a love fully consecrated to the Lord, a love like His, a love that will be in accord with a good conscience and an undissembled faith -- a faith that is well founded on the teachings of God's Word, a faith that is anxious to know God's will, and that searches the Scriptures and delights in God's law, and that can say as the Psalmist has expressed it prophetically, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God !"

## **CHOOSING THE BEST THINGS,**

*"I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me." -- Phil. 3:7-16; 4:8, 13.*

ALL who catch the inspiration of the Divine Message, of the call to the position of heavenly glory - and honor, realize that their attitude and viewpoint are well expressed by the Apostle in the language -- "but what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." This is merely another form of stating in substance their consecration to God; that having come to a knowledge of His truth and grace in Christ, of the rich heavenly promises that center in Him, they gladly assume the responsibility of the cross; of counting all the present advantages, opportunities, and blessings of an earthly character as loss by sacrificing them "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord," that they "may win Christ and be found in Him." Thus, the "loss of all things" to the Christian is merely another form of referring to his consecration vows which involve the taking up of the cross, and the giving of his earthly goods, time, strength, and opportunity, in the direction of the Lord's service, and in the interest of the heavenly things, including the development of the character likeness of God's dear Son.

Dilating upon the Apostle's words, "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things", another has said:

"Paul, when he became a Christian, gave up his brilliant prospects in regard to this life, and everything indeed on which his heart had been placed. He abandoned the hope of honor and distinction; he sacrificed every prospect of gain or ease; and he gave up his dearest friends and separated himself from those whom he tenderly loved. He might have risen to the highest posts of honor in his native land, and the path which an ambitious young man desires was fully open before him. But all this had been cheerfully sacrificed in order that he might obtain an interest in the Savior, and partake of the blessings of His religion. He has not, indeed, informed us of the exact extent of his loss in becoming a Christian. It is by no means improbable that he' had been excommunicated by the Jews; and that he had been disowned by his own family."

The Apostle's words remove all grounds for boastfulness or self-laudation by declaring that it was not on account of his own righteousness that he was hoping for a share in the future glories, but because he had taken steps by which the righteousness, that is the merit of Christ, had been imputed to him, giving him a full standing in justification before God.

### **The Power of His Resurrection**

One of the most important essentials in connection with winning Christ is that of knowing Him, which implies becoming fully acquainted with His character, His work, and the spirit which actuates both the heavenly Father and the Lord; Jesus. "It is one of the highest objects of desire in the mind of the Christian to know Christ," and even at the present time, to experience "the power of His resurrection." The Apostle speaks of the resurrection process already begun in the saints, "If ye then be risen with Christ," The truth concerning our Lord's resurrection, and our hope of sharing it with Him, carries with it all through the Christian's earthly pilgrimage, an influence that is most inspiring. What trials may we not bear with this assurance? What is to be dreaded in death, if this is so? What glories rise to the view when we think of the resurrection! And what trifles are all the things which men seek here, when compared with the glory that shall be ours when we shall be raised from the dead!

### **Lessons of Experience**

We all learn in time, as did the Apostles, that the securing of the approval of the Lord for a place in His glorified Body is a matter of time and experience. The lessons imparted to us by the Truth and the lessons of experience must all be appropriated in such a way as to work out the desired results. Thus when the Apostle wrote to the Philippians he said that he did not count himself as having "already attained," which means that he had not yet arrived at the goal and won the prize; neither did he consider himself as "already perfect," that is, he had not yet attained what to him was the full measure of character development. "Yet who can urge better claims to having attained perfection than Paul could have done?" asks another. "Who has surpassed him in love, and zeal, and self-denial, and true devotedness to the service of the Redeemer? Who has more elevated views of God, and of the plan of salvation? Who prays more, or lives nearer to God than he did? That must be extraordinary, piety which surpasses that of the Apostle Paul, and he who lays claim to a degree of holiness which even Paul did not pretend to, gives little evidence that he has any true knowledge of himself, or has ever been imbued with the true humility which the Gospel produces." Then in hope of ultimately succeeding, the Apostle writes, "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

### **The Mark of Character-Crystallization**

St. Paul expresses his full appreciation of his opportunity to gain a prize, something worthy of laying hold upon, of grasping fully, of getting possession of, He spoke of this thing as a prize, which he was pressing along to win.

In a general way it seems manifest that this "mark for the prize of the high calling" is that of crystallization of character in the likeness of our Lord. After having attained a heart-likeness to Christ, we must hold it fast, and see that in all the testings which the Lord permits to come upon us, we are counted by Him as overcomers, not in our own strength, but in that of our Redeemer. By fighting the good fight until the end of our course, we crystallize our characters in love for the principles of righteousness, for God, for the brethren, and even for our enemies. If thus faithful, we shall win the prize of glory, honor, and immortality.

There is no reason to think that our consecration is the mark; for our testing, our proving comes after our consecration, and not before it. No one would be at the mark merely because he is consecrated, but because he had endured the testing, thus proving that his consecration was from the heart and that he was sincere in the devotion of his every power to the service of God. We cannot suppose that the mark is reached the next moment after consecration. Some degree of character-development must be possessed; there must be some mark of character, in order that God may count that person worthy of everlasting life.



## **God Has a Standard or Mark of Character**

God's standard of character is perfection, which must be manifested by loyalty and obedience under whatever tests He permits to come to individuals upon any plane of life. No one will get the prize of everlasting life unless he successfully passes those tests. We realize that the Church has been under trial throughout the Gospel Age, as to her worthiness to obtain "glory, honor, and immortality" -- joint-heirship with her Lord. -- Rom. 8:17.

From the Scriptures we learn that throughout the Messianic Age the world will be tried by The Christ, and that even after passing that test they will not receive the reward of everlasting life until God shall have proved them at the end of Christ's reign by loosing Satan for a "little season." (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 20:7-10.) The fact that the world is thus to be tried by both The Christ and God confirms the thought that God has a standard, or mark, of character to be attained by all those who are loyal and obedient to him -- on any plane of existence.

While this mark of character to be attained by the world during Messiah's reign is not the one to which St. Paul refers in our text, nevertheless there is such a character-mark to be reached by mankind. Those who then attain the mark will have everlasting life on the human plane. But those who attain the mark to which the Apostle refers will be given eternal life on the Divine plane.

The Apostle was a noble example of one who was pressing forward toward the mark for the prize. He had not yet attained to the prize itself, and could not do so until his change should come. He was constantly pressing along, trusting that God would give him all the things that are in reservation for "them that love Him."

## **Submission the First Requisite -- Patient Endurance the Second**

A good illustration of the process of character-development and crystallization is afforded by the work of a potter. First, he must select the right kind of clay, for some clays would produce very coarse ware, others would crack or warp in the drying, and still others would not stand the intense heat. Having selected the proper clay the potter subjects it to very many processes of grinding, mixing, and wetting until it comes from the mill a soft, plastic mass of the consistency of tough dough, ready for the potter's use. Then comes the moulding into the article desired. The dish is formed, or shaped, with care, and dried. Next it is placed in the kiln and fired with an intense heat for two or three days and nights. Then it requires a long time to cool before it can be removed from the kiln. But even then it is only a porous, leaky vessel, altogether unfit for use until it has been dipped into a liquid glaze, or slip, which it readily absorbs.

Again it is subjected to the heat of the glaze kiln, which not only melts the glaze, but converts it into a perfectly transparent glaze all over the surface, making the article beautifully smooth and comely. But if the vessel is of very choice porcelain, to be made still more attractive to the eye by decorations, the ornamentation and gilding must be done at this stage, and the vessel must again be placed in the kiln for a third firing. Some vessels which have stood all the other tests, fail at this point and are cast into the waste heap. But if the vessel passes successfully the last test, it is ready for the service for which it was designed.

So in our Lord's case. Not only was He perfect as a man, but His own will was in complete subjection to the Father's will. When trials came, there was no swerving, no twisting, no bending. He was of the proper material. His heart (applying this word to the mind) was of the proper character. So must it be with us. Those who will be accepted and found worthy of the great reward will be of His character-likeness in this respect; they will lie loyal to God's will. Not only will they endeavor both to ascertain and to do the Father's will, but they will be in heart submission to that will in every degree. The "cup" they will be required to drink is the same that our Lord drank -- and "all of it!"

## **Must Stand Faithful**

To follow in His steps, we must reach this Mark of character-development; and having done all, we must stand there. It is well to repeat the thought that it will not do for us to think that one reaches the mark of proper character-development just at the moment of death. Character should be attained as soon as possible. But having reached this character-development called the "mark," it is for us to stand faithful, and not be thrust away from it by the opposition of the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

All such opposition must be endured before we can win the prize. Some of the noblest characters, who have been in an acceptable condition, and used of the Lord, did not get to the mark until they had passed through certain severe experiences.

The Apostle urges that as many "as be perfect, be thus minded," that is, that all who thus are perfect minded in the sense of, having pure and holy motives, and who are aiming at perfection-these he exhorts to have the same spirit that he himself had, and to be thus minded; to be united in the effort to attain the prize, and to become entirely perfect. He goes on to say that if there were those in their midst who were otherwise minded, who lacked in appreciation of and aspiration for such high ideals, it was his hope that God would correct any erroneous opinions and disclose to them the importance of making the effort toward the prize according to the course that he had outlined, and which he himself was following.

To what we have attained, said the Apostle, "let us walk by the same rule." The meaning would seem to be that though there might be different degrees of character attainment among Christians, and different views on many subjects, yet the essential points all could agree on. There were attainments which they had all made; and concerning these they should walk in harmony and love.

### **Think on These Things**

Finally we come to the Apostle's grand summing up (Phil. 4:8) of the way in which the Christian is to co-operate with the Lord in bringing about the desired end; the way in which the Christian is to set his affections-fix them, fasten them, hold them upon profitable things; that he may grow in grace as well as in knowledge and love of God. The Apostle points out that the will having been consecrated to the Lord, faith having been exercised in rejoicing and thanksgiving in all of the Lord's providences, the peace of trust having come in, the further steps in the development of character will be through guarding our thoughts: and- this means also the guarding of our words and acts, because it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and that the whole course of life is directed. What, then, should be the trend of the Christian's thoughts after he has reached the grand development already outlined by the Apostle? It should be toward things that are true, having no sympathy with anything that is, false or even exaggerated. Whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself. Whoever cleanses his thoughts, and avoids exaggeration, etc., is in that degree purifying his mind and his entire character, and coming the more into touch and sympathy with the Lord Himself, who is "the Truth."

Nor is it sufficient that we are sure of the truth of matters. We are to test them further, and discern to what extent they are honorable, noble; for although the Lord has accepted us, ignoble and imperfect, and has covered the ignoble features of our characters, and proposes to cover them to the end with his own merit, nevertheless, we cannot be in sympathy with the ignoble features of our fallen condition, but on the contrary must desire true nobility, and the highest standards, of honor in our hearts, in our thoughts, in all, of our dealings with our God and with our fellows. The test of honor is therefore to be applied after the test of the truth. The thing might be true, but Is it honorable to think about it or tell about it? is another question.

### **More and More Transformed**

Another test we are to apply is, Are the things just? We are not to allow our minds to run along lines that would be unjust, and we are to learn to apply this test of justice to every thought and word and act of ours,, while learning at the same time to view the conduct of others from a different standpoint-so far as reason will permit, from the standpoint of mercy, forbearance, pity; helpfulness. But we cannot be too careful how we criticize every thought we entertain, every plan we mature, that the lines of justice shall in no sense of the word be infringed by us with our heart's approval.

Purity is another quality to be esteemed in us. We are to love and cultivate that which, is pure to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we will desire to drop it from memory, and this will only be accomplished by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness, and to esteem it. From our standpoint the impure, the unjust, the untrue, the dishonorable things, cannot appear lovely, desirable, worthy of emulation. When we would think on the purest of things we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible, and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately the loveliness manifested in one or another of the followers of Jesus, who walk closely another His footsteps. The mind that frequently calls up the lovely perfections of the Lord and the Truth, and is well filled by these, is guarded greatly against intrusions of unlovely and unholy things, contrary to the spirit of the Lord. The Apostle concludes the list, by referring to all things of good repute: things of any virtue or value, things in any degree praiseworthy -- the noble words or noble, deeds or noble sentiments of, any body, we may safely meditate upon, and as a consequence find ourselves growing toward these ideals upon which our minds, our new natures, thus feed. We will become more and more transformed by the renewing of our minds, and approach nearer and nearer to the glorious likeness of our Lord and Master, being changed from glory to glory, inch by inch, step by step, little by little, during the present life; and our thought's being in this attitude and our union with the Lord maintained, we shall have part in the First Resurrection, which will perfect us forever in the Lord's image and likeness.

## **TRAVELS IN THE HOLY LAND**

### **SERIES VI -- The Garden, Tomb, and Calvary**

OUTSIDE the city wall, not far from the Damascus gate, is a tomb known as the New Tomb. In front of this tomb a section of an old well laid out garden has been uncovered. Although there is no way of knowing whether or not this is the place "where the Lord lay", still, this tomb cut into a wall of solid rock, with its door opening directly on a garden, is somehow most impressive and I found it so like the mental picture I have carried from childhood that I with some degree of faith looked 'round about me as I' stood in its doorway and thought, Perhaps this is the place "where the Lord lay."

A short distance from this tomb is a hill whose sheer straight side and rounded brow closely resembles a human skull. The features are quite clearly defined when viewed from the garden below. The eye sockets are formed by old tombs cut into the rock. It is impossible to know whether or not these tombs were there in Christ's time, but the British Committee who has charge of the place undogmatically presents the evidence, leaving it to the visitor's own decision. If this is Golgotha, then upon this hill our Lord was crucified. It is further alleged that from its top Stephen was shoved and then stoned, and in support of the claim that it was a place of stoning and dispute, they point to the fact that even to this day the Jews throw stones that way as they pass.

The better, more modern part of Jerusalem is outside the walls. Here is a German colony of well built homes, and one known as the American Colony composed of ninety members, who carry on a certain degree of philanthropic work and hold services every day of the week. This colony was founded in 1881 by people, mostly American citizens, who came to Jerusalem to be present at the Second Coming of Christ. .

### **The Progress of Zionism**

Just before leaving Jerusalem for other parts of the Holy Land, I took a hurried trip, in company with a gentleman and his wife from Connecticut, to see some of the interesting results of the Zionist movement. A friend of theirs, who was formerly of America; but now a resident of Jerusalem, and who is a great admirer of and" believer in Zionism, escorted us. He went to Palestine two years ago and afterwards returned to America for nine months and disposed of a well established business. He then returned to the land he so longed for. In his conversation with us he remarked, "Palestine is henceforth my home, and my country." We drove a few miles out to two new Jewish settlements. One had been built but six months and the other a year and a half. The latter one had its neat, smooth lawns well planted with shrubbery. The houses, built of well cut stone, are of the bungalow type and most attractive. The streets were lined with rows of small saplings, all planted by children on a day similar to our Arbor Day. The view from here is so picturesque -- a valley midst a sweep of rolling hills leading to Jerusalem, that they have given it a Hebrew name meaning "Hill of Beautiful View." We passed a new hotel, not yet finished, of 200 rooms; a home for the aged; and an orphanage. Men were at work on new roads. I was

told that young men from Russia of education, many of them college graduates, were working on these roads, not minding the commonest kind of labor, so intense is the zeal of some of these people to prepare a home for their persecuted brethren.

The Zionist movement is often criticized as merely political, that it is a waste of funds, and that high salaries are paid some whose motives are selfish ones. This may, at least in part, be true; but of this I became certain, that there is much individual, unselfish benevolence being exercised along the lines of Zionism. There are tales of loving sacrifice, and I came to know personally some who are giving money and sometimes their time in an effort to help provide a haven for the less fortunate of their race. The present movement may fail, but the "fig tree" is putting forth its leaves, and the Lord will give Palestine to the Jews in His own good time and way.

We passed new institutions, hospitals, etc.; but my time being limited I chose to visit the new Jewish University. Here were young men students in the temporarily fitted laboratories and library already pursuing their studies, in spite of masons and carpenters at work all around them. A large campus is laid out that will admit of unlimited growth. From the university a few rods of brick pavement is laid, as an evidence that it will some time be continued down through the wide valley below to the Dead Sea. From this distance and height this sea looks like a blue jewel in its grey setting. Mt. Scopus, on which the university stands, is, one of the most \*scenic points around Jerusalem; even outranking the Mount of Olives. The walled city with its white dome and spires looks its best from this hill. To the side of the university is a natural amphitheatre, probably the finest in the world. Because of the favorable climate it can be used nine months of the year. It is in such a position that the sun can never shine directly into the faces of spectators, and the view across the Jordan valley to the mountains, so distant, is most beautiful.

### **Obstacles to Overcome**

Much of Palestine is desolate. The olive groves and trees have nearly all been destroyed. Except in the valleys the soil is more or less stony. Zionists claim the land can be made to support 3,000,000 Jews in agriculture, but the casual observer feels a doubt. Water is a perplexing problem. The only hope seems to lie in a way being found to utilize the Jordan. The rainfall seems insufficient, for although the valleys are green and well watered, the hills are dry and parched. Those studying the situation tell us the rainfall is the same as that of England, but the hills can not retain it and they must be terraced to overcome this. A young man of Nazareth, of Arab parentage, with a degree from Cornell University: along scientific lines of dealing with the soil, informed me that the soil of Palestine, except in the fertile valleys, is lacking in nitrogen and potash. The former can be supplied by planting legumes, but the latter must be imported at a great expense. The taxes under British rule are high -- in addition to the land and animal tax there is a 12 per cent tax on all gross produce: I inquired if the taxes were not high under Turkish rule and he replied that they were high but never enforced. The country, he declared, is not worth what the Jew must pay for it, and after he once has it, agriculture cannot be made to pay.

There are three types of Jewish agricultural colonies-individualistic, where each one works for himself and sells his own produce; co-operative, where they buy and sell as a corporation; and communistic, where each one receives his living and anything left over is placed in a common fund. In a colony like this the children are cared for, and both men and women work, enjoying their families during their recreation hours.

Balfouria, near Haifa, is a colony for orphans. There are dormitories, with nurses, where fifty four orphans from 3 years to 18 years of age are taken care of. Those old enough do all the work and are being carefully instructed in scientific agriculture.

Near Jaffa is a flourishing new town often called New Jaffa, but its Hebrew name is Tel-Aviv. This is laid out like a fine modern city and at one time 100 homes a month were being built. It is not an agricultural colony and therefore of less interest.

### **Side Trips from Jerusalem**

The road on which we traveled from Jerusalem to Jericho is a fine, modern one, built by the late Kaiser and repaired recently by the British. It winds back and forth, down the sides of the hills in a series of hairpin curves, not at all conducive to a feeling of safety,

especially since the Arab chauffeurs are reckless drivers and take these sharp turns with no slacking of speed. I thought regretfully at times of "a certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho," and envied him his slower journey, even if it was dangerous from another viewpoint.

Three miles out from Jerusalem we passed through the little village of Bethany. Its small stone building, rudely plastered over with mortar, and its unclean, begging people, are not at all appealing. We found it hard to connect Mary and Martha with such a place. We decided that the old Bethany must have been quite different from the one that now occupies its site, and so, closing our eyes to its ugly reality, we found satisfaction and comfort in remembering how often our Lord had gazed from this very place across the lovely Jordan valley below to the gray and purple misted, hills in the distance.

The scenery of Palestine, beautiful even in its desolate places, has not been touched by man's hand. The passing centuries may have smoothed the softly rounded hills a little, but on their gentle slopes may still be seen the shepherds with their flocks, the sheep as beautiful and the shepherds as picturesque as when our Lord walked here with weary feet. The sheep of Palestine have long rippling coats, with a shining luster, quite unlike those to which we are accustomed. Sometimes a shepherd seen walking behind his flock with a young lamb in his arms. Often a flock is composed of black goats, sometimes of both sheep and goats. Thus in a journey through the land of Palestine the words and teachings of the Master are constantly in one's thoughts, for here, all along the way, are sights and scenes so illustrative of His words and teachings.

Throughout all Palestine, on the hillsides, by the roadside, in the fields, and even sometimes covering the sod-thatched roof of a tumble-down building, grows a little flower with a single blossom on each plant, not much higher than our dandelion and somewhat the color of the poinsetta -- a rich shade neither red nor scarlet. In shape it resembles a wild rose, or better still, a poppy. When we were there it spread a brilliant carpet over much of the land, for the month of February is spring in Palestine. I never tired of them and at every opportunity I was out of the car picking these blossoms, for surely, "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." From the first moment I saw them, I never felt the slightest doubt that these were the Master's "lilies of the field."

### **To Ancient Jericho**

All the way to Jericho the scenery is of such beauty and grandeur that my limited human senses seemed not able to hold it all, and any attempt to picture it in feeble words must necessarily be weak. It is mountainous, yet not rugged, for the softly rounded hills of Judea roll like great billows in every direction, becoming more bare and desolate as we traveled on.

The Jordan Valley, with its Jericho and its Dead Sea, is 4000 feet below the top of the Mount of Olives and so, all the way as we continually descend, it lies like a lovely map at our feet, bordered in the distance with the purple mountains of Moab. Part way on our journey we reached the Good Samaritan Inn, where in the days of carriages, when the trip took two days instead of six hours, travelers stopped to rest. The ruined Inn with its desolate surroundings fits well the Bible parable.

The site of ancient Jericho is marked by a large mound over 1200 feet in length, on the edge of the plain and six miles from the River Jordan. Traces of a mud-brick wall are uncovered here, perhaps the one which fell before the blast of the trumpets of Joshua. This mound, with its surroundings, nothing now but desolation, was once famous for its dates and balaams, and was known as the City of Palms. At the base of the mound is a spring with a great flow of water, pure and clear. It was probably the water supply of the city and much used for irrigation. The tradition that it is Elisha's fountain is quite well established.

A few miles beyond the Good Samaritan Inn; before reaching Jericho, we had passed the Brook Cherith, and nearby, the traditional spot where Elijah was fed by the ravens. At certain times of the year ravens still fly about this place, giving an added touch of interest. In Palestine and Syria there still wanders a tribe of Bedouins, called the Ravens. Although they are reputed to be a "thieving and no account people", many are inclined to believe that these were the "ravens" who fed Elijah, rather than the literal birds. It seemed an interesting thought to me, but of no great moment.

# **GOD'S SUPERVISION OF HIS PEOPLE AND HIS MESSAGE**

*"Come over into Macedonia, and help us." -- Acts 16:6-15.*

HOW important is a resigned will, a consecrated heart, on the part of all who would successfully do the Lord's work and minister in holy things to the pleasured of the Lord! The self-will, the spirit unresigned, does its own planning and scheming, pushing ahead in one direction or another, often contrary to the leading of the Spirit, and in opposition to the Lord's providence. Here again the Apostolic example is most inspiring. We note that the Apostles were men fully resigned to the Lord's Spirit; they were constantly looking to the Lord and for the guidance of His Spirit in respect to their service for Him and the message they proclaimed. For this reason the Lord gave them unmistakable evidence of His care and leading. Examples of this positive providence and guidance of the Apostles constantly come to our attention in the sacred records, and this strengthens our confidence in them.

## **God Directing the Message**

On the second pilgrim tour that the Apostle Paul took, accompanied by Silas, having accomplished their labors at Phrygia, the question arose respecting their future labors--other fields. The Apostle's intention was to "go into [lesser] Asia" -- the region in which subsequently the seven Churches of Asia were located. But for some reason this was not the Lord's plan at this time; and so we read that they were prevented or forbidden (whichever way the word might be translated) to preach the Word there. We are neither informed why nor how. The Lord possibly had some other agent or better means or more favorable time for sending the word of His grace into that quarter, as well as some other work for Paul and his company. As soon as the missionaries discerned the Lord's leading in this respect they turned their attention northward, to go into the province of Bythnia; but again the Lord's spirit, power, influence, hindered their proposed plans. So they passed onward to the coast--to Troas -- doubtless wondering at the Lord's providences, and speculating as to whether or not this' meant that their work for the present was accomplished, and that they should return homeward. It was at this juncture that the Lord instructed them respecting their journey, by means of a vision or dream, in which Paul saw a man dressed, in the garb of Macedonia, standing before him, and beseeching him, saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us !"

In these verses we have three positive, distinct statements, showing the Lord's supervision of His cause and His servants. And when we remember that our God changes not, that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, it gives us assurance that He is still careful and interested as ever in His work, and in the affairs of all His servants. It gives us assurance that our ministry for Him at the present time is not going haphazard, as it extends hither and thither from one to another, by letter, by tract, by book; by word, to various parts. What a comfort there is for the Lord's people in this! How completely overwhelmed we would be if we were to lose sight of this fact, and feel the weight and burden of the responsibility of the work pressing us down! In proportion as we are able to exercise faith, trust in the Lord in regard to the work, in that same proportion are we enabled to joy in the Lord and to possess the peace of God which passeth all understanding--to have it ruling in our hearts, controlling our lives and keeping us balanced, not only regarding the things of this present time, but also concerning the glorious outcome -- things to come:

## **Lord Increase Our Faith**

This faith is largely a matter of education, too; for instance, as we observe the Lord's providential care, as taught us in this lesson and other lessons from His Word, we are more and more enabled to apply the same care and the same promises to ourselves. Nothing will calm our fears more than this, and enable us to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might; and in our confidence that He will ultimately bring off His work victorious. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." "Lord, increase our faith." The Apostle's confidence in the Lord's supervision of his work enabled him to read the lessons of his time, and to act accordingly with full faith respecting -the results. The Lord could have directed him otherwise and could direct us also otherwise than as He does--could speak to us audibly, if He chose. We are, therefore, to presume that it is for some wise purpose as concerns the development of our faith that He requires His followers to walk by faith, not by sight and sound.

As soon as the Lord's guidance was recognized no time was lost, and matters in general seemed to co-operate for the journey of the missionaries into Macedonia. They went direct to Philippi, the principal city in that vicinity. Apparently they found no Jewish synagogue there, but outside the place they found a spot on the river bank where services were customarily held: This place is

supposed to have been a temporary shed, such as, it would appear, was not unusual where the numbers were insufficient to erect a synagogue. It is possible, too, that this city, being directly under the Roman government, prohibited synagogues within its walls:

### **They Sought Out the Jewels -- Saints**

We note the course of the Apostles here, in the presentation of the Gospel. They did not go to the chief magistrates of the city, and say, Please direct us to your most degraded population, the wickedest people you have in this city, for we wish to preach the Gospel to them and reform them. On the contrary, they evidently made inquiries respecting people who already knew God, and revered and worshiped Him; and however small their number and unimposing their meeting place, thither the Apostle and his companions went. He knew, as many at the present time seem not to know, that God's work now is not that of reforming the world, is not a "slum work," but a seeking and gathering, of the "jewels"; a mission for those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness; a hunt for those whose hearts are tender and broken and therefore ready for the balm of Gilead, the Gospel message of redemption and deliverance from sin and its penalty. Whatever others may do, let us follow the Scriptural precedents; let us be laborers together with God in His work; the results will justify this course, when this Age shall have fully ended; and the things now hidden to so many shall be revealed, and they shall learn that God's ways were not their ways, nor His plans their plans, but that His were higher, broader, grander, as the heavens are higher than the earth--that His time' for the reformation of the world is future, and that the present is His time for selecting the Kingdom class which shall bring about this reformation.

### **One Rich in Faith Toward God**

The text of the Apostle's discourse is not given. We know, nevertheless; quite distinctly what his message was. He had only the one message, namely that God's promises made to Abraham were beginning to be fulfilled; that Messiah had come and had paid the ransom price for the world, as its sin-offering, and that now forgiveness, reconciliation to God, and a privilege of joint-heirship in the Kingdom, was being offered, "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile"; and that whosoever accepted the call in honesty of heart, and was faithful to it, would have not only the joy and peace of the Lord's Spirit and blessing in the present time, but also a share in the glory to follow by and by.

In the audience was a woman from Thyatira, of the very district (Asia Minor) into which the Apostle was not permitted to enter and preach. She was in Philippi, probably temporarily engaged in merchandising -- a seller of purple -- perhaps of purple dyes, or possibly of purple-dyed cloth. Dyeing and dyes had not reached present development, and the processes were generally secret, and profitable to those who understood them. It is presumed, therefore, that Lydia was well to do in this world's goods, as well as rich toward God in faith. Like the Apostle, she had sought out the place of prayer, and now the Lord had rewarded her and answered her prayers by sending her the truth for which she had been hungering and thirsting. She and some of her household believed, and were promptly baptized in confession of their faith--possibly on this very Sabbath day in which she first heard.

### **How the Lord Mellows the Heart**

Where the heart is in a condition of readiness, obedience does not need to be delayed, nor does it require long to decide to be on the Lord's side, and to be obedient to the voice of the good message which He sends us. This attitude of Lydia's heart is noted in the lesson, in the words, "whose heart the Lord had opened." We are not to suppose a miracle wrought in her case, to open her heart to the truth; we are rather to suppose that it was in her case as it is in the case of all the Lord's people; that none are ready for the Truth unless the Lord has prepared their hearts. And O, how much this preparation of heart means! -- often trials, disappointments, difficulties, etc. -- the processes by which the Lord breaks up and mellows -- and makes the soil of our hearts fit for the receiving of His truth and grace. No doubt Lydia, after receiving of His truth, looked back at past experiences, severe ordeals, etc., and could praise God for the leadings of His providence by which her heart had been "broken" and humbled and made ready for the seed of truth--ready to appreciate, not only the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him, but ready also to appreciate His promised watch-care in their affairs in the present time, guaranteed to work out blessings to those who abide in His love.

## **Come Into My House and Abide**

Having received the Truth, and some of its joy, Lydia not only confessed the Lord, but sought means to serve Him. She could not join the Apostle's company as an evangelist of the Good Tidings, but she could entertain and serve Paul and his associates, and did so. No doubt she received more than compensation for the expense and trouble, in spiritual riches and refreshments but nothing in the narrative implies that even this laudable selfishness actuated her. Apparently her sole desire was to serve the Lord, and she saw the opportunity for this in rendering service to His representatives. She esteemed it a privilege, and so expressed herself, saying, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide."

When we remember the Master's own words, "He that receiveth you, receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth him that sent Me," we can see that Lydia took no extreme view of her privilege and opportunity in connection with this service. Her whole question was whether the Apostle and his companions would honor her dwelling with their presence. The same principle is true and applicable today, and conduct similar to that of Lydia is always to be considered a favorable sign indicating deep love for the Lord and for the Good Tidings. The messengers of the Good Tidings must necessarily, always be associated in our minds with the message which they bear, and the great King Whom they represent.

## **THE GOSPEL LIGHT SHINES IN PRISON**

*"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." -- Acts 16:16-40.*

THOUGH there was every manifestation of Divine supervision of the Gospel and its ministry in the early Church, this does not mean that everything went along peace fully and quietly from the natural stand. s point; for as we have noted, trials and persecutions were often experienced, and played .their part, in the development of the 'Church in the faith and in other great qualities of the Christian character, and were otherwise overruled for good.

Answering the call of Macedonia, and preaching the Divine message in those parts, St. Paul and Silas met with severe reverses. A young woman, possessed (obsessed) by an evil spirit (one of the fallen angels) was used for fortune-telling, etc., the spirit working through her, divining or giving, intelligence of things that were lost, a telling fortunes, etc. The Apostle' exorcised the evil spirit; with the result that the woman's super-human power was gone. The owners of the woman, who had been making gain of her fortune-telling, were at once incensed and angered. They could not legally attack the Apostle, because he had done the woman no harm, but they could have revenge, and, hence raised a riot, claiming that these men with the new religion were interfering with the rights of the people of Philippi, which was a Roman province in Greece. Paul and Silas were carried before the rulers at, the market place for the imposition of sentence.

To satisfy the mob, to restore the peace quickly; the missionaries were publicly beaten, presumably with rods, and then were committed to the prison. Alas, we say, what a reward for missionary effort! What a recompense for sacrificing their lives for the Lord and the, truth-that 'these men should be evil spoken of, evil thought of, and evilly treated.

## **Songs of Praise While Suffering**

Paul and Silas, bruised and doubtless bleeding from the cruel beating they had received at the command of the rulers of Philippi, were enabled to praise God in the prison, notwithstanding the fact that it must have been, like other prisons of that time, a most unhealthy and disagreeable dungeon. That night they sang praises to God. The other prisoners listening must have been surprised, it probably being the first time hymns to God had ever risen from that prison. If any other, songs at all had ever echoed from its walls they ere probably ribald, and inspired by alcoholic spirits. It is indeed remarkable that practically none but the Christian religion possesses a hymnology. Buddhists have none; the Mohammedans have none; the Confucians have none; and these three represent more than one-half of the world's population. Indeed, there seems to be nothing happifying or consoling in any religion except that of the Bible: The Bible alone teaches the love of God, His care over His consecrated saints, and His provision for their change to glory, honor, and immortality-yea, for the awakening of all the families of the earth and the bringing of all to a knowledge of the grace of



## **God and opportunities for life eternal.**

We can readily see that nothing less than a strong, living faith in God enabled those two missionaries to feel that their adversities endured for the sake of the Gospel meant to them Divine approval, if rightly received. It was because they realized that their trying experiences were but "light afflictions" which, under Divine providence, would work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory--only this enabled these distressed men to triumph in their hour of distress and to praise God for the privilege of suffering as members of the Body of Christ, filling up -- a share of the sufferings of Christ that by and by they might also share His glory as members of His Body -- members of the great antitypical Moses, the Mediator of the New Covenant. -- Acts 3:23.

These things are written for our instruction, that, beholding the faithfulness of others, we might be encouraged. Our covenant is the same as theirs and theirs the same as the Lord's, for the sufferings of Christ are one, however varied in character, and, the glories to follow will be one, although the sharers will differ as stars differ from star in glory. The greater the sufferings faithfully endured, uncomplainingly, rejoicingly, the greater will be the reward in the Kingdom of our Father and of our Lord.

## **A Well-Timed Earthquake**

Whilst the missionaries were singing, an earthquake shock was experienced which jarred the walls and loosed the staples of the chains whereby they were bound, releasing also the bars wherewith their prison-doors were held in place. The jailer finding the doors down and supposing that the prisoners had escaped, and knowing that he would be held responsible, drew his sword and was about to suicide, when St. Paul called to him and said: "Do thyself no harm. We are all here." By this time the jailer was fully convinced that the missionaries committed to his care were remarkable men--not ordinary criminals. Possibly, indeed, he had some knowledge of demonism and obsession and had heard, by word of mouth, that one of these men had spoiled a supposedly Divine "oracle," by exercising some superior power.

At all events the jailer was now ready to care for these prisoners and to hear the message of God's love. Presumably he first secured the prison, the while thinking over all these matters, and then brought the missionaries into his own living quarters in the prison. He attended to their comfort and meantime heard from them something respecting their mission--respecting Jesus the Messiah, and His death as the world's Redeemer. He was convicted of sin. He realized in a general way at least that, all mankind are sinners, aliens, separated from God by wicked works. He longed for a realization of a forgiveness of his own sins and a reconciliation with his Creator. And these missionaries, above all others, could help him. Hence his inquiry,

## **"What Must I do to be Saved?"**

What must I do to come into relationship with God, that I, like you, might be able to realize His loving care in all of my affairs; that, like you, I might be able to glory in tribulation, and to realize that all things shall work together for my good under Divine providence?

The answer came promptly: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Taking this as the text the missionaries explained to the jailer and his household some of the philosophy of the Divine Plan of Atonement, the death of Jesus, the just for the unjust, the blessing that in due time is to reach Adam and his race through the resurrection processes and the privilege now of hearing and accepting the Divine call to joint-heirship with Jesus, as His "members" in the sufferings of this present time and the glory that shall follow.

The Truth seed sank into good soil. Those present believed and gratefully accepted the privilege of discipleship -- to suffer for Christ's sake. Forthwith they were baptized, thus symbolizing their death to the world and to sin and to self, and their desire to walk in

newness of life as "members" of the Christ. Ah, how the missionaries must have realized that they were as much providentially directed to the jail (by the injustice of the magistrates) as they had been previously, guided to Lydia and the riverside prayer meeting! Their faith was strengthened. They were willing to endure hardness with patience and joy for the sake of enjoying this great privilege of carrying the good tidings to others.

We may be assured that although times have changed in some respects, our Lord was quite right when He declared, "Whosoever will live godly in this present time shall suffer persecution." It may be in his own home and family or in the Church or from the world; he will not escape if he is faithful. If, therefore, any of us is escaping persecutions he should feel fearful of his condition and make careful examination as to whether or not he is faithful to all the privileges and opportunities he can find. This does not mean that we should seek persecutions in the sense of doing foolish things or doing proper things in a foolish manner. But it does mean that we should not shrink the responsibility of proper conduct, because of fear of consequences. Fear is one of the most subtle foes of the "little flock." It should be offset by trust, faith in God.

### **"Let Them Come and Fetch Us".**

The magistrates evidently realized that they had no just cause against the missionaries. The beating and imprisoning of them was merely to satisfy the public clamor, just as when Pilate similarly commanded Jesus to be beaten, not as a satisfaction for justice, but to appease the anger of the multitude. But St. Paul had not been a lawyer for nothing. The night before he had probably a tempted to tell the rulers that he and Silas were Roman citizens and had the right to demand a fair trial before having any kind of punishment but probably the clamor of the people was so great that their protests were unheard. Now, however the missionaries sent word to the magistrates that they were Roman citizens and had been unjustly dealt with and would have to be treated in such manner, as would show that they had done no wrong.

Their claims were recognized and, they were honorably led forth as men who had one thing amiss, but who had concluded that in the interest of peace they would quit the city, although the rights as Roman citizens would have permitted them to remain. Here in St. Paul's condition we find illustrated the proper course "the spirit of a sower mind." He insisted on such of his rights as reasonable and necessary for the cause, -- and he freely relinquished other rights in the interests of peace in harmony with the Scriptures, "Seek peace and pursue it"; and again, in harmony with his own exhortation, "So far as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

Before separating they returned to the home of Lydia and "met the brethren" and comforted them. What they said for the comfort of the brethren is not difficult to imagine. They surely recounted to them the joy they had experienced in suffering for Christ's sake, and how the Lord overruled the trials and difficulties, sufferings and imprisonment for good, in that thereby, the jailer and his fame, were added to the number of brethren -- "the Lord jewels."

Whoever has read the New Testament properly: has surely noticed the spirit of brotherhood there in recorded as prevalent amongst those who accepted the Lord as members of the household of faith. An whoever intelligently comes in contact with those who are now rejoicing in the Truth must surely note something of the same spirit of brotherhood, in a remarkable degree.

### **"GROW IN GRACE"**

"Unto him that hath,  
Thou givest ever more abundantly.  
Lord, I live because Thou livest,

Therefore give more life to me;  
Therefore speed me in the race;

Therefore let me grow in grace.

"Deepen all Thy work, oh Master,  
Strengthen every downward root,  
Only do Thou ripen faster,

More and more, Thy pleasant fruit  
Purge me, prune me, self abase,  
Only let me grow, in grace.

"Let me grow by sun and shower,  
Every moment water me;  
Make me really hour by hour

More and more conformed to Thee,  
That Thy loving eye may trace,  
Day by day, my growth in grace."

## **THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM**

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### **REMARKABLE TESTIMONY SUSTAINING THE VALIDITY, TRUTHFULNESS, AND DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES**

#### **"A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, THEY COME UP OUT OF EGYPT"**

*While many of the learned and great in the wisdom of this world are using every means possible to undermine and overthrow faith in' the Scriptures as an inspired Revelation of Divine truth, and while many of the hosts of Christendom are casting away their confidence and rejecting the only source of light upon the pathway of life, the Lord on the other hand, employs other agencies and testimonies by which to strengthen and confirm the faith of His trusting children. There has come to our attention a very strong and inspiring testimony by a well known and able writer, Mr. Frederick F. Van de Water, who has assembled together some most remarkable facts and evidences sustaining the validity, truthfulness and inspiration of the Scriptures, coming from ancient documents recently discovered in the land of Egypt. This writer's article appearing in a recent issue of the **Saturday Evening Post**, bears the title above, "A Cloud of Witnesses, They come Up Out of Egypt." We are publishing it in these columns in the confidence that it will be read with profit and encouragement.*

BY FREDERICK F. VAN DE WATER

EARLY nineteen centuries ago eight men wrote the most important book in the world. Two of them gave first-hand accounts of the life of their Leader. Their names were Matthew and John. Two others set down similar biographies from the testimony of

eye-witnesses. One of these was also a John, surnamed Marcus, or Mark. The other was Luke, a physician, who also described the early missionary efforts of that Leader's followers. There is a hypothetical document referred to by scholars as "Q" from which, as a concealed source, some of the recorded text has been apparently copied. Numerous letters of guidance, advice and inspiration were composed by these missionaries of the new faith. It is possible that many of them have been lost, but we possess three by John, the Apostle, who wrote besides, in his old age, an allegory of strange and terrible imagery and baffling mysticism. Peter wrote two that are still extant. Jude and his brother James each contributed one. The eighth man, the most intelligent and commanding of the eight, penned many. He was a little man, but great of heart, bearded and bald, if one is to credit early Christian attempts at portraiture, with a mighty mind and a tongue like a sword. He was a tentmaker from Tarsus, Saul by name. After his conversion he called himself Paul.

Long after the authors died, their writings, or part of their writings, were assembled in a single volume, the New Testament. Millions have accepted every word in this Book as the strong, authentic testimony of the mortal life and the teachings of God. Millions continue so to accept. Scientists have doubted and questioned. Year by year the volume of this doubt and criticism has grown until recently, when the discoveries of science refuted the skepticism of the scientist.

Science believed it discerned innumerable weaknesses and impossibilities in the eight authors' testimony. The higher critics gradually constructed an imposing edifice of indictments against its authenticity, against even its probability.

Then the science that had been skeptic was faced suddenly by a startling series of new discoveries, and in consequence the whole structure of higher criticism totters today and threatens collapse, while the writings of the eight authors of the New Testament have been justified and confirmed.

### **The Three Centuries of Silence**

These authors were humble men. Luke, the physician, and Paul were the only ones with any scientific training. Of their lives, apart from their writings, we know little; of their deaths less. We have no knowledge of when they wrote, or how, save in the case of Paul. Of him -at work we can catch a fairly clear glimpse-a little red-eyed man of fiery energy, striding to and fro in his chamber, dictating to Silvanus, called Silas, or perhaps to Luke, admonitions, instructions, reproofs and exhortations to the newly established churches, undaunted by the lifted arm of an irritated empire, believing that the faith he preached would at last conquer even that empire itself.

Yet even this picture of Paul, the author, is largely hypothetical. Of the other seven we have no such vision. We do not know -certainly whether all the words ascribed to them truly were theirs. For almost nineteen centuries there stretched between the lifetime of the eight and the earliest copies of the writings ascribed to them, 300 years of emptiness. No word they actually wrote has been recovered, no second or third, or hundredth copy, of their original manuscripts has been found. Three centuries have lain blank between them and the modern world's earliest contact with their writings.

Until the last generation, the oldest known transcriptions of the Gospels, Epistles, Acts and the Book of Revelation were contained in the Codex Sinaiticus and the Codex Vaticanus. The bulk of the former, an ancient parchment book, was found in the library of the Convent of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai in 1859 and was presented to the Czar of Russia by its discoverer, Tischendorf. There was an earlier fragment, discovered years before. The whole of it contained the New Testament complete, and most of the Old. Scientists believe that it was written toward the middle or end of the fourth century.

Another perhaps slightly older Bible is the Codex Vaticanus, which has been the chief treasure of the Library of the Vatican for centuries. Portions of the Old Testament, as well as part of the Epistle to the Hebrews, all of Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Revelation were lost before we have any record of it.

These two great codices were volumes such as princes might have owned-great stiff pages of dark skin on which the text has been set down with exquisite care in inks of silver and gold with delicately wrought initials. As antiques they were well-nigh priceless; as source Bibles they are invaluable. They stand, two massive, broken monuments on the road back to Scriptural sources, and with them,

for centuries, that road ended. Beyond was silence and surmise—a gap of 300 years stretching between these royal volumes and the humble folk who first set down their belief in the godhood of Christ and their stories of His life.

Scientists have attempted to abridge that abyss of silence with theory and hypothesis. They have attempted to fill it with the skepticism of the higher critics. The problem has been, baffling. The three centuries of silence has been one enigma. The language in which the earliest known copies of the New Testament were written has been another, equally insoluble.

Greek, presumably, is the language in which the authors of the New Testament wrote, for Greek, in their era, was the common speech of the Roman world. In Asia, in Egypt, in Rome itself, culture had become Hellenic. Men who could write at all wrote in Greek. All except the lowest and most benighted spoke it. It was the nearest approach to a universal language the world has yet seen. Greek is the tongue in which the great codices were written.

But such Greek! Classical scholars have wrung their hands over it. Pericles and Socrates would have had enormous difficulty understanding it. It was not the Attic tongue. Words unknown to the golden age of the Hellenes are included therein. The orthography is, different. Even the grammar is strange. Frequently it is difficult for classicists to get any meaning at all from a passage. There are more than five hundred words in the New Testament that, until a few years ago, Greek scholars were forced to guess at.

This strange distorted form of the Hellenic tongue received innumerable excuses and explanations. The scribes were blamed for carelessness in copying. It was set forth that, since most of the authors of the New Testament were Jews, they had permitted idiosyncrasies of the Hebrew tongue to creep in when they tried to write Greek. Other Bible students held that the strange dialect had a mystical significance. Some of the more skeptical claimed that the distorted tongue was proof positive against the Testament's antiquity. The story of the life of Christ, ascribed to St. John, they declared solemnly, must have been written not earlier than 200 A.D., and the other Gospels must have been set down long after the time of Christ.

### **The Theory of the Critics**

Furthermore, the higher critics held, it was certain that the New Testament had undergone radical changes during the reign of Constantine. It is known that, after this emperor's conversion early in the fourth century, he set about revising the religion of his adoption with a Roman passion for order and system. Undoubtedly, skeptics asserted, he collected the writings of the founders of the Church and edited them to his own satisfaction, amending, altering, adding, and rejecting as he saw fit. Thus we knew nothing, critics claimed, concerning what the disciples and their co-authors actually wrote. What we had, even in the oldest manuscripts, so the theory ran, is what a strong-willed despot thought they wrote or wished they had written.

There the matter stood: Three hundred years of silence [broken at last by the voices of the Codex Sinaiticus and the Codex Vaticanus,] speaking a Greek that the scholars of the Hellenic tongue did not recognize, and added to this the suspicion that Constantine, rather than the men to whom the writings were ascribed, had fashioned the New Testament.

That is all modern civilization knew concerning those men who followed and believed in Christ, until recently science, which had doubted, was awed by new discoveries into the beginnings of belief.

Out of Egypt the child Christ returned to His native land. Out of Egypt, and not from the country of His birth and His later life, have come astounding confirmations of the writings that tell all we know of Him.

In Palestine no trace of Him or of His followers has been found. Bethlehem tells us nothing of the Baby born there. Nazareth furnishes no record of His childhood. The Palestine Exploration Fund has combed the land from one end to the other. It has made notable discoveries, but these have been almost entirely geographical—sites of vanished towns and villages and the courses of dead streams and old highways mentioned in the Scriptures. Even Jerusalem itself, apart from remnants of Roman buildings, the location of the Temple and the problematical site of the Holy Sepulchre, has yielded nothing directly concerned with the life of Christ and His followers.

Innumerable invasions have plowed through Palestine. What these have not destroyed, the heavy rains, beating upon the unending Syrian rock, have erased. Palestine, by history and climate, has been unable to retain for 2000 years the secrets committed to its care, but Egypt can treasure them for 8000.

## **The Ancient Papyrus Writings**

Along the life-giving flow of the Nile there is an arid, preserving atmosphere. Rains there are none, and the slow, concealing and perpetuating drift of the brown sand covers and keeps. From Egypt the modern world obtained the Septuagint, our version of the Old Testament, written in classic and rather ponderous Greek by scribes of the Jewish colonies that settled there. From Egypt, more recently, has come an enormous and dramatic mass of testimony confirming the New Testament.

This testimony is not graven upon rock. It is written on papyrus, the ancestor of modern paper-flattened reeds fashioned into tough brown pages that endure in a dry climate beneath the cherishing sands with all the permanence of granite. The oldest papyrus writing yet discovered speaks to us across 4500 years and this is only a copy of another papyrus 1000, years older.

The makers of ancient Egypt's writing fabric harvested vast quantities of the reeds that grow along the Nile, dried them and cut them into strips. A number of these strips were laid edge to edge vertically, and cross hatched with another series placed horizontally. The strips were then soaked in water, pressed and, when dried, rubbed to eliminate any roughness. The result was a sheet, usually about 10x5 inches, which sold in the first century of our era for the equivalent of twenty-five cents. The ink used was a compound of charcoal, gum and water. Generally the writing was done across the horizontal strips, though notations often were made on the vertical ribbed back of the document. If more than one page was required the second was pasted onto the bottom of the first, the third onto the bottom of the second, and so on. The completed manuscript had a stick affixed to either end and then was rolled up into a scroll, tied and, if it were a letter, sealed and addressed.

Papyrus was the common writing material of the ancient world. It was cheap; it was plentiful. Under the Romans enormous quantities of it were used, for throughout the empire, and particularly in Egypt, only the lowest classes were without ability to write and there were scribes in plenty to help them.

Thus in the early days of the Christian Era there was a vast circulation of manuscripts between friends and relatives, between business men, between government officials. Accounts were kept upon papyrus. Records were written, proclamations were issued, books were copied upon these durable tanned sheets. Undoubtedly all the writings later collected into the New Testament were set down originally upon papyrus. A total of 200 linear feet of material was required by the eight authors. Luke's Gospel needed a scroll thirty-one or two feet long. The Epistle to the Thessalonians took fifteen inches.

All letters of the period were rolled, tied, sealed and handed to a courier or traveler, who carried them to their destination. Since the delivery was to be personal, the address on the scroll was nothing more than a memorandum -- "To Romans."

This custom has caused Bible students much trouble. No one knows who the Jews were or where they were to whom was written the epistle addressed "to Hebrews." Similarly, it has never been and never can be determined whether the Galatians, to whom Paul wrote an epistle, were the Gauls of North Galatia or the folk of South Galatia, who dwelt in and about Antioch.

The whole life of the time was set down upon papyrus sheets. They were the voices and the spirit of the age, caught and made permanent, until the empire fell and the papyri went up in the fires kindled by barbarians or else vanished beneath the inereeping Egyptian sands.

As the centuries marched past, plunderers or treasure seekers, digging into the tombs of old kings and prowling about the sand-covered ruins of ancient cities beside the Nile, came now and then upon sheets and rolls of tawny fabric, covered with incomprehensible scribblings in faded ink. These the marauders usually burned, for in Egypt fuel is scarce.

Flinders Petrie, the Egyptologist, was the first to pay heed to the possible significance of those dead leaves of an old civilization, scattered through the ruins of the land. His chief source of material was mummy cases, the tops of which are fashioned into rough effigies of the occupant. Under the plaster surfaces of these effigies he found stuffing of used papyrus. Thus hermetically sealed and preserved, this waste paper had become infinitely more precious than other treasure found with the dead. From the mummy cases Petrie obtained hundreds of examples of the records, correspondence and literature of Egypt under the Ptolemies and the Caesars, written for the most part in the vernacular Greek of the time. When translated and published, they startled and thrilled the scientific world.

### **Varied Records of the Past**

Out of these erstwhile coverings of the dead came the living echoes of earlier centuries. A babel of voices arose, singing, crying grievances, making love, dunning for payment, appealing to higher authority, admonishing subordinates. Petrie, through his discoveries, cut a cross section through the rich life of a Roman province, baring all its fibers, nerves and veins, bringing to a half-forgotten epoch in history a strangely modern note.

All varieties of writings were included in the papyri, from imperial proclamations, to a peevish note written by a retired farmer to his grandson, reproaching him bitterly for letting the two pigs die.

There are invitations to weddings, cast in a form almost identical with that of today. There were invitations to dinner as modern in tone as the following:

"Chaeremon requests your company at dinner at the table of the Lord Serapis in the Serapeum, tomorrow, the 15th, at 9 o'clock."

There are records of dental operations, market reports which reveal that one per cent a month was the usual interest rate, diplomas of membership in athletic clubs, recipes for toothpowder, receipted bills from livery-stable keepers, an address on preparedness, advice on how to avoid the income tax and a vast accumulation of family and business letters, all written from 900 to 2000 years ago.

Literary treasures, believed to have been lost for all time, have been resurrected from the Egyptian papyri-poems of Sappho and Pindar, works by Greek poets and orators whose names alone have been known heretofore, most of a lost play by Euripides -- and the great essay by Aristotle on the constitution of Athens, which was discovered written on the backs of farm records for an Egyptian estate during 78 and 79 A.D.

The papyri rescued by Petrie and those who followed him reproduce the voices of antiquity from before the reign of Julius Caesar down to the tenth century. They were written in Greek, both vernacular and classic; in Coptic, Aramaic and Latin; but chiefly in the Greek of the common tongue, the Koine, a speech differing almost as widely from the language of Athens as American newspaper diction differs from Chaucer. Many of the manuscripts were dated, and by them scientists have been enabled to plot the changes in grammar and orthography of the Koine from century to century and place with great accuracy the period of the undated sheets.

Ten years after Petrie had awakened the world's interest in the enormous anthropological and historical value of the hitherto neglected papyri, Adolf Deissmann, a young German, made his great discovery which overthrew -an entire mass of carefully constructed exegeses, angered and then confounded the Biblical skeptics and brought about a complete reversal of scientific opinion in regard to the New Testament.

Deissmann's discovery was a matter of simple comparison. From the time that Petrie brought his papyri home, the fact had been open and evident to any one not too bound by scientific formulas and dogmas to see it. Deissmann was not an archaeologist. He was merely a theological student who chanced to get hold of several papyri written in the vernacular Greek, or Koine. He was struck immediately by the strong similarity between the language of these and of the New Testament. Further investigation strengthened his theory in every particular. Accordingly he announced to the world that "the speech of the Gospels and Epistles and the speech of the common people of the era in which they were written were one and the same -- the vernacular Greek, the Koine.

### **Written in Koine**

There was no mystery, Deissmann proclaimed, in the crooked grammar, the strange orthography, the cryptic phrases of the New Testament; no esoteric significance in the unusual abbreviations; no foundation for the explanation that certain words and phrases were Hebraisms or else anachronisms. The Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, Revelation had all been written in the common tongue of the period, the nearest approach to a universal language the world has seen so far. They had been written by humble folk for humble folk, in the tongue best understood by most of them.

"Christianity from the beginning," Deissmann proclaimed, "spoke the tongue of the peasant."

The manifold discoveries since Deissmann's discovery have only strengthened his claim. The New Testament, it has been definitely established, was set down in the vital language of the first century. There were no hidden meanings to its text, no mystical significances. The foundations of Christianity had been laid by simple men, using the common speech of their day.

(Continued in next issue)

## **REVIEW OF A PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE SOUTH**

Dear Brethren in Christ:

After an eventful pilgrimage through the South lasting nearly three months, it may be of interest to the friends to hear of some of the impressions formed by association with -brethren in the Southern States, who are standing steadfast amid their trying experiences peculiar to the situations which-have developed in these perilous times.

Although the past season has been one of the hottest and driest known in the South and Southwest, the average attendance at the meetings along the way was much beyond what could reasonably be anticipated. Even in some of the remote country places far out on the hot, dry, and dusty plains of Texas and Oklahoma, the attendance ran up to a hundred and a hundred and fifty. The interest indicated of those who gathered to hear the simple message of the Truth, the glad tidings of the coming Kingdom, devoid of sensationalisms and speculations was deeply gratifying.

The conditions relating to spiritual progress and development among the Lord's people are on the whole very favorable although in some instances there are those whose interest and zeal in the love and service of the Truth have lessened considerably. Particularly is the latter true in Florida where the unusual real estate fluctuations, with the resulting opportunities of acquiring riches have attracted a number to their spiritual disadvantage. -- 1 Tim. 6:9-11.

Those who have waged a good warfare contending earnestly for the eternal principles of the Christian faith and who, through all the tumult and the strife have maintained a quiet and confidential attitude, how good and how pleasant it is to have fellowship with such. (Psalm 133.) It is daily becoming more apparent that the overcoming saints are becoming few in numbers this side of the wail.



Everywhere throughout the South, or elsewhere, the ravages of the wolves in 'sheep's clothing, and the would be prophets, teaching perverse things to draw away disciples after them, are in evidence among all the Classes visited. Those heroic souls who have steadfastly resisted the encroachments of the spirit of sectarianism on the part of ambitious and designing leaders have invariably been ostracized and in most cases excommunicated because they refused to recognize any other tests of Christian fellowship than those established by the Lord in His Word.

It is astonishing the number of those who have been misled by leaders who claim special Divine prerogatives and who pose as heaven's favorites. The amazing credulity exhibited by these in the loud and assertive claims which some have put forth to the effect that they or their societies which they represent, are repeatedly pictured in the types, symbols and parables of the Bible is almost incredible. There is nothing in the darker ages of the Church's experiences to surpass this disposition of credulity witnessed in our times. How lamentable that with all the warnings of the Scriptures and in view of the facts of history for the whole Age, there are still those who listen to the Voices of false prophets (teachers) and Consult their own imaginations, instead of hearkening to the voice of the Good Shepherd and using their own thinking or reasoning faculties.

There are many who, it seems, have not yet learned this valuable and important lesson that types, parables, and symbols are never to be used as the basis for the Christian's faith and practice. A thousand times this has been tried out by the unthinking, and a thousand times it has resulted in confusion and failure. The Christian's faith, character development, and service of the Truth are not established upon the flimsy basis of some one's more or less perverted understanding of the dark sayings of the Bible, but upon the plain literal declarations of the Lord and the Apostles. There can be no mistake here to the consecrated, spirit begotten child of God. Let it once be seen and recognized that types, symbols, and parables are used merely to verify or confirm, facts or truths already proven and established in history, or by the plain instructions of the Bible, and the mists and clouds of confusion and error besetting the minds of many will quickly be dispelled.

Nearly every one of the different factions existing among the friends today is headed -by some individual who sees himself represented in the Scriptures and who insists that his views of the parables and symbols are right; and must be accepted in order to get into the Kingdom, and that all other views are wrong and that all who accept them can never make their calling and election sure! Can more arrogant and blatant claims than these be found outside of the great Apostate Church of Rome? Think of it! The important matter of one's attaining joint-heirship with Christ is dependent upon another's boastful claims and opinions relating to the proper interpretation of certain dark passages of Scripture!

We heard of one society, in the course of our journey, which time and again (almost annually now) has made all sorts of predictions as to what would take place and when. These predictions are usually the basis of some "great work" which its devotees were to carry out. These predictions have all failed and the great and marvelous works have fizzled out in more or less degree yet so great is the infatuation for this self-claimed Divine society, on the part of its members that they still claim with great gusto, all of its utterances must be accepted without question! Who shall open the blind eyes of these poor deluded ones! Will it not require the awful experiences of the great tribulation with which this Age will close! Would that these friends might take to heart the instructions of Deuteronomy 18:18-22.

We were much encouraged by the many expressions of Christian love and appreciation of the efforts of the brethren who are co-operating in the ministry of the present Truth and seeking to refresh and encourage the Lord's people over the world.

Expressions of confidence in the ministry thus being conducted were made in every place visited because the brethren engaged in this work are not seeking self praise or exaltation by finding themselves represented in the Scriptures. Neither do they make loud and boastful claims to great, and wonderful works. Nor are sensational and political methods of propaganda resorted to.

The high spiritual tone of the "Herald" is much admired by those who have the spirit of a sound mind and it was specially noted that its instructions are presented meekly and lovingly for the consideration of its readers and that never has the disposition to force its views upon the minds of others been manifested. There is no desire to condemn any one or to judge or threaten those who may view matters differently. The recent issue of the "Herald" containing a review of the Bible chronology is growingly popular because of its

clear and lucid presentation of the matter explaining why our expectations were not fully realized in 1914, and why many predictions which were made for this present year by some, failed to materialize.

Concluding we wish to say that the spiritual influence of the prayers of the friends was sensed in a deeper measure than ever, before and the privileges of association with the Lord's people along the way were enjoyed in greater measure than in all of our Christian experiences in the past.

With earnest prayers in behalf of all those who worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, and with thanksgiving to God for His immeasurable love, I am,

Faithfully yours in the Narrow Way,

H. Clay Rockwell

## **THE BIBLE AND EVOLUTION SERVICE**

THE general response from the supplement enclosed in the Evolution Herald of September 15, relating to the wide circulation of that issue; has been very refreshing. It gives evidence that there is still a considerable number of brethren, who notwithstanding the much confusion -- the discordant and conflicting messages and voices of the recent years, are maintaining an excellent poise and balance of mind, and a spiritual discernment with regard to what constitutes the Gospel Ministry, as to what are the essential and important truths that make up the great Message of the hour that God's people are commissioned to give to mankind.

Many letters are received from the friends far and near throughout this country (we have not yet had time to hear from across the seas) expressing the heartiest appreciation of the treatise on the Bible and Evolution, that the review of the entire subject has been of much refreshment to heart and mind. The earnest desire is generally expressed also to co-operate in the distribution of the Evolution issue, that other hearing ears may be blessed; and this is splendid evidence that there are still brethren in whom the, fires of zeal and love for the Lord and the Truth have not been quenched, and who desire to be alive and alert to the privileges of the hour, of letting their light shine for the glory of God.

We remind all again that as we have the second class mailing privileges in the United States in connection with sending forth the "Herald," the postage is a comparatively small item. The principal cost, of course, is the printing of extra copies; and we still have in mind carrying out the plan of furnishing the Evolution number to the friends as volunteer matter for free distribution. The response already received enables us to consider favorably the idea of getting another edition printed. But we are delaying the order till more of the Classes and brethren have been heard from, regarding the extent of their assistance and co-operation that we may be in a position to know more definitely how large an edition to have printed. It is understood of course that for the present we are prepared to fill orders from the -original lot we had printed.

In accordance with the suggestion in the supplement., some are engaged in a general distribution of the Evolution number where it is hoped they will reach hearing ears. Others are sending to us for wrappers, and are assembling names-lists of church members, clergymen, and of people in general; the, latter may be found in the city directories, and telephone books. Already we have received back, addressed wrappers from some.

From one place we learn that the friends plan to send us twenty thousand addresses, and from another fifteen thousand. If the brethren everywhere could thus be filled with zeal, they would realize how great are their privileges of witnessing to the Truth in these closing days of the Age. Let all who purpose to enter into the present opportunities communicate as soon as possible to what extent they hope to be able to assist and engage, that arrangements may be completed accordingly.

We have the Master's assurance that presently both the sowers and the reapers will enter into their reward, and that both will rejoice together in the grind and more glorious privileges in the Kingdom of God.

## RECENT CONVENTIONS

Two conventions recently held, one at Springfield, Mass., September 5-7, and the other at Ulster Park, September 25-27, were attended by the Divine blessing in rich measure. There was about the usual attendance at Springfield upward of one hundred were present Sunday afternoon which included a number of the public. At Ulster Park, where the gathering was composed entirely of the brethren, there were present about sixty; these had come from quite a wide area, from several States -- eight representatives coming from Montreal and Toronto. A number who had hoped and expected to be present, found circumstances preventing them at the time. Nevertheless, the season of communion in the Lord was very precious. In fact, at both of the Conventions it was manifestly the earnest desire for closer fellowship with the Lord and to partake more largely of His spiritual grace, that had brought the friends together. And those who come with such purpose upon their hearts are always a means of spiritual uplift to others.

Again in these conventions the matters that lay near to the hearts of God's trusting children were given earnest consideration; attaining fullness of Divine favor and joint-heirship with Christ in His Kingdom is surely the blessed goal we all seek. The Lord is the Judge of His people, and will decide every case; "He knoweth them that are His." And the earnest contemplation of the Divine instruction as to the present career, duties, and service of the Church is what logically engages the hearts and thoughts of consecrated brethren in Christ when they gather in such conferences. We are glad to be able to say that such contemplations and thoughts were much in evidence in the songs, prayers, testimonies, and discourses at these recent Conventions; and we could wish that more, such holy convocations were possible for the edifying of the Body of Christ. Yet the Lord careth for His own, and He will give strength unto His people.

## LOVE NEVER FAILETH

*"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." -- 1 Cor. 13:1-13.*

HUMAN experience is in agreement with the wisdom of the Bible, which declares that of all the grand qualities with which our race has been originally endowed, love is the most excellent, and takes the first place: It is doubtless because God is love; and from Him has come this grand endowment to angels and to men.

The entrance of sin into the world, bringing selfishness and degradation, has seriously marred and effaced this quality in humanity. It is the lack of love-selfishness, that is responsible in large measure for the suffering and distress on earth, as the poet has said: "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn."

Yet, all along through the ages noble examples of godlikeness, love, are to be observed; and these are found amongst those who have been measurably in touch and communication with God, and have enjoyed the privilege (if His instruction concerning love and its blessed fruitage. To the new creation of this Gospel Age called to the glorious heights of joint-heirship in the coming Kingdom, the will of God on the subject of love has been profusely elaborated upon to the intent that all such might receive of His fullness, might attain unto the likeness of His dear Son.

## Sets Forth Great Truth on Love

In studying the life and teachings of the Savior and His Apostles, we cannot fail to recognize that constant intermingling of the spirit and power of love, manifested in sympathy, tenderness and thoughtfulness of others. The charm and attraction of their messages as well as their examples are due to the force and triumph of love. There is, of course, a diversity of expression, and some have dealt more exhaustively with this theme than others. Speaking with regard to what we have from the Apostles John and Paul, another has

remarked: "It is a notable circumstance that the most elaborate description given in Scripture of the grace of love is from the pen, not of St. John, who was pre-eminently a man of love, but of the Apostle Paul, whose great characteristic was his soaring faith."

Boldly and by a very fine analysis the Apostle sets forth in His letter to the Church the great truth on love, which is recognized amongst Christian people everywhere, and that in proportion to their development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, in proportion to their development as children of God.

Yet, says another, "We search in vain for a definition of love; in this great chapter we are not asked to study love as an, abstraction. We are asked to walk with love, a kindly, kingly presence; to hear how love says the thing that must be said day by day; to see how love does the thing that must be done day by day; to see how love endures the thing that must be endured day by day.' Surely this is the best way to come at love's true meaning-indeed, to come to the true meaning of anything."

The Apostle sets forth that not knowledge, not wisdom, not talents, not "gifts" of any kind are the things most to be sought for, but love-because God is Love, and because all who would be pleasing to God must develop this character, this disposition, and because according to the Divine Law, none will ever have full Divine approval or eternal life on any plane of being, without the full establishment in the heart, in the character, of this Divine quality-love. Therefore, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law."

### **Not Eloquence, Knowledge or Self-Sacrifice but Love**

The importance of love as a necessary element of Christian character is shown by comparing it with other gifts and graces. The most shining gifts pale before its brightness. Eloquence first competes with it, and its music becomes clanging brass.

In the Apostle's forceful language, if he had all the tongues of earth and of heaven and could speak them with perfection and charming rhythm, these would still not constitute a proof of his harmony with God and his acceptance of life eternal. Should he do all this in a perfunctory manner, even to the extent of speaking of the Divine character and in the interests and welfare of his fellows, he might still have no heart in the matter, but be merely like a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The argument is that tongues were not to be esteemed as a proof of Christian character. Eloquence is a great and splendid gift and few things are more coveted among men, but in itself it has no moral virtue. An eloquent tongue is simply a powerful tool which a bad man may use as deftly as a good man. A man may be told as eloquently as the truth.

Knowledge and faith next step forward to compete with love; these are compared with love, and we might surely expect to see them win the crown, yet these mighty graces are found to be wanting, and retire vanquished. And so the Apostle argues respecting prophecy, oratory and the understanding of mysteries and knowledge and the possession of mountain-moving faith, and he asks, Would these abilities not signify a glorious development and a full acceptance with God and an assurance of life eternal? He answers us, No, any of these or all of these abilities, precious as they are, in the Divine estimation would have no value whatever, would profit us nothing, unless mixed with love and based upon love.

### **Finishing Touch of Perfection**

Finally, self-sacrifice advances to compete with love, bestowing all its goods as charity, and giving its very body to be burned, and again we may feel sure the prize will be won; and again it is lost, and, love is triumphant. Such sacrifice is rare devotion and imitates the very cross of Christ, but it might be only imitation and spring from a wrong motive. The great evangelist D. L. Moody remarking upon the exercise of energy in sacrificing and working for God, says, "It is not Always more work that we want so much as a better motive. Many of us do a great deal of work, but we must remember that God looks at the motive. The only tree on this earth that can produce fruit which is pleasing to God is the tree of love."

All of these qualities mentioned foregoing are "high and fine graces, but the character that has these and yet lacks love would lack the highest and finest grace of all and would be that, partial success that is painful failure. The runner may lose the race by only the last inch, but he loses it none the less. The peach may have a sound core and a scarlet blush, but if it lacks sweetness and spice it cannot take the prize as the finest and best.

"Thus love has held its ground against all comers and wears the brightest crown of Christian character. This is not only a truth of Scripture, but we all instinctively know and acknowledge that a lovable and loving spirit is the chief element of worth and final finishing touch of perfection in the human soul."

### **Analysis of Love's Component Elements**

To those of the Lord's people who have never really studied out what love is-what are its elements, its constituent parts, the Apostle's suggestions here will seem like a revelation.

Love is patient -- it is long-suffering with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions. Moreover, it is patient even with those who are out of the way, and who oppose themselves to righteousness and truth, realizing that the whole world are more or less under the influence of the great Adversary and his demon host, who blind the minds of the masses. This manifestation of love was very prominent in our Lord- Jesus. How patient He was with His opponents! Let us heed the Apostle's words in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied [in well-doing and patience] and faint in your minds."

Love is kind in its methods. It not only seeks to do good, but seeks to do it in the kindest possible manner. In proportion as love is attained the effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, as well as the thought which prompts them, full of kindness. Love is tender, affectionate. It has a . real and deep interest in others, especially the brethren in Christ: We do well to remember the motto of the old Quaker: "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show, to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again." This sentiment is especially applicable in the Church of God.

### **Love is Generous, Humble, Courteous**

Love is generous, and has no place for envy, which, on the contrary, springs from a perverted nature-from selfishness. Love rejoices with them that rejoice; it rejoices in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and service of all who Are actuated by the Spirit of God. Whenever you attempt a good work you will find other men doing the same kind of work, and probably doing it better. Envy them not. Only one thing truly need the Christian envy, the large, rich, generous soul which "envieth not."

Love is humble-it "vaunteth not itself." It does not sound a trumpet before it. Its good deeds are not done to be seen of men, not done to be praised of the brethren, but would be done just the same if no one should see or know but the Lord alone. It is boastful neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father, and it returns praise to Him for every mercy received. Love seeks rather to keep self in the background. Some one has truly said; "Love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence." After love has performed its valuable service, it has yet "to learn this further thing, Humility -- to put a seal upon your lips and forget what you have done. After you have been kind, after love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the shade again and say nothing about it. Love hides even from itself. Love waives even self-satisfaction."

Love is courteous" -- "doth not behave itself unseemly." How beautiful is this trait in the child of God! How much pain is caused by the lack of courtesy, of that thoughtful consideration for others which springs from real love in the heart-love that is trained! Pride and selfishness are at the root of most of the unseemly conduct and boorishness so common to those who think themselves somebody,

either intellectually or financially. Perfect love, on the contrary, manifests courtesy along with humility. Politeness, courtesy, may be defined as love in the little things.

The secret of real courtesy is love. A gentleman or lady is one who does things gently, thoughtfully, kindly, lovingly. A true Christian, then, should be a gentleman or a lady in the most real and perfect sense. To ignore the little courtesies of life as unnecessary is a serious mistake in the child of God. A kind greeting, a pleasant smile, little acts of thoughtfulness for others-who has not realized their potency or felt pain from the lack of these?

### **Unselfish, Sweet Tempered**

Love is unselfish -- "seeketh not her own," exclusively or pre-eminently. It never seeks to take advantage of others or to promote its own selfish interests. It goes out to others, and seeks to promote their comfort and happiness. It does not desire to grasp the best of everything for self, nor to have the chiefest seats or the most attention or the highest honors, but rather prefers others in honor, and is willing in cheerfulness to take the lower place. Put into practice, this phase of love-unselfishness -has a great influence for good upon all the affairs of life, in the home, in the Church of God, everywhere.

"Seekest thou great things for thyself ?" said the prophet; 'seek them, not.' Why? Because there is no greatness in things. The only greatness is unselfish love. The most obvious -lesson in Christ's teaching is that there is no happiness in having and getting anything, but only in giving. And half the world is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting; and in being served by others. He that would be great among you, said Christ, let him serve. He that would be happy, let him remember that there is .but one way-it is more blessed, it is more happy, to give than to receive."

Love is good-tempered -- "not easily provoked." Among the evils abounding today is that of ill-temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offense. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered or willingly harbored, and not fought against, it is an evidence of a deficiency and a lack of development in the Spirit of God., of deficiency in the likeness to Christ, our Pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive as much leniency and as many excuses for its continuance as does this fault. However much natural weakness or nervousness may tend in this direction, every true member of the Body of Christ must surely vigorously oppose this disposition to be irritable, fault-finding and morose. He must fight this tendency of his fallen flesh, must wage a good warfare against it in the strength of the Lord. "For a want of patience, a want of kindness, a want of generosity, a want of courtesy, a want of unselfishness, are all instantaneously symbolized in one flash of Temper. Hence, it is not enough to deal with the Temper. We must go to the source, and change the inmost nature, and the angry humors will die away of themselves. Christ, the Spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, and transforms all." Few traits of character more truly glorify the Lord than sweet temper.

### **Love is Guileless and Sincere**

Love is guileless. It "thinketh no evil" -- does not surmise evil. It seeks to interpret the actions, words and manners of others charitably. Being pure and well-intentioned itself, it endeavors so far as possible to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial matters. "Faults are thick where love is thin," is a wise and true saying. Love makes all possible allowance for errors of judgment rather than impugns the motives of the heart. "It is a wonderful thing that here and there should still be left a few rare souls who think no evil. This is the great unworldliness. 'Love thinketh no evil,' imputes no motive, sees the bright side, puts the best construction on every action. What a delightful state of mind. to live in! What a stimulus arid benediction even to meet with it for a day! To be trusted is to be saved. And if we try to influence or elevate others, we shall soon see that success is in proportion to their belief of our belief in them. Our ideal of what he is, becomes to him the hope and. pattern of what he may become.

Love is sincere -- "rejoiceth not in iniquity." It is grieved by evils wherever encountered, but is sympathetic toward all who fall into evil through weakness or who are beset by temptations. In this respect love prompts to an opposite course of action from that of Balaam, who "loved the reward of iniquity." Balaam, it will be remembered, feared the Lord and as His prophet could not think of doing otherwise than according to the strict letter of the Lord's injunction; but he did not have the spirit of obedience and loyalty, the spirit of love; and hence when a reward was offered him if he would curse Israel, he was willing, in order to secure the reward, to conform to the evil proposition, if only the Lord would permit him.

### **Modern Balaams in the Church**

So there are some Christians who have a respect for the letter of the Divine Word through fear, but who lack the Holy Spirit (disposition) of love, and who by reason of a love for wealth or popularity or ease, etc., are willing to engage in various practices which come as near to injuring the Lord's Cause as possible without being in open opposition to, Him. Some of these Balaams are in the ministry and for the sake of position and prestige and the friendship of wealthy Balaks, they are willing to preach views which they do not believe, to wink at unholy practices, and in various ways to cast stumbling-blocks before spiritual Israel, and encourage others so to do. Both our Lord and the Apostles. mention these Balaams as being false teachers in the Church. See 2 Peter 2:15 ; Jude 11; Revelation 2:14.

### **Takes Pleasure in the Truth**

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the Holy Spirit, perfect love, should guard this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness and goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect love rejoices riot in iniquity under any circumstances or conditions, and would have no sympathy, but only sorrow, in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own gain.

Love "rejoiceth in the Truth." However profitable error might be, love could take no part in it, and could not desire the reward of evil and error. But it takes pleasure .in the Truth-truth on any subject, but especially the Truth of Divine Revelation, however unpopular it may be, however much persecution its advocacy may involve, 'however much it may cause the loss of the friendship of this world. The spirit .of love has so strong an affinity for the Truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress, or whatever may come against the Truth and its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of Him or; His Word; and of such He declares that He will be ashamed before His Father and the angels. Love has no sympathy with hypocrisy or pretense. It is transparent and honest in character.

What a wonderful world this would be even with all of its aches and pains physical, if every member of our race were perfect in these qualities enumerated! However, it would be a useless waste of time to weep over what we have not, or to unnecessarily chide our neighbors and friends because they, like ourselves, are not perfect in love. Indeed, the more we come to understand the teachings of God's Word, the more of sympathy we may have with the poor "groaning creation." In one sense of the word our sympathies are all for this glorious standard which the Apostle holds up before us. We cannot sympathize with the evil, the error, the wrong. It is uncongenial to us. But, understanding the situation, we can sympathize with our fellows and with ourselves, as being in a fallen condition, in which none of us can do the things which we would.

### **The Lessons of the School**

When we enter the School of Christ, the lesson, as a whole, set before us is expressed in the Great Teacher's words, "Be ye like unto your Father Which is in heaven." The same thought is presented to us in the Apostle's words when he assures us that God has predetermined that only such as become copies of His dear Son -- in character likeness -- can be His joint-heirs in the promised Kingdom. We did not know how much was required when we entered the School of Christ. We did not understand all when we made our consecration even unto death in the service of righteousness. However, no advantage was taken of us; for what was presented to us

and what we did consecrate to do, includes everything in our power and no more -even unto death. So then, no lesson that can come to us is beyond our covenant or agreement to perform.

The Apostle in the spectrum of love given us in this lesson is delineating the various parts of this one great lesson of Christ-likeness, which is Godlikeness. He is pointing out what constitutes such a character as God desires we shall have, and such as God has predetermined we must have, in order to be worthy of the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Love Viewed in Comparison**

Love beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things. Its elements of patience and gentleness are love in the sense of willingness to bear, to endure under all sorts of opposition, wherever it sees a proper subject for its sympathy. It believeth all things in the sense that it is not given to doubt, to disbelieve, to impugn the motives and truthfulness of its fellows. Only after full and convincing proofs to the contrary will it cease to exercise faith. Love hopeth all things in the sense that it desires a blessing for all with whom it is in contact and is continually striving, in harmony with its desire, to do them good. Love endureth all things in the sense that it cannot be quenched wherever there is anything that it can properly exercise itself upon. These qualities viewed from another standpoint might be interpreted thus: "Beareth all things," as enduring pressure on every side without being crushed; "Believeth all things" as being full of faith in the Divine promises and arrangement, doubting nothing; "Hopeth all things" in the sense that this perfect love toward God enables the heart to be full of confidence toward the Almighty One, in whose, love it reposes; "Endureth all things" in the sense that the soul that is united to the God of Love by the link of love cannot be crushed, cannot be overcome, because this is the Divine will, the Divine arrangement. God will not suffer such to be tempted above that they are able to bear, but will, with every temptation, provide a way of escape.

### **Love the Fruitage of the Spirit**

The Apostle institutes a comparison as between love and some of the "gifts" which the Corinthian brethren properly estimated highly. He would have us all see how infinitely higher Love is than any of these gifts in which the early Church rejoiced. Love is not a gift, but a growth, a fruitage which must be developed in the garden of our souls and be tended with much care, in order to its proper development. He says that Love never faileth; but that other things will fail, namely, the power of prophesy or oratory, the gift of tongues, knowledge, etc. These would lose their value as the changing conditions would comparatively do away with their necessity. Prophecies fail by being fulfilled, their very success is their death, as blossoms wither and fall after their fruit is ripe.

The gift of tongues would cease; and even the most eloquent natural tongue must soon lie silent in the dust. Languages are ever becoming obsolete and being entombed as dead languages. All books and libraries will perish, because the need for them will pass; and all the infinite babble of human speech will vanish in eternal silence. Special manifestations of knowledge would cease. There is a sense in which present knowledge is ever passing. It is partial and imperfect, limited at every point and mixed with error, and it is ever losing itself in larger truth. What we do know is only an infinitesimal fraction of what we do not know; and the wider the circle of our light the wider still is the wall of darkness that shuts us in.

The Apostle's argument is that these things would all come to an end necessarily, when perfection would come in because all of Our gifts and talents are imperfect. Surely with our glorious "change" in the First Resurrection and with the ushering in of the Millennium our conditions would be so different, that many things highly esteemed in the lesser light and under the unfavorable conditions of the present would then be -valueless. Just so, flints were once valuable for the striking of a light, but are now rarely used, being supplanted by matches, electric lights, etc. Many of those gifts, however, including the gift of tongues, perished long before the morning light of the Millennium-ceased shortly after the death of the Apostles, because those gifts were imparted only by the Apostles.

### **Like the Toys of Childhood**



Next the Apostle compares the gifts of the Spirit with the fruitage of the Spirit and shows that the former, in contrast with the latter, were the toys of childhood in comparison with the valuables of manhood. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things." So the gifts of tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc., were given to the Church in its infancy and served useful purposes then, but might well be put away as the Church emerged from infancy to the strength and development accruing from a -greater knowledge of God's Plan. The milk of the Word and the strong meat of the Word were intended by God to develop the members of the Body of Christ, until they all come to the stature of manhood in Christ. The more advanced the Christian, the more surely would he know that the gifts of the Spirit were merely like a childish plaything to be supplemented by the fruits of the Spirit, much more valuable to the Church in its developed condition.

St. Paul points further to the fact that we are living not merely for the present, but specially for the future; and that whatever we can develop here which will last us into the eternal future, must certainly be the most important matter for us to acquire. He would have us see that most important thing to the Christian-love-the Love which He has described. Our knowledge, tongues, etc., of the present time are only mere shadows of the great powers which will be ours, if we attain to the glorious blessings of the First Resurrection. Whatever clearness of sight we have at the present time we shall then find but darkness in comparison with that full light of the glorious morning time. "Finally, all this partial and imperfect knowledge of earth shall vanish into the vaster knowledge and clearer vision of heaven as the flame of the candle fades before the rising sun and the stream is lost in the immeasurable sea. But when these temporary gifts and graces have fulfilled their end and faded away, love will have arrived at its full blown blossom and will bloom forever." Where now we see as through an obscure glass; then we shall see face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall know as we are known. And the poet has said:

"Here, in part, and seen but dimly,

Lord, Thy guiding hand we trace;

There, as we have known, we'll know Thee,

There shall see Thee face to face."

Faith, Hope, and Love

St. Paul would have the Church see that faith, hope and love, three fruits of the Spirit, are far superior to all the "gifts" of the Spirit of any kind, because these will abide all through the Age. Until the Millennial morning we shall need faith; we shall need hope; we shall need love. We cannot get along without them. We cannot make any progress in the footsteps of Jesus without them. But if we seek to contrast these imperfect qualities amongst themselves, he points out that the chiefest of these is love. Why the chiefest? Because it is the Divine quality without which, with all; the other qualities possessed, we should still be unsatisfactory to God. It is the quality which will persist to all eternity. We shall always need to have love, if we abide in Divine favor. Love is greater than faith and hope because it is a finer and richer state and exercise of the soul, and because it is more useful, the minister of greater blessings and joy. We may believe one whom we cannot love, but we cannot fully love one whom we cannot believe. We can also hope for one without loving him, but we cannot love one without hoping the best for him. Love includes faith and hope and all other graces. Finally, love is greater than faith and hope because love is the end for which faith and hope are the means. We trust and hope in order that we may love. "Root and branch and leaf exist for blossom and fruit. Love is the finest blossom and richest fruit of the soul for which other states exist and into which they crystallize and ripen."

As for faith and hope, excellent qualities though they be, the time will come when they will be swallowed up by sight, by fruition, by the actualities of the glorious condition of fellowship with the Lord. But love will never fail. Amongst all the graces of the Spirit it stands supreme and eternal. It comes to its highest and finest and perfect expression in God Himself.

**WATCH AND PRAY**

"Christian, seek not yet repose,

Cast thy dreams of ease away;

Thou art in the midst of foes,

Watch and pray.

"Principalities and powers,

Mustering their unseen array,

Wait for thine unguarded hours;

Watch and pray.

"Gird thy heavenly armor on,

Wear it ever night and day;

Ambushed lies the evil one;

Watch and pray.

"Watch, as if on that alone

Hung the issue of the day;

Pray that help maybe sent down

Watch and pray."

## **TRAVELS IN THE HOLY LAND -- SERIES VII**

A SHORT distance beyond the site of ancient Jericho is modern Jericho, once known as Gilgal. It is a small town, not especially inviting, but has well irrigated orange groves and fruit gardens. This was the first camping place of the Israelites after they had crossed the Jordan, but few ruins remain of the former city.

Six miles farther on we reached the Jordan, and leaving our autos we spent a half hour or so -on its bank. The stream bends, in nearly a right-angled turn at this place, and is lined on each side with a thick fringe of trees. It is a small stream with muddy waters and those travelers who desire to take some of the water home, must first have it carefully filtered as it becomes foul in a few days. At the place where we stopped is supposed to be the spot where "Jesus, coming from Nazareth of Galilee, was baptized of John in Jordan." It has, since the earliest centuries, been considered a great privilege to be immersed at this particular spot. A young boy of our party took advantage of the opportunity and was baptized while there.

Leaving the river we drove a short distance over the plain to the Dead Sea, into which it flows. On its shore we found a party of Bedouins camping, shiftless and wandering descendants, perhaps, of Ishmael. I gathered a few tiny shells, from the small stones of its graveled beach, tasted the water and found it bitter and briny, and then reluctantly climbed into the waiting auto, feeling that I would enjoy a longer time by this really beautiful lake. Six and a half million tons of water flow into it every day and all is evaporated. The water of the Dead Sea is five times as salty as that of the ocean, and the ground in its vicinity is powdered with salt.

### **To Bethlehem**

The road to Bethlehem is along a pleasant way, with green and fertile land on either side. About three miles from Jerusalem we reached an elevation from which could be seen both Bethlehem and Jerusalem, and the mountains beyond the Jordan. A mile further on we stopped at the Tomb of Rachel, a small building by the roadside. The authenticity of the site has not been proved, but it is much visited, and is revered by Christian, Moslem, and Jew.

A short distance on we reached "the little town of Bethlehem." Its streets were full of happy appearing people, some of them masked and in costume. Although it was Sunday, some kind of festival was on. Bethlehem is built on the hillside, and its mortar covered buildings being close together, it presents a solid, compact appearance. Its population of 6,000 is mostly Christian, although not more than fifty of these are Protestant.

The Church of the Nativity, built over the cave where tradition declares Christ was born, is the oldest Christian church in the world, being erected in 330. The tradition had its beginning in a statement made by a writer born shortly after the death of the Apostle John, who declared that the Lord was born in a "certain cave close to the village of Bethlehem." We entered the interior of the church and descended into a grotto, lighted by many lamps. A Silver star with the words, "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus est" marks what is said to be the exact spot of His birth. Looking around the cave I felt the usual haunting doubt, but I knew that somewhere in this city of David was born "a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," and that somewhere in fields not far away, shepherds heard the angel choir singing, "Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace, good will to men."

### **On the Way to Tiberias**

We ended our stay in Jerusalem on the fourth day, and started by auto to Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee. All along the way is ground, sacredly historical. Some of the actual sites are fairly well established, and we soon passed the ruins of the birth place of Samuel, Shiloh, Bethel, and to our left we saw the high hill of Mizpah now called "Neby Wal" by the inhabitants, or, "Tomb of Samuel." Coming down out of the hills into the long, green valley of Shechem, we came after a time to Jacob's Well. This is one of the few sites in Palestine that can be spoken of with certainty. It has been protected since the fourth century by a small Greek chapel and the unbroken traditions of Jew, Moslem, and Christian identify it. Recently the old stone curb has been uncovered, the one on which Jesus perhaps rested as He talked to the woman of Samaria, and close by on the hillside is the town of Sychar. After stepping inside the one-story chapel and drinking from this deep well, we paused a while outside, while one of our party read the Gospel story. Gazing around, the same scene met our eyes that must have met His so long ago-the long green valley with the two mountains rising abruptly at either side, the town on the hillside, and, skirting the mountain, the same dusty road He doubtless traveled. Such thoughts continually come to us as we travel through the Holy Land and make our Lord's life on earth very near and real to us.

### **Crossing Plain of Esdraelon**

Leaving the well, we passed through the town of Shechem, once the old city of Nablus. It lies at the upper part of the Shechem valley. It is well watered, and has luxuriant vegetation. Shechem is the oldest of all the sacred places of Palestine. Here Abraham came with his flocks and herds 4,000 years ago, and beside the altar which he built the Lord here appeared unto him and promised this land should be his and his seed's possession.

After a few hours' travel we crossed the wide plain of Esdraelon, the largest area of fertile land in Palestine, flat and unbroken by any rise of land. Here we noticed many new Jewish colonies. Built of lumber painted white, and with red roofs, they are bits of the west set down in a land acquainted otherwise with only stone and mortar. As we reached the far side of the plain, Mt. Tabor stood abrupt and alone at our right, and far to our front and left Mt. Hermon's snowy peak stood high above the other mountains, While directly in front, nestling rather high in the hills, lay Nazareth, itself enclosed with a rim of high land. Lying as it does, there is not the beautiful view from Nazareth that we find in nearly every other high place; and in order to see across the plain we had just traversed, it would be necessary to climb the high ridge at the back of the town. Once there, the sight is glorious, and it must be that the boy Jesus often climbed this height.

### **To Nazareth**

As we rode into Nazareth, I was impressed with its bare dreariness. We passed the "Virgin's Fountain," where children and their elders are always gathered, filling their jars at the faucet; for the actual fountain which has been throughout times past the only source of water supply, is enclosed in an old Greek chapel, a short distance away, and the water is carried down to this modern place by a pipe. The Hotel Galilee, kept by a German, was clean and comfortable enough; although the only light in the rooms was from old fashioned candles. I stepped out on an upper balcony that evening and the dark little town, lying so quiet in the moonlight, had a restfulness and peace that made me forget the harsh, sun-baked aspect and the dusty streets of the day. Nazareth is and always has been, a rural village.

The following day we visited the chapel of the Virgin's Fountain, and the chapel over the traditional site of Mary's home, and also Joseph's workshop nearby. Near this Roman church is a shop where the Near East boys, orphaned by the war and by Turkish cruelty, make little souvenirs of olive wood. I purchased a small frame, neatly made and varnished. The boys were massed just outside in a choir, and sang several songs for us, and at the close threw bouquets of flowers our way. They were husky, healthy looking boys, showing every evidence of good food and care. The Virgin's Fountain, always the center of the daily life of the Nazarenes, brought thoughts of a little lad, growing in "wisdom and stature," who must often have come here on errands for his mother, even as the children come today and gather, around the faucet farther down.

That afternoon as we were in our autos ready to leave Nazareth, a little Mohammedan boy of eleven who had closely attached himself to me during my stay, came to our car and placing a small brass camel bell into my hand said, "bakscheech, madam." The sad face as he said goodbye, framed in a none too clean muslin scarf, the torn blue gown, and bare, soiled feet of this uncared for, untaught little fellow is a touching memory, and I see him again as he stood there presenting his farewell gift, the very best he had to offer, finding it blessed to give as well as to receive. It is good to know that God's Kingdom is even at the door, a fulfillment of the "good tidings of great joy that shall be to all people."

Five miles from Nazareth we came to Cana of Galilee, an unlovely village. Our short stop here left an unpleasant memory of the horde of begging, children who besieged us. Begging is a profession with them in these countries.

### **On the Sea of Galilee**

Riding through a pleasant valley planted with almond and olive groves, we came at nightfall to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee. Just before reaching here we noticed one of the new Jewish colonies in the fertile small plain of Genessaret. The Hotel Tiberias, under a similar management to the one in Nazareth, was satisfactory. Hotel accommodations are important items with a traveler, in strange land's. There is always a certain fearful looking forward to, and a sigh of relief when they are found to be at least fair. Before retiring

we walked the block down to the sea. It was in one of its numerous stormy moods, and we were amazed at the roar and violence of the waves. Next morning it lay rippling quietly in the sunlight. In a frail old boat with a flat top, forming an upper deck, we spent four hours on this lake so closely associated with our Lord's ministry. We skirted quite near to the shore, at first passing Magdala, home of Mary Magdalene, made up now of a few miserable hovels. Next came Bethsaida, home of the fishermen, and shortly we drew up to the shore at the side of Capernaum, buried and forgotten except where an excavation tells the tales of past glory. The ruins unearthed are those of a fine Jewish temple. The carvings on its marble frescoes and pillars, of fruit-figs, grapes, pomegranates-and a seven-branched candlestick, -proclaim its Jewish origin. An inscription dating it back to Christ's time has recently been found, and the flight of marble steps leading to its entrance, just lately uncovered, are in a perfect condition. After we were on our boat again, a few of us to escape the burning sun went below, and as we sailed towards the far end where we were to take our train for Damascus, we sang hymn after hymn suggested by the time and place.

Reaching the pier I looked back at the scene we were leaving-blue Galilee sparkling in the sun, encircled with its rim of hills and at its farther end Mt. Hermon, tall and majestic in the distance, stood blue and misty with glistening snow-capped topa picture more beautiful than any brush could paint. -- G.M.H.

## **"EXCEPTIONS" GIVEN BY OUR LORD**

*This article is supplied by a Brother in England*

### **Except A Man Be Born Again**

IN ST. JOHN'S Gospel, chapter 3, verses 3 and 5, we read. -- "Except a man be born again; he cannot see the Kingdom of God". "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God".

We remember the incident with Nicodemus, a devout man, and highly educated. Although not handicapped by a lack of understanding of the language, as we are, he was puzzled to understand our Lord's teachings: his well-trained human brain found it difficult to fathom the truths the great Teacher enunciated, they were so different from anything he had learned previously. Need we wonder, therefore, that only a few can rightly understand these words of our Lord today? only those who possess a reverent mind, and, more important-still, have been given spiritual discernment by God..

Students of language tell us that the Greek word "gennao", like the Hebrew word "yalad", can be correctly translated "begotten" or "born"; and that the Greek word "eidon" means "see," "behold".

Bearing in mind these definitions of the words used in the passages, we suggest that verse three may be correctly understood from two standpoints. (1) Except a man be "begotten" from above he cannot see (discern); the Kingdom of God. He is, not enabled to see (appreciate) its reality, and true worth, be he educated or no: the whole matter being a mystery, hid from ages and generations, and now being revealed to those begotten from above, and these alone. God hath revealed these things unto us by His Spirit. Prophets and kings of old, and even the angels of heaven, have desired to "see" these matters, but were not so privileged. (2) Except a man be "born" again he cannot see (enter into) the Kingdom of God, into the "place" the Lord has prepared for His Bride.

The natural birth, according to the flesh, is a type, an illustration of a higher, spiritual birth, to a spirit nature, with a spirit body. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit", and "that which is born of flesh is flesh". As a man cannot see things pertaining to this world, nor enter into the enjoyment of them, until after he has been born of the flesh, so likewise no man can see, or enter into, the heavenly Kingdom, except he be born of the Spirit.

### **Washing of Water by The Word**

In like manner may we not understand the fifth verse from two separate viewpoints: Water immersion of John was administered to the Israelite as a symbol of the cleansing away of sin, and to prepare the heart for acceptance by Christ, and the begetting of the Spirit; and except a man (a Jew) be born of water (be cleansed from sin) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. Or it may be understood to apply to the Gentile. The laver in the Court was arranged for the cleansing of the Priests before their entry into the Holy; typical of the cleansing of the antitypical Priesthood by the "washing of water by the Word." (Eph. 5:26:) There can be no real cleansing, however, apart from faith in the sacrifice of Jesus, represented in the Altar. Having this faith we can then be cleansed by the Truth (water); and thus continue our way towards consecration, and the begetting of the Spirit by the Word. -- Jas. 1:18.

"Except a man be born out of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God". This is not the Kingdom our Lord taught us to pray for -- "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth". - God's domain will have "many mansions", many planes of being; the earth will be one plane when restored, but the Kingdom, or plane in God's domain, to which our Lord here referred, is the one He mentions in Luke 12:32-"Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom;" a Kingdom on the spirit plane of being and, "Except a man be born out of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into this Kingdom."

### **Except Ye Eat the Flesh of The Son of Man**

"Verily I say unto you except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day". (John 6:53, 54). Jesus was here emphasizing the Scriptural standpoint-that the human race, although apparently living, are really dead, dead in Adam, dead in trespasses and sins. He had come that they might have life; and that they might have it more abundantly. -- John 10:10.

The Lord elsewhere referred to Himself as bread (verse 8). He was bread without leaven, and contained the life germ unimpaired; it was the human life germ. That is to say He had the power to pass on perfect human life. Possibly we at one time thought to "eat" the Lord's flesh meant our receiving spirit life: we think differently now... Then why do those who would be His disciples need to eat His flesh? Are they to expect a perfect human existence by and by? It was all very puzzling, because He went on to say-"and drink His blood". For the Jew to drink blood would lead to his being "cut off" under God's law. (Lev. 7:26,27.) What, then, could it all mean? It meant just what the Lord said of course, only that we need to rightly understand the matter.

Under the Jewish dispensation the words of the Law were to be taken literally because these people were all actors in a play. For an actor to make a success of his part, he needs to be indeed earnest.

God intended His people to be in dead earnest. What He told them in His Law was literally true -if they ate of blood they would be "cut off".

Both the sacrifices and the blood under the Jewish dispensation accomplished little beyond typically illustrating a following dispensation of better sacrifices, whet those with whom God would have dealings, would be called upon to reckonedly drink blood-partake of life, for "the life of the flesh is -in the blood" (Lev. 17:11), and this would lead to death; sacrificial death being the end in view.

### **Partakers of His Sufferings**

To enable us to present our bodies a living human sacrifice we must, by faith, assimilate (eat) the flesh of Jesus, and drink His blood. That is, we must whole-heartedly believe that He laid down a perfect human sacrifice for us. Believing this, recognizing in it God's mercy for us individually, we, by faith, partake of His great sacrifice we "taste of the heavenly gift" (Heb. 6:4), and we live. Having partaken of His blood, it is now our privilege to die a sacrificial death, before we can become "partakers of the Holy Spirit." -- Heb. 6:4.

Using another figure to illustrate the matter the Apostle Paul says- (Rom. 6:3), "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death". This is a favor reserved to the present dispensation-a dispensation of sacrifice.

We do not literally eat of the flesh of Jesus; neither do we literally receive life from Him; it is all a matter of faith on our part, without which we cannot please God. There has to be a literal presentation of the body (being) however, and a literal fulfilling of the sacrifice-a dying daily until the moment of our change. There is an actual begetting too, and actual evidences of the fact, for-"if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" When we shall be born of the Spirit on to the spirit plane, to be for ever with our Lord.

This dispensation of sacrifice, of grace and favor, is drawing to its close: our sacrificial walk in Jesus' steps is drawing near its end, we believe: we await His appearance with much joyful anticipation. The curtailments of the flesh will soon be gone forever: its weakness too. We hail the dawn of a New Dispensation-the opening of a Golden Age, when sin's evil effects will gradually be removed from off the earth. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning":

### **Except a Corn of Wheat Fall**

"Verily I say unto you except a corn of wheat fall into the ground it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit". -- John 12:24.

These words were spoken by our Lord just prior to His crucifixion, and it is no wonder that His disciples, and the Jews also, were mystified by such statements of the Truth. By the grace of God it is now possible to understand much of the significance of His sayings: in this case for instance we can see that, had Jesus not laid down His life for others He would not have been in a position to use His sacrificed life in behalf of the Church during the Gospel Age, and, later, be enabled to bestow life upon all found worthy amongst the sons of men during the Millennial Age.

Laying down His life in harmony with God's Plan; described by Himself as a grain of wheat falling into the ground to die, meant the bringing forth of 144,000 other grains of Wheat, the "first fruits". This part of God's program is still in progress in harmony with the instructions "gather the wheat into My barn". (Matt. 13:30.) Quite evidently the Lord intended to show that He must die so that others might have life from Him-the appointed

### **Second Adam; "the Everlasting Father" of the future**

In verse 26 Jesus carries the thought a step further saying-" If any man serve Me, let him follow Me". That is let him follow example and lay down his life a sacrifice, and "where I am, there shall also My servant be." -- By this language our Lord declared that His faithful followers shall ultimately: share His Divine nature in the spirit realm; for "if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor". The Father honored the Son because of His faithfulness even unto death. The same joy is set before us: the same prospect is held out as an incentive to us; for God is now calling out His sons and daughters who, after suffering with their Lord, shall live and reign with Him.

The world cannot live, they cannot partake of that which Jesus has provided for them-life and life abundant, until the last grain of wheat has fallen into the ground and died. Those of us who have covenanted to sacrifice must carry out our covenant, -or we may expect the destruction of the human nature through great tribulation. When all the sacrificing is complete, when all benefiting now from our Lord's death have passed beyond the veil, then will the merit of His sacrifice "bring forth much fruit". "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied", for "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

## **REACHING OUT HANDS FOR HELP**

Dear Brethren: For I still believe you to be brethren although you are no longer connected with the W.T.B.&T. Society. I received two copies of the "Herald" this week, and I must say I enjoyed reading them. I like the spirit Manifested in the articles therein. I am not at this time sending my subscription. Oh no, I am not yet ready for that; I have had such trying experiences, such heartaches, so many disappointments in the past few years that I am not going to be easily caught by anything again. I came into the light of present Truth about six months before Brother: Russell's death, and there was no person living happier than I was over the wonderful truth brought forth from God's great storehouse. I've been a very enthusiastic worker ever since, till, the past three or four months. For the past two or three years my mind has at times been torn with doubts, but however with an occasional slump here and, there,. I've been able too go on with the work which I believed. and, hoped almost against hope] was what the Lord wanted His children to do; for I did want to do His will, but in the past year one thing after 'another has appeared in the columns of the' Watch Tower which to my mind did not harmonize with Scripture or reason, and I am the kind who must have reasonable proof for what I believe. ' I could not tell, what was wrong. I' began to wonder. if I had been unfaithful and so the Lord was, allowing me to go into darkness.

' I kept struggling on and matters got worse and worse Everything I- read made me, doubt more and more, even when .I'd force these things to the back-ground and go out with .the books. The arguments of people I. met at the doors seemed to raise fresh doubts in my mind till I began to wonder seriously if there really was any God I got to the point where I. was ready to give up trying to serve Him, and I did. But do what I would I could not get rid of the ache at my heart. You see as far back as I can remember I had a desire to live pleasing to the Lord, so it was not very easy to sit down and do nothing. I never thought of looking elsewhere for I made up my mind when my trouble first began that if I ever lost faith in the Society, I would never have confidence in anything else. But of late the thought comes again and again to my mind that, it might be possible that the Lord still has a little body of His children whom He is still leading, and the Society to my mind gets more like Babylon, in that we must not question anything that comes to us through it, that having proven in the past that it is the channel through which the Lord is leading His people, we must, accept whatever comes to us through it as from the Lord, whether we, see it clearly or not.

One thing in particular which I cannot understand is this: The great work that's being done, is done for the greatest part by those neat' in the Truth who have come in and been advised to go right in the service. I am sure many of them have not had time to read the Scripture Studies, and they surely get no time to study the Watch Tower; and with two or three service days per week, and through the summer evenings and all, where do they get: any knowledge of the truth? How do they know why they are doing the work in which they are engaged?

I've been on the verge of infidelity and now like a drowning person catching at a straw I am reaching out my hands to you for the help which perhaps you might be able to give and at the same time praying that the Lord will lead and guide me into the paths of righteousness and truth once more and restore me to His favor, which tome is more desirable than ever: Perhaps I should not write all this to you, but I know that any true child of the Lord would want to help another, who is in doubt and perplexity. Will you please let me know' if there are meetings held here in. --? I want to attend and investigate further. So thanking you in advance.

I am, Your sister in Christ, -- Mich.