

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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THE SECOND PRESENCE OF OUR LORD

THE MANNER OF HIS REVEALING

PART I.

"And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" -- Matt. 24:3.

AS WE "see the day approaching," the subject of the Second Presence of Christ becomes increasingly of absorbing interest to all faithful watchers. It is entirely proper that it should be thus because the emphasis and prominence which Jesus and the Apostles gave to this theme, together with the importance and magnitude of the work and events associated with the Master's return, warrant the keenest and most alive interest. Briefly, the second visitation of Christ to this earth, or in other words, the exercise of Divine power through Christ in the affairs of mankind, is to usher in the era of world redemption. There is a vast array of inspired testimony which unmistakably teaches that this coming era is to witness the most signal triumph of all Ages -- victory over the grave; in that during that blessed dispensation the prison doors of the great death house the grave, are to be opened and all the prisoners set free. -- John 5:28, 29; Luke 4:18; 1 Cor. 15 :14-27.

Additionally, during that Age all the difficulties, sorrows, and sufferings that have so long afflicted mankind, including sin and death, are to be forever banished from the earth; further, during that 1000 years of the Mediatorial ministry of the Kingdom of God all the willing and obedient of earth's vast throngs will be restored and ushered into the perfect state of paradise; the willfully disobedient being destroyed in the Second Death. This is, without doubt, the Kingdom for which Jesus taught His disciples to pray, saying, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." In a word, this Kingdom is to bring the state of things in heaven, where there is no sin, no sorrow, no death, to this earth; and this must imply the establishing of the rule of righteousness, justice, and love; under which role humanity will ultimately be constituted one grand brotherhood. All of this happy state having been attained at the conclusion of the reign of Christ, St. John's vision will have passed into fulfillment and into history : "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away." -- Rev. 21:4.

No More in a Body of Flesh

While we contemplate with thrilling interest this glorious outlook for the human race, we very properly feel even a greater concern with regard to that more excellent inheritance which is promised the Church, and with regard to the program of events that is distinctly marked in prophecy as closely related to and connected with the Second Presence of Christ; and the rapture of the Church. "We shall be like Him and see Him as He is," says St. John; and O wondrous declaration! What footstep follower of Christ has ever yet fathomed the rich depths of meaning in that precious promise! None we answer. For that same Apostle goes on to say, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2.) Since this sublime event of the union of Christ and the Church is distinctly set forth as one of the first events to follow the Master's return, the subject of His presence and the manner of His revealing is one that is eminently fitting for our most sober study.

A thorough and exhaustive investigation of the entire subject of the second manifestation of Christ in the earth has resulted in the conviction of many, that the Savior is not to be revealed in a body of flesh as at His First Advent; either as He appeared before His resurrection, or as He manifested Himself in a fleshly form immediately thereafter; for the reason that He is no longer a man, no longer of the human nature, no longer subject to human conditions, but is now ascended far above angels, principalities and powers, dwelling in the realm of light that no human eye can see and no man approach unto. -- 1 Tim. 6:16.

That our Lord could, if He chose, assume a body of flesh and appear in human form again, as He did after His resurrection, no one will for a moment dispute, since all power is His. But such procedure is not only not borne out by the Scriptures, but would not be in keeping with the objects, purposes, and offices that are associated with His Second Presence. In the case of our Lord's fleshly manifestations immediately after his resurrection, the matter was entirely different. The Twelve Apostles must be constituted twelve reliable witnesses for the entire Church throughout the Age. They must be convinced beyond all doubt. He must appear in the same form as that by which He was known to them as a man. That purpose was served; they were fully convinced that He had come forth from the dead. But that purpose being accomplished, He will never so appear again. There is no such object to be served at His Second Advent as that which caused him to assume various bodies of flesh after His resurrection. His second manifestation to humanity is to be as King of kings and Lord of lords, to exercise all authority and power to heaven and in earth, for the deliverance and exaltation of His Church, and for the recovery from death, and the resurrection to paradise, of all the willing and obedient of the human race.

Considering the sublimity and magnitude of this work, the assuming of a body of flesh by our Lord and his dwelling therein visibly to men would be entirely inadequate and unsuitable to the fulfillment of His glorious

offices, and the carrying forward of God's great program for the Age. No more is it necessary for Christ to dwell in a body of flesh on the earth in connection with His future work of delivering humanity from sin and death, than it was for Jehovah to dwell with Israel in a body of flesh ages ago, when he dwelt with them and "led them forth by the right way." He used various agencies to perform His will at that time, and so will Christ use such agencies in carrying out the administration of His Kingdom in the work of restitution of all things.*

* In this connection a careful review of the present nature of Christ since His resurrection and the manner of His Second Presence, as found in Volume II, Chapter V, of "Studies in the Scriptures," will be found most profitable.

The Secrecy of His Second Presence

The strongest evidence that Christ's Second Presence is not to be revealed in a body of flesh is found in certain explicit statements which clearly imply that Jesus will be present in the end of this age for a time and the masses of humanity be entirely ignorant of it; in other words, that there is to be a secret invisible presence for a time prior to the revealing, or manifestation of the fact to the world at large.

As is well known by the careful student, the word "coming" used in our Common Version in several instances with reference to our Lord's Second Advent, is an improper translation; the Greek term being "Parousia," meaning presence, or having arrived, and should have been so translated. This wrong translation has been the cause of much confusion on this point. An instance of this wrong translation is to be noted in the Scripture text at the head of his article, which records the question of the disciples, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming," etc. Evidently it was not that the disciples were desirous of knowing what sign would be given to indicate the act of His coming or the instant of His arrival; rather, the thought in their minds was, "How shall we know that our Master is present in the end of the Age; what will be the indications, what events will disclose the fact of His presence?" Their question then was not what would be the sign that would indicate the nearness of the time when He would be coming, or on the way, but how they would know He was present after He had come.

So startling and strange is this thought to one accustomed to thinking of the Lord coming as a visible bodily presence, manifested to the visible sight and senses of all mankind, and to associate it with supernatural sights and sounds, such as the figurative descriptions seem to indicate, that it is almost immediately, without examination, rejected and scouted as preposterous.

As in the Days of Noah

It is interesting to note that the Revised Version recognizes "presence" to be the correct translation in this text by inserting it in the margin, and Professor Young, a generally recognized authority, gives the meaning as "being alongside of." The thought is further confirmed in our minds when we consider, too, that in our Common Version the word "parousia" is twice translated "presence," because any other translation would be inconsistent. The two passages are found in 2 Cor. 10:10 and Phil. 2:12. The first one reads, "But his [St. Paul's] bodily **presence** [parousia] is weak." Let the reader notice how entirely foreign to the true meaning this passage would be, as in many other cases, for it would then read, "His bodily **coming** is weak." The second instance, in Philippians, would also be just as inconsistent, if rendered **coming** instead of **presence**.

As a portion of our Lord's reply to the great question of His disciples and as clearly implying a secret presence for a time at his Second Advent, He said: "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming [presence] of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming [presence] of the Son of Man be." (Matt. 24:37-39). A critical examination of these words, and bearing in mind the proper rendering of the word "parousia" leads to the unavoidable conclusion that the Lord is speaking of His **presence** and not of His coming. The Master is making a significant comparison not as between the coming of the flood and the coming of the Son of Man; the **coming** of the Son of Man is not referred to in these verses at all. The comparison deals with the question the disciples had asked: "What shall be the sign of Thy **presence**," etc. It is true that the great catastrophe in the end of the old dispensation is compared to the dreadful fiery troubles that are to come as a result of the presence of the Son of Man, but these troubles do not eventuate and reach their climax until some time after His arrival. -

Christ's Presence Introduces New Dispensation

The comparison, then, is between the days of Noah, which preceded the flood, and the days of the presence of the Son of Man, which shall precede the trouble in the end of the present evil world. It would be proper to say that in a general broad sense, the days of the Son of Man include the entire Millennial day. But it is important to distinguish between the comparatively short introductory period of the Millennial day and the longer era of His manifested reign with His saints over the nations. The early part of the period of the days of the Son of Man is what we are now discussing. It is a time of transition or overlapping from the present to the future Age. The Scriptures make a distinction between this overlapping and His full revelation in glory and the establishment of His Kingdom that follow. In other words, it is the presence of Christ in the end of this Age that is to bring about the change, causing the downfall of the present order and preparing for the new. This is taught by St. Paul's statement in his letter to

the Thessalonians, when, speaking of the mystery of iniquity and its final end, he says: "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming [presence]." -- 2 Thess. 2:8.

This time of His presence when He will be engaged in certain activities which will cause the overthrow of Satan's empire, is evidently the time referred to by the Master in making the comparison between the days of Noah and the days of His secret and invisible presence prior to the inauguration of His Kingdom. The points of comparison between the days of Noah and the days of the Son of Man are distinctly noted, namely that the people in the end of the old dispensation were engaged in the usual routine of affairs in life -- eating, drinking, building, planting, marrying, giving in marriage, etc., till the day that Noah entered the ark and understood not till the deluge came and swept them all away. They were in absolute ignorance that those were days of preparation for a great catastrophe. So shall the days of the presence of the Son of Man be. There would be the same state of ignorance on the part of the masses. They would be continuing the same routine in life -- eating, drinking, building and planting, etc., and be in ignorance that Christ was officially present and engaged in certain enactments that are intended to accomplish the overthrow of the present evil world.

Revealed to the World in Flaming Fire

While it is true that sin and wickedness are shown to abound both in the days of Noah and in the days of the presence of the Son of Man, yet this is not the point of comparison; but the fact of the complete unconsciousness on the part of the people in both periods, of what was going on. So far as the world at large is concerned, it will be given no sign of His presence prior to the great trouble which His presence will cause. It will be the fiery trouble itself, that will finally open the eyes of humanity as to the significance of what is going on all about them. It is to this fact that the Apostle points when again he says: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." -- 2 Thess. 1:7, 8.

Here we are distinctly taught that it will be the fiery judgments, the great time of trouble, that will so humble humanity that they will ultimately discern that the overthrow of all their works and institutions is the result of the presence of the Son of Man. "Then shall they see [Greek **horao**, discern, take heed -- not with their physical eyes] the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven [the intense fiery troubles which then will make manifest to the whole world that the new order of things has begun] with great majesty and power." Compare Matt. 24:30 with Isa. 19:1; Psa. 97:1, 2; Jer. 4:13, where the symbolic nature of coming in the clouds is explained. Thus will be fulfilled also the words of the Revelator: "Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see [Greek **horao**, discern, take heed] Him, and those who pierced Him and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." As a part of the work of the Master's

secret presence in the end of this Age, there is what is called in the Parable of the wheat and the tares, the harvesting or gathering time; the time when all the ripe fruitage of the Age would be made manifest, gathered into the garner. Jesus said: "The harvest is the end of the Age." (Matt. 13 :39.) In other words, the harvest was to be the time when all the faithful footstep followers of Christ would be gathered and glorified together with Him.

"As a Snare Shall It Come'

Other texts which distinctly teach the secret presence of Christ in the end of the Age are: "Behold I come as a thief," and "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." (Rev. 16:15; 1 Thess. 5:2.) The thief-like coming and presence of the Lord can teach no other lesson than that of a secret or concealed presence for a time. Looking at the figure used: A thief approaches stealthily, quietly, and as far as possible, unobserved. He carries out his scheme of theft in a manner to conceal the fact of his presence until his deed is accomplished. Hence, we have the same lesson taught concerning the secrecy of the Master's presence, as set forth in His words in which He compares the days of Noah; with the days of the presence of the Son of Man.

Another testimony confirming the thought of a period of secrecy at our Lord's Second Advent is found in the statement: "As a snare shall it [the day of the Lord, the day of His presence] come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." (Luke 21:35.) The thought is undoubtedly the same as above noted, namely that the world will be unconsciously in the day of the Lord; it will have come upon them as a snare, stealthily, quietly, unknown to them; and only in the resultant fiery judgments and troubles will it be discerned by them later on.

Still other Scripture statements giving support to the conclusion of the Master's secret presence are suggested in our Lord's great prophecy recorded in Matt. 24:45-51, and in Luke 12:36-47. The Master here calls attention to two classes of servants, them faithful and unfaithful. His prophecy clearly shows that He is discussing conditions and events that pertain to the end of the Age, in the period of His presence, and declares that those servants are blessed who are obedient, faithful, and watchful; that such a state of heart will prepare them to recognize His presence. He likewise here describes other servants lacking in obedience, unfaithful, and not in a watching attitude, and that such will not, therefore, be in a state of heart to appreciate the truth, and facts concerning His presence, but will be denying them.

Other Watchers Have Knowledge of His Presence

Now if this early period of the Lord's presence was to be open, manifest, and visible to all, there could be no grounds whatever for anyone denying His presence. Brother Russell, writing on this point, has made the following statement which is worthy of careful consideration:

"The closing verses of Matt. 24, from verses 42 on, are very significant. In verse 37 our Lord had shown that the world would not know of the

Parousia of the Son of Man; and now he cautions His professed disciples that, unless on their guard, they will be similarly in darkness relative to His **Parousia**. He says, 'Watch therefore; for you know not what hour your Lord doth come [**erchomai** ---arrive].' If people were expecting a thief at a definite time, they would stay awake so as not to be taken unawares; so you should be ever awake, always ready, and always watching for the **first evidence of My Parousia**. In reply to your question, 'When shall these things be?' I merely tell you to watch and be ready, and when I arrive, when I am **present**, I will communicate the fact to **all** who are watching and faithful, and they only will have any right to know. All others should and will be in outer darkness, and must learn **with** and **as** the world -- through trouble.

"Who, then [in the Harvest], is a faithful and wise servant who his master shall make ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed that servant that his lord on coming [erchomai--when he **arrives**] shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods' -- all the vast storehouse of precious truth shall be opened to such faithful servants, to arm and supply and feed their entire household of faith.

"But if the servant's heart is not right, he will say, My master tarrys (has **not arrived**), and may smite (oppose and contradict) his fellow servants (those who differ with him; those, therefore, who are declaring the opposite -- My Lord does not tarry, but has come, is present). -- Studies, Vol. II, p. 163-164.

The fact that the Master distinctly tells us that some who are careless and overcharged will be lacking in the spirit of watchfulness and therefore will deny His presence, clearly establishes our claim that His presence at that time is of a secret and invisible character, and will be recognized only by a certain class, and by means which others cannot properly appreciate.

Signs for the Watchers

But if this early presence of our Lord is not to be an open, visible manifestation, but a secret presence for a time, how shall the faithful know? How shall they understand the secret of His presence? The reply is, Jesus gave certain signs and indications. In answer to the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign," etc., the Master gave a general description of the Gospel Age. He continued in a general way the character and circumstances of the Church's history, telling of her sore trials and tests of faith even until the end, or to the time of her deliverance. He led the minds of His disciples down to the end, and coming directly to their question, He said there would appear then, the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. This sign in the heavens we would understand to be not a literal, ocular demonstration, or manifestation of any bodily presence, but a sign in the sense of an indication that the time was at hand, and that then His presence would be an accomplished fact. And because He will have commenced certain official duties associated with His office as the world's new Ruler, there will be signs or manifestations in the symbolical heavens, that is, in Christendom.

Those in the attitude of faithful watchers, reading from the prophetic page the various forecasts and descriptions of that time, will see in the general circumstances prevailing amongst the nations and in Christendom, plain indications or signs that a new power, a new influence, is operating amongst mankind, looking in the direction of the disintegration of the old order, and ominous of the new dispensation approaching, the first act of which will be the inauguration of His Kingdom. Was it not then in consideration of the foregoing that Jesus uttered the words of encouragement, a message which doubtless brought a measure of comfort to those who heard Him then, but intended more particularly for the comfort and refreshment of those living contemporaneously with the days of His Second Presence.

He said: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28.) This must necessarily signify that when the time arrives that Christ's followers shall see the things begin to come to pass, that He mentioned, that the Master Himself shall already have been present for a time, in order to cause these things to come to pass. More than this, the promised deliverance for the Church cannot take place until after Christ comes.

When Ye See These Things Then Know

Again, the Master said: "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21:31.) He does not say, When ye see these things then know the coming of the Son of Man draweth near. No, He will have already come and the things mentioned will be in evidence as a result of His presence, And they will constitute in Christendom signs of the presence and activity of the Master; and He declares that they may then know, not that the Kingdom of God has been established, but that it is **nigh** at hand. The evident import is that His presence being an accomplished fact, and various events incident to the gathering of His Church and the fall of the old order of things already in progress, His faithful watchers would be fully justified in recognizing the imminency of His Kingdom and their deliverance and exaltation in the same.

Is it not apparent then, that the method or means by which the secret presence of Christ would be made known to His true disciples would be by their carefully observing the signs of the times, the trend of events in the world, politically, socially, and religiously in connection with the various outlines of prophecy contained in the Bible, which definitely describe, sometimes in symbolic language and again by plain, statements, the general circumstances and order of events associated with the

conclusion of this Age, the glorification of the Church and the establishing of the Kingdom of God? And was it not for this reason that Jesus said: "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is [except by watching and praying and by noting the signs of the fulfillment of prophecy]? And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." -- Mark 13:33, 37.

(Continued in Next Issue)

A WORTHY EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY

HUMILITY is one of the prime essentials of the Christian character. It has a most important bearing upon our progress in newness of life, of how we advance in the school of Christ. Lacking in humbleness of mind, the Christian will be disposed to neglect his duty when humiliation or self-abnegation, or, self -renouncement is involved. Pride, the opposite of humility, seeks ever to justify self, to exonerate self. If one then be deficient in the grace of humility, if he thinks more highly of himself than he ought to think, the fact will be made manifest in the unsatisfactory fruitage of his spiritual life. He will be shunning opportunities of service to the brethren in those humble ways in which their needs are often so manifest.

We recall how the Apostles overlooked a most important privilege on the last night of their Master's sojourn on earth; their blessed and worthy Lord was in their midst; there was not the customary servant to wash the guests' feet. The question arose as to who would perform this service. Instead of being moved by humility, there were sentiments of pride and ambition at work. They were discussing who would be greatest in the Kingdom. Their Master understood all. He girded Himself as a servant, and with towel and basin performed this menial service for His disciples. How powerful must have been this gentle reproof: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." -- John 13:14, 15.

"Let This Mind be in You"

Though there is not in these days the opportunity of performing the service of literal feet-washing, there is, nevertheless, abundant opportunity for the practice of the lesson involved. There are still opportunities for symbolic feet-washing. There are occasions in the Church of Christ when a proper degree of humility may go a long way in adjusting differences amongst brethren; in overcoming a state of contention and strife, and thus many heartaches and sorrows be prevented. It is to this end that there have been given us many kindly admonitions to humbleness of mind, to helpful service one to the other. "Let this mind be in you," the mind of Christ, the mind of humility, the mind that will in honor prefer another.

One of the most important places for humility to act is in connection with wrongs which have been done to others: proper apologies, acknowledg-

ments, and adjustments are most necessary. Humility must perform its duty. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." -- Matt. 5:23, 24.

Oh, that all the brethren could but see what a world of influence for good they can exercise in the Church by the proper exemplification of humility, in preserving a loving spiritual tone and in fostering and encouraging the fruits of the Spirit.

One of the finest examples of this display of humility has recently come to our attention in the form of a letter that was written and signed by 15 friends, who only recently have come to see the better way and their full liberty in Christ. The letter was sent broadcast throughout the country. It calls attention in no uncertain manner to the wrongful course in the past, and seeks in every possible way to right matters with everyone concerned. Believing this letter will be read with much profit by all, we are publishing it in full below:

Seattle, Washington.
August 11, 1926.

Dear Brethren In Christ Everywhere:

After long consideration and prayer this letter is sent forth. Recalling the words of our Lord, "If thy brother hath ought against thee," (Matt. 5:23, 24) we desire if possible to conform with His instructions.

For months we have felt keen regret for our part in the many wrongs amongst the brethren during the past nine years. However, by the grace of the Lord, we trust that some valuable lessons have been learned through these experiences.

From 1916 to 1925 we were successively identified with the I. B. S. A., the Stand Fast Bible Students, and the Elijah Voice Society. We accepted the "Finished Mystery" as "Divinely provided." A prominent doctrine of that book was that the time had arrived for the "Execution of Judgments" upon professed Christians, and upon this "World" or order. In conjunction with this teaching was the one made so prominent in the "Stand Fast Movement" -- that of the "Glorification of the Church" while still in the flesh. The many divisions and factions amongst Bible Students today are both directly and indirectly the results of these teachings of the "Finished Mystery." Believing these teachings, we began to judge the brethren, relegating groups and individuals into the "Great Company," or into the "World."

From 1923 to 1925 while in the "Elijah Voice Society," we (the writers of this letter) shared in the publication of a monthly journal, one issue of which (Dec. 1923-Jan. 1924 Elijah Voice Monthly) was especially devoted to judging and condemning the various other groups of Bible Students.

Now we wish to apologize and ask forgiveness for all such misjudging, condemning, and disfellowshipping: because we see that most of it was contrary to the Scriptures.

Furthermore, in seeking to oppose the present order, as per the "Finished Mystery," we indulged in wrong conduct, dishonoring to the great cause of the Truth. For a time our influence was used in causing some children to be separated from their consecrated parents over the question of patriotism, as taught in the public schools. This was in direct violation of the Scriptures, and of justice toward the children. -- 1 Tim. 5:8; F p. 603; Manna comment Jan. 15th.

Now we fully acknowledge our wrong in all these matters, as well as any other wrongs we may have done toward any one. Our fault began by trusting in leaders, instead of in the Lord. "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," should always be the rule with both leaders and their publications. **Christ alone** is the **unerring Guide**, and **God's Word alone is infallible**.

Candid investigation reveals that both brotherly love and justice were violated when the publishing of the "Finished Mystery" was "railroaded through" by those who assumed charge at that time. These facts are open to any one. There "a little leaven" (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9) began to manifest its working.

We fully acknowledge our fault in not heeding sufficiently the Lord's Word. By this neglect we have brought reproach upon the cause of Christ (1 Cor. 1:10-13; John 17:20, 21.) Jesus Christ is the **only basis of peace** and **center of unity**. We desire to fellowship with all who are united to Him by faith and consecration. This is fundamental. Our union with Him depends not upon any "Society," earthly "Channel," or set of men. (Z. '95-181; Poems of Dawn, pp. 13-18.) "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. Therefore, may we now enjoy the fellowship of all who are truly His.

Humbly, your brethren,

Signed: [Fifteen names follow]

We desire to emphasize the importance and value of the above letter. Let the situation be seen in its true light: During the past ten years especially, the Lord has permitted to sweep through the ranks of His people the most fiery ordeals and searching tests. Many peculiar changes have come; many new and strange teachings introduced. As a result a state of sore perplexity, confusion and distress has seized many. Some for a time have permitted themselves to be swayed by one object, influence, or another, and have taken a positions on certain issues and questions contrary to the teachings and spirit of the Master's Word. May have been found exhibiting an unloving and persecuting spirit; in other instances, have accepted certain foolish and fanatical teachings and have engaged in their dissemination, only later through some circumstances of awakening have been made to see the wrong and folly of their course. Instead of humbly acknowledging their indiscretion, and the injustice done their brethren, and

making due restitution and apologies for the same, studied effort is made to quietly cover the past and to act as though no wrong had been committed, and no apologies called for.

In the light of our Master's teachings, it is most obvious that such brethren are making a serious mistake, and are permitting pride and vanity to stand in the way of their own progress in spiritual things. May this not be the reason for such leanness of soul and poverty of Spirit among the brethren here and there? "Humble yourselves, therefore," says the Apostle, "under the mighty hand of God," if you would have the richness of His blessing and share in the great exaltation of the future.

In the letter above it is to be observed that no effort whatever is made to excuse or condone the wrongs of the past. A full sweep of everything is made. The atmosphere becomes entirely clear so far as these individuals who signed the letter is concerned, and none can fail to see that the right spirit prevails, and that there is the desire to honor the Lord. May this example of lowliness and humility have far-reaching effects and be blessed to the edification of others.

"WHAT IS PRAYER?"

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

"Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

"Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
Returning from his ways;
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And cry, 'Behold, he prays!'

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death:
He enters heaven with prayer.

"The saints in prayer appear as one
In word and deed and mind,
While with the Father and the Son
Sweet fellowship they find.

"Nor prayer is made by man alone, --
The Holy Spirit pleads,
And Jesus on the eternal throne
For sinners intercedes.

"O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hath trod:
Lord, teach us how to pray!"

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

"If ye do these things, ye shall never fail." -- 2 Pet. 1:10

THAT the Scriptures teach that certain heart qualities and stability of the soul in righteousness are necessary to the attainment of Divine favor and to a share in the exceeding great and precious promises, we presume, in some sense, will be acknowledged by all familiar with the Scriptures. Yet, this question is one that is evidently treated too lightly by the majority, and few appear to appreciate the true depth of the Lord's instruction on the subject of heart preparation for the enjoyment of His fellowship and the promised great reward. There are many explicit statements of Scripture which unmistakably teach that the attainment of that condition styled in the Scriptures, "Meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," is by a gradual process, requiring time and the providential leading, dealing, and disciplining of the Lord, in which the individual is given opportunity to cooperate by the exercise of the will and volition, and by yielding himself to the molding processes of the great master mind. Surely this thought is embodied in the Apostle Paul's admonition: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." -- Phil. 2:12.

This same inspired writer instructs that: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. 5:22, 23.) Again, another Apostle admonishes: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." -- 2 Pet. 3:18.

It is therefore manifest that there is a philosophy in the growth and development of Christian character, just as truly as in the growth and development of vegetation; and the more thoroughly we acquaint ourselves with the natural processes and conditions of development and growth in either case, the better we shall understand how to cultivate and to secure the desirable end -- maturity and luxuriant fruitfulness. The farmer who puts into practice only what he has learned by accident, in a haphazard way, and who is goaded to effort only by sheer necessity, must not expect the fruitful fields, the abundant harvests and the well earned approbation of the enterprising, thrifty farmer who has made a study of the business and brought knowledge, carefully gleaned, together with enterprise and energy, to his assistance in the work.

Bringing Forth Fruit Unto God

Let us learn a lesson from the fruit tree. If one, knowing nothing about the necessity for cultivation, simply plants the tree and neglects it, its strength, instead of producing fruit, will generally go toward making wood and leaves; worms and decay may attack its root, insects may sting and blight its scanty fruitage; and if it continues to stand, it will Only be a useless, fruitless cumberer of the ground, an advertisement of the farmer's negligence, and worthy only of having the axe laid to its root. Had it been pruned and trimmed and kept free from insects, etc., under the blessing of God's air and rain and sunshine, it would have been a fruitful, creditable tree; for the laws of nature are true and faithful in all their operations.

And none the less rigid are the operations of moral law in the growth and development of moral character. Under proper conditions and with proper diligent cultivation, the character will grow and develop according to fixed laws, and will become beautiful and fruitful in blessings to self and others; or, lacking the necessary cultivation, even under favorable natural conditions, it will be deformed, worthless and fruitless.

When we presented our bodies as living sacrifices to God, holy and acceptable through the merit of our Redeemer, We there received the spirit of adoption to the spirit plane, as spiritual sons of God; and from that time the faculties and dispositions of our mortal bodies were reckoned as our new being, now under the direction and control of the Spirit of God. The faithfulness with which we through the Lord's Spirit, cultivate and nourish this new life, by persistently weeding out old habits of thought and action, supplanting them with new virtues, and training them to activity in the Divine service, is to prove our worthiness or unworthiness of the actual new nature to be received at the resurrection, to which perfect spirit condition our present condition stands related as embryotic; for the character and disposition of the embryo New Creature will be the disposition of the perfected New Creature, when born in the resurrection. .

The Apostle affirms (Rom. 8:11) that if we really have the Spirit of God in us -- unless we quench it or put it away from us -- it will quicken our mortal bodies, make them alive toward God, active in growing into His likeness and fruitful in Christian graces and activities. Again he adds, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His," and "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." -- Rom. 8:9, 14.

It is our business, therefore, to grow; to cultivate in ourselves those dispositions which are worthy of us as spiritual sons of God, called to be "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ."

The Development of Christian Character a Gradual, Daily Life-Work

The Apostle Peter tells us how to proceed in the matter of cultivating Christian character, intimating that we cannot do it all in a day, nor in a few days, but that it must be a gradual, daily life-work, a process of addition -- adding virtue to virtue and grace to grace, day by day and hour by hour. He says, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue [fortitude];

and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance [self-control]; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity [love]." Then he adds, "If ye do these things ye shall never fall." -- 2 Pet. 1:5-7, 10.

This is a very strong assurance -- that if we do these things we are **sure to stand approved of God**. We do well therefore to consider them with **special care**. Here are eight elements which must go toward making up the Christian character, the one to be added to the other and assimilated by the spiritual germ of the new nature, until the embryo New Creature is formed; and then it must continue to grow and to develop. Look at them again. They are:

1. Faith 5. Patience
2. Virtue (Fortitude) 6. Godliness
3. Knowledge 7. Brotherly kindness
4. Temperance (self-control) 8. Charity (love)

A "Thus Saith the Lord" Should Be the End of All Controversy

"Let a man examine himself," says St. Paul. Let each ask himself: (1) Have I the **faith** to which the Apostle here refers; not faith in everything or every person, but in God -- in His plan of redemption through the vicarious or substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, and in all his promises built upon that sure foundation? Do I trust Him implicitly? Is a "Thus saith the Lord" the end of all controversy, the solution of all doubts and the restful assurance in every perplexity?

(2) Am I endeavoring to lead a **virtuous** life? This, to the child of God, consecrated to be a living sacrifice, implies much more than merely abstaining from evil. It implies living truthfully, that is, **true to his covenant**, which to willfully violate would be equivalent to swearing falsely. It is **fortitude**, strength of character in righteousness. It implies the cultivation of the strictest integrity in our dealings, both with God and with our fellow-man, scrupulous honesty, justice and truth being the only standards.

The Psalmist clearly defines it thus, saying, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth **in his heart**. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor; in whose eyes a vile person is condemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not [who will not violate a contract found to be unfavorable to himself]. He that putteth not out his money to usury [taking unjust advantage of the necessities of others], nor taketh a reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." (Psa. 15:2-5.) Such an one is a virtuous man, a man of fortified or strong character. How we need to invoke Divine assistance here! and how critically to judge ourselves.

(3) Am I endeavoring day by day to gain a more thorough and complete **knowledge** of God, of the Plan revealed in His Word, and of the special features now in operation, that I may co-operate with him in its execution; and of His will concerning me in the particular relationships and

conditions in which I now stand -- **irrespective of my own will and disposition in any matter?** Am I striving to gain this knowledge of God and of His righteous will concerning us, as revealed through His Word, by the Holy Spirit? Neglect of this Divinely appointed means of knowledge is equivalent to setting up our own imperfect standard of righteousness and ignoring the Divine standard. It is, therefore, important that we give **all diligence** to the study of the Divine Oracle, that we may be fortified in faith and works accordingly.

(4) Am I **temperate**, moderate, exercising **self-control** in all things -- in eating, drinking, in home arrangements, in conduct, in thoughts, in words, in deeds? Do I realize that self-control is one of the most important elements of good character? "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city," is the counsel of the Wise Man; and many a victorious general has yet to learn to conquer and control himself. Self-control has to do with all our sentiments, thoughts, tastes, appetites, labors, pleasures, sorrows, and hopes. Its cultivation, therefore, means a high order of character-development. Self control, accompanied by faith, fortitude, knowledge from on High, implies increased zeal and activity in Divine things, and increased moderation in earthly things. In judgment, in conduct, in the regulation of temporal affairs, etc., "Let your moderation [temperance, self-control] be known unto all men." (Phil. 4:5.) Let them see by our thoughtful (not rash and hasty), careful and considerate demeanor, in every affair of life, that we honor our profession.

(5) Am I **patient** under trial and discipline, keeping my feelings always under the control of enlightened reason, letting patience have its perfect work in cultivating the character, however severely the plow and the harrow may break up the subsoil of the heart, meekly submitting **cheerfully** under the mighty hand of God, in His work of preparing me for a place in His Kingdom soon to be established? The Greek word from which patience is here translated means **cheerful endurance**.

(6) Am I carefully observing and endeavoring to **pattern my character** and course of action **after the Divine model?** If a parent, or in any position of authority, am I using that authority as God uses His -- not for selfish purposes, to make a boast of it, or in any way to oppress or trample upon the God-given individual rights of those under such authority, but for the blessing and advantage of those under it, even to the extent of self-denial, with patience, dignity, and grace, and not with boastful imperiousness, which is the attitude of tyrants?

If a son, or one under authority to any extent, do I consider the example of loving obedience furnished us in the example of our dear Lord? His delight was to do the Father's will at any cost to Himself. As a man, under the kingdoms, authorities of this world, and as a youth, under the authority of earthly parents, He was loyal and faithful. (Matt. 22:21; Luke 2:51); yet all of this earthly authority was exercised by His personal inferiors, even though they were His legal superiors. How beautifully we shall be able to grace and fill whatever station we occupy in life, if we carefully copy

godliness (Godlikeness), whether we princes or peasants, masters or servants

Does Brotherly Love Control?

(7) Does **brotherly kindness** characterize all my actions? Does it cause me to make due allowance for the inherited weaknesses and circumstantial misfortunes of others? Does brotherly kindness deal patiently and helpfully so far as wisdom, with a view to the correction of those faults, may dictate; and even at the expense of self-interest, if necessary and prudent?

If, as I look myself squarely in the face, I recognize deformity of character, do I thankfully accept a brother's proffered aid and meekly bear reproof, determining that by the grace of God I will overcome such dispositions, and prove myself a help rather than a hindrance to others, if it should even cost my life to do it; and that I will no longer foster my old dispositions, but will plunge into activity in the service of God with those who should have my co-operation in service, instead of being a burden to them?

(8) Have I **charity** (love unfeigned) for the unrighteous and unlovely, as well as for the good and beautiful -- a love which is ever ready to manifest itself in wise and helpful activity for saint and sinner; a love which pities, helps, comforts, cheers and blesses all within its reach; which longs for the grand opportunities and power and glory of the incoming Age, chiefly for its privileges of scattering universal blessing; and which, in harmony with that sentiment, utilizes every present opportunity wisely and in harmony with the Divine Plan for the accomplishment of the same end -- thus manifesting and cultivating the disposition which must be found in every member of that glorious company which will constitute the King's Cabinet in the incoming Age? If this disposition is not begun, cultivated and developed **here**, we shall not be considered worthy of that office **there**.

Just as in a well kept orchard pruning, trimming, and cultivation are necessary to accomplish the desired end of fruitfulness, so must we be watchful and take necessary precautions to prevent blight and decay of character, and to guard against the intrusion of evil powers and influences calculated to sap the life of the New Creature. By resisting the Devil he will flee from us; and by patient continuance in well-doing an increasing measure of development will result. "If these things be in you and abound," says the Apostle Peter (that is, if you have them in some measure and keep on cultivating them, so that they abound more and more and rule in you), "they make you that ye shall be neither barren [idle] nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord, Jesus Christ." The Truth is for such: "Light is sown for the **righteous**," and they are **sure to get it**. They shall not walk in darkness. If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine. (John 7:17.) "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath **forgotten** that he was purged from his old sins.

Let Us Give All Diligence in These Matters .

"Wherefore, brethren, **give diligence** to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things [if you diligently cultivate this disposition] ye shall **never fall**." Being justified fully, by faith in the sacrifice of Christ for your redemption and sanctification (setting apart from the world, and devotion to the service of God) by the Truth, your final selection to that position of glory, honor and immortality, to which you are called, shall be **sure**. For "so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

"Wherefore," again says our beloved Brother Peter, "I will not be negligent to put you always in", remembrance of these things. Yea, I think it meet so long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance Moreover, I will endeavor that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance." This Peter did; and the Church to this day may profit by his brotherly counsel.

While the Apostle Peter, addressing the consecrated, thus clearly and explicitly points out the way in which we may make our calling and election sure to the chief favor of God, the Apostle Paul, addressing the same class, shows that willful and continual neglect to develop and cultivate the Christian character, involves the loss, not only of the chief favor of the High Calling, but, eventually, of all favor. He wrote, "If, ye [ye who have solemnly covenanted to sacrifice your **very life** in the service of God, for the eradication of evil] live after the flesh [with selfish effort, merely to gratify self] ye shall die." (Rom. 8:13.) God has no use or place for willful covenant-breakers:

With all our striving and watchfulness, however, we shall not be able, in our present condition, to reach our ideal in the details of conduct, thought word and deed. Perfection is something which can only be approximated in the present life. But the measure of our effort to attain it will prove the measure of our faithfulness and earnest desire to do so. And that effort will not be unfruitful. If no fruit appears, we may be sure that little or no effort is made at cultivation, pruning, etc. The fruit will appear, not only in the development of the Christian graces of character, but also in increasing activities. We must not wait for our immortal bodies, promised us in our resurrection, before our activity in God's service begins. If we possess the spirit [the will, the disposition] of that new nature our **mortal** bodies will be active in the service of God's Truth now. Our feet will be swift to run His errands, our hands prompt to do His bidding, our tongues ready to bear testimony to the Truth, our minds active in devising ways and means to do so more and more abundantly and effectively. Thus we shall be living epistles, known and read of all about us-an honor to Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

THE COURAGE OF FAITH AND THE WEAKNESS OF FEAR

"We are well able to overcome it." -- Num. 13:30

WE WALK by faith," says the Apostle Paul, and the faithful follower of Christ, along through the years, realizes through experience the wisdom and truthfulness of the Apostle's words, that all progress that he made in the Christian life is according to faith, and in proportion as the believer is able to step out in full confidence and go forward in the strength of the Divine promises and the unfailing Word of God. Jesus truly said that man shall not live by the natural bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. But to live by His Word, it must be received and appropriated by faith. We must feed upon it and must live according to it.

Again, there comes before us one of those deeply solemn lessons from Israel's wilderness journey; one that teaches us the cause of failure, as well as the secret of success in God's service. And as all experienced Christians have observed that it is mistrust that spells disobedience and failure, so it is simple and implicit faith in God that produces a life of devotion, obedience, and loyalty to Him.

It was early in Israel's experience that they reached the place known as Kadesh-Barnea, on the border of the promised land, with the hills of the latter in full view. In harmony with the program that they should have the inheritance of Canaan, it was proposed that they go up immediately to possess the land; but caution and fear suggested that first spies be sent out, that they might have a better knowledge of the real value of the land, and also a better knowledge of the obstacles to be encountered in taking possession of it. With Israel, as well as with Christians today, the opportunity was afforded of doubting the beneficence of the Divine arrangement, of doubting the wisdom and love of God, and conjecturing the impossibility of taking possession of the land, and the probability that even then they should find it far less attractive than the Lord, at the mouth of Moses, had reported.

Faith Needs No Human Props

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel; of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them. And Moses by the commandment of the Lord sent them from the wilderness of Paran; all those men were heads of the children of Israel." -- Num. 13:1-3.

If we would properly grasp the reason for the foregoing commandment, it must be considered in connection with a statement of Moses later recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy; where, in reviewing the facts of Israel's remarkable history in the wilderness, he recalls the following important and interesting circumstance: "And when we departed from Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible wilderness, which ye say by the mountain of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-Barnea. And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us. Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it, as the

Lord God hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged. And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come." -- Deut. 1:19-22.

Here the secret of Israel's difficulty is made known and it becomes manifest that it was in response to the unbelief and lack of faith on the part of the people, that God gave the commandment concerning the sending of the spies. Had they been controlled by proper trust and reliance upon God, they would have acted upon those solemnly significant words of Moses: "Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: **go up and possess it**, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; **fear not, neither be discouraged.**" There is no intimation here about the necessity for spies in order to help God to fulfill his promise. Faith has no need of spies, when it has the promise and the presence of the Living God to rely upon. Since Jehovah had declared the land to be theirs, it must surely have been worth having, and truly His promise was most definite and complete. He had testified the quality and character of the land in the highest terms. -- Deut. 8:7-9.

Unbelief Rejects God's Ways

In consideration of the Divine foreknowledge respecting the journey to the promised land and of all the difficulties and reverses incidental thereto, what need could there possibly have been for the sending of spies, except in response to the heart of unbelief. And was it not this unbelief on the part of the people that prompted them to say: "We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again"?

Truly, these questions come directly home to the heart of the believing Christian. "They find us out, and make thoroughly manifest where we are. It is not for us to sit down and coolly animadvert upon the ways of Israel in the wilderness; to point out error here, and failure there. We must take all these things as types set before us for our admonition. They are beacons, erected by a friendly and faithful hand, to warn us off from the dangerous shoals, quicksands, and rocks which lie along our course, and threaten our safety. This, we may be sure, is the true way to read every page of Israel's history, if we would reap the profit which our God has designed for us in penning such a record. . . . We learn, most distinctly, from Deut. 1:22 that the idea of sending the spies had its origin in the heart of Israel. God saw their moral condition, and He issued a command in full keeping therewith.

"If the reader will turn to the opening pages of the First Book of Samuel, he will find something similar in the matter of the appointment of a king. The Lord commanded Samuel to hearken to the voice of the people, and make them a king. (1 Sam. 8:22.) Was it that He approved of the plan? Most surely not; on the contrary He declares plainly that it was a positive rejection of Himself. Why then command Samuel to appoint a king? The command was given in consequence of Israel's condition. They were growing weary of the position of entire dependence upon an unseen arm;

and they longed for an arm of flesh. They desired to be like the nations around them, and to have a king who should go out before them, and fight their battles for them. Well, God gave them their request, and they were very speedily called to prove the worthlessness of their plan. Their king proved a most complete failure, and they had to learn that it was an evil and bitter thing to forsake the living God and lean on a broken reed of their own selection.

"Now, we see the same thing in the matter of the spies. There can be no question, in the mind of any spiritual person who studies the entire subject, as to the fact that the scheme of sending the spies was the fruit of unbelief. A simple heart that trusted God would never have thought of such a thing. What! are we to send poor mortals to spy out a land which God has graciously given to us, and which He has so fully and faithfully described? Far be the thought; nay, rather let us say, 'It is enough; the land is the gift of God, and as such it must be good. His word is enough for our hearts; we want no spies; we seek no mortal testimony to confirm the word of the living God. He has given; He has spoken: this is enough.'"

The Christian's Consolation in Christ, But Real Faith at High Premium

Surely the lesson in all of this matter doubtless was intended for Israel after the Spirit. Indeed, we should not forget that the failure of natural Israel, and the Divine dealings with them in consequence, were more in the sense of typical illustrations for spiritual Israel than as real condemnations on natural Israel. It is difficult to suppose that God expected much more of those people in their condition and circumstances than was manifested in their course. Of spiritual Israel, however, much more may reasonably be expected. There are significant correspondencies. We observe the same lack of faith all along the line -- the constant trend toward apostasy. To spiritual Israel God has given every ground for confidence: The long promised Savior came in due time. Most reliable witnesses have testified concerning the purpose of His ministry, sacrifice, death and resurrection, and finally concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. By many indisputable proofs, there is given a strong consolation for all those who have fled unto Him for refuge. The Divine call has come to His followers to walk in His footsteps, to bear the cross, to live the life of self-mastery, the overcoming life, and to attain, at last, a share in the inheritance that is "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God 'unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Additionally, to strengthen faith in Him He has given us the more sure word of prophecy. And now in these days, far down the stream of time, it becomes most obvious that much of this word of prophecy has passed into history, and Jesus' words are frequently recalled: "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." This combined prophetic testimony teaches us that "the end of all things is at hand" -- all things as they relate to the conclusion of this Age, and the introduction of the new Age of life and promise. Yet, with all this

display of grace and Divine provision for all needs, real faith today, is at a high premium and there is to be noted everywhere in spiritual Israel the tendency to want to "spy out the land," and to neglect the path of faith, to seek by natural means, and according to the spirit of the children of this world, to attain the promised inheritance. The warning of the Apostle Paul to the early Church is most fitting, therefore, at this time: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." -- Heb. 3:12, 13.

The Majority and the Minority Report

The order was that twelve men should go to spy out the land, and we read: "And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way, southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in., whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. . . . And they returned from searching of the land after forty days . . . and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely find it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we." -- Num. 13:17-19, 21, 25-33.

The report given foregoing is shown to be by ten of the committee of twelve. Two of the number, Joshua and Caleb, not concurring in this, report gave a very reverse one. They said: "The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for. us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not." -- Num. 14:7-9.

There was a most deplorable lack of faith upon the part of the masses of Israel. Almost unanimously they decided that they had been misled, that their best course was to return to Egypt and proffer their services again to the Egyptian taskmasters. They decided that their coming out of Egypt was a mistake, that the journey through the wilderness was wasted time, and that they now stood in a hopeless position, a people without a country. It is the story of unbelief that impresses us all through this record. Had the people and their leaders been properly exercised by faith, they would have quickly recognized that the same hand which had conducted twelve men safely into the land could just as easily have conducted the whole congregation of Israel there, and thus God's promise would at once have been realized. But without that faith, the whole scheme proved a failure, and the results only revealed the real condition of the hearts of the people.

Faith Bring in the Living God

"There is always surely to be a 'nevertheless,' where man is concerned, and when unbelief is at work. The unbelieving spies **saw** the difficulties -- great cities, high walls, tall giants. All these things they saw; but they did not see Jehovah at all. They looked at the things that were seen, rather than at the things that were unseen. Their eye was not fixed on Him who is invisible. Doubtless, the cities were great; but God was greater. The walls were high; but God was higher. The giants were strong; but God was stronger.

"Thus it is that faith ever reasons. Faith reasons from God to the difficulties: it begins with Him. Unbelief, on the contrary, reasons from the difficulties to God; it begins with them. This makes all the difference. It is not that we are to be insensible to the difficulties; neither are we to be reckless. Neither insensibility nor recklessness is faith. There are some easy-going people who seem to get along through life on the principle of taking things by the smooth handle. This is not faith. Faith looks the difficulties straight in the face; it is fully alive to the roughness of the handle. It is not ignorant -- not indifferent -- not reckless; but -- what? **It brings in the living God.** It looks to Him; it leans on Him; it draws from Him. Here lies the great secret of its power. It cherishes the calm and deep conviction that there never was a wall too high for the Almighty God -- never a city too great -- never a giant too strong. In short, faith is the only thing that gives God His proper place; and, as a consequence, is the only thing that lifts the soul completely above the influences of surrounding circumstances, be they what they may. Caleb was the exponent, when he said, 'Let us go up at once at possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.' These are the pure accents of that lively faith that glorifies God and makes nothing of circumstances.

"But alas! the great majority of the spies were no more governed by this lively faith than the men who sent them; and hence, then one believer was talked down by the ten infidels. 'The men that went up with them said, 'We are not able to go up against this people.' The language of infidelity was flatly opposed to the language of faith. The latter, looking at God, said, 'We are **well** able.' The former, looking at the difficulties, said, 'We are **not** able.' Thus it was and thus it is. The eyes of faith are ever covered by the living God, and therefore difficulties are not seen. The eyes of unbelief are covered with circumstances, and therefore God is not seen. Faith brings in God, and therefore all is bright and easy. Unbelief always shuts God out, and therefore all is dark and difficult."

Only Few in Spiritual Israel Obtain the Promises

One has but to read the Church's history of the past nineteen centuries to find the counterpart of all this sad lack in ancient Israel, enacted throughout the career of spiritual Israel. St. Paul while still in the Church by the power of the Spirit, sensed the dangers and perils that would beset the Church and warned the Lord's people concerning the impending apostasy. He referred to the wolfish and ambitious who would creep into the Church

and work havoc amongst its members. (Acts 20:29, 30.) The same Apostle with others saw the same apostasy setting in in his day. A little later there is disclosed in the Apocalyptic visions of St. John, what was to be the tried and troubled state of the Church throughout the Age. History now unfolds before our gaze the fulfillment of many of those startling and marvelous pictures which set forth the professing Church as she has been composed of an admixture of all kinds, classes, and grades, assuming the name of Christ. And as it was in the case of Israel of old, the majority were found going wrong and fighting against God, so throughout the Age and unto this day the majority are easily swayed by influential leaders who have usurped positions of power and control; and the voice of the minority, who generally represent the standpoint of true faith in God, is of little influence, and its testimony given no weight.

All of these facts concerning the state of spiritual Israel throughout the Age are further brought more or less to our attention in the seven messages addressed to the seven churches, as recorded in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation. Therein the Lord is shown to be constantly reproofing, judging, and warning his professing Church; the truly faithful amongst whom are generally shown to be few in number. But they are the overcomers and to them appertain the fulfillment of the exceeding great and precious promises. May all of Gods truly trusting children today profit by the voice of inspiration coming from those far off days, and in this time of confusion, fiery ordeals and tests of faith, exercise that faith and confidence that will wait upon the Lord and endure as seeing Him who is invisible. We shall reap in due season, if we faint not; for He is faithful that promised.

SATISFACTION WITH DIVINE GUIDANCE

(Continued from last issue)

"And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken concerning Israel." -- Num. 10:11-13, 29-36.

OBSERVING again, the picture of Israel in the wilderness, fully equipped and ready for the journey, everything is duly ordered for their marching forward triumphantly by the grand regulator -- "The commandment of the Lord." All are in their proper place, every man according to his pedigree and each tribe according to the standard thereof. We observe the pillar of fire and the cloud and at last the definite signal or testimony of the silver trumpet. There is, therefore, nothing lacking amongst the hosts of Israel. An all-watchful eye, a powerful hand, and a loving heart have made provision for all possible emergencies so that the entire congregation in the wilderness is thoroughly furnished. How is it then with the Church of Christ? The reply is that every needful provision has been made for the spiritual guidance and leading of the Christian in all his journeyings. He is

under the direction and leadership of the greater than Moses, even Christ, who is the Head over all things to the Church which is His body.

"Nothing can escape His vigilant eye; nothing is beyond His omnipotent hand. Hence, therefore, all those who can truly say, 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' may add, without hesitancy or reserve, 'I shall not want.' The soul that is, in truth and reality, leaning on the arm of the living God can never shall never want any **good** thing. The poor foolish heart may imagine a thousand wants; but God knows what we really want, and He will provide all."

Another Lesson of Reliance Upon God.

As every follower of Christ knows, the lesson of trust is surely an all-important one. Practically all the failures in the Christian life are due to unbelief and to an insufficient faith and reliance upon the Lord. Again we have a solemn lesson along this line and a touching display of grace Divine as Israel was about to move forward after a period of waiting. We read: "And Moses said unto Hobab., the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you; come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my, kindred. And he said; Leave us not, I pray thee, forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." -- (Num. 10 :29-31.)

This declaration of Moses to Hobab is a beautiful expression of faith in God. Speaking for all Israel, he is affirming their trust in the Divine promise originally made to Abraham concerning the inheritance of Canaan for his posterity, and is virtually saying: "We firmly believe in the promises of God. We are now in the journey toward that promised land, of which the Lord has said, 'I will give it thee.'" Yet, observing critically this interesting statement of Moses, we discover what appears to be a weakness of faith, a failure to trust fully in the arm and leadership of the Lord. The object of Moses in accosting Hobab and entreating him to join them in the journey and share in the experiences, sufferings, and fortunes of Israel may have been from a good purpose; but it appears that the principal motive was that Israel should have the advantage of the knowledge and experience that Hobab possessed, in that wild and uncertain country in which they were journeying: This thought is conveyed in the words, "and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." Thus there is the suggestion of mistrust or failure to rely upon the promise of God's guidance and supervising care. Moses, therefore, displays that element of weakness that is so commonly to be observed in the professing servants and children of God through the Ages.

Prone to Leave the God We Love

"If we did not know something of our own hearts, and the tendency thereof to lean on the creature rather than upon the living God, we might well marvel at the above. We might feel disposed to inquire, What could

Moses possibly want with Hobab's eyes? Was not Jehovah sufficient? Did not He know the wilderness? Would He suffer them to go astray? What of the cloud and the silver, trumpet? Were not they better than Hobab's eyes? Why then, did Moses seek for human aid? Alas! alas! we can but too well understand the reason. We all know, to our sorrow and loss, the tendency of the heart to lean upon something that our eyes can see. We do not like to occupy the ground of absolute dependence upon God for every step of the journey. We find it hard to lean upon an unseen arm. A Hobab that we can see inspires us with more confidence than the living God whom we cannot see. We move on with comfort and satisfaction when we, possess the countenance and help of some poor fellow-mortal; but we hesitate, falter, and quail when called to move on in naked faith in God.

"These statements may seem strong; but the question is, are they true? Is there a Christian who reads these lines that will not freely own that it is even so? We are all prone to lean upon an arm of flesh, and that, too; in the face of a thousand and our example of the folly of so doing. We have proved, times without number, the vanity of all creature confidence, and yet we **will** confide in the creature. On the other hand, we have again and again, the reality of leaning upon the Word and upon the arm of the living God. We have found that He has never failed us, never disappointed us., nay, that He has always done exceedingly abundantly above all the we ask or think; and yet we are ever ready to distrust Him, ever ready to lean upon any broken reed, and betake ourselves to any broken cistern. Has it not been so all along with Israel after the Spirit? But notwithstanding the fact that thus it is with us, God's favor, his deep and compassionate love, have abounded toward us as in the days of old toward Israel.

God Provided a Resting Place

While Moses is looking to Hobab for guidance, Jehovah proceeds to teach His servant that He Himself is all-sufficient as a guide, for we read:

"And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them." How marvelous! How deeply significant this should have been to Moses. "What rich, what precious grace! In place of their finding a resting place for Him, He would find a resting place for them. What a thought! The mighty God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, going through the wilderness to look out a for a suitable camping ground for a people who were ready, at every turn in their path, to murmur and rebel against Him!

"Such is our God, ever 'patient, gracious, powerful, holy' -- ever rising, in the magnificence of His grace, above all our unbelief and failure, and proving Himself superior, in His love, to all the barriers which our unfaithfulness would erect. He, most assuredly, proved to Moses and to Israel, that He was far better as a guide than ten thousand Hobabs. We are not told in this place, whether Hobab went or not. He certainly refused the first appeal, and perhaps the second likewise. But we are told that the Lord went with them. The cloud of the Lord was with them by day, when they

went out of the camp.' Blessed shelter in the wilderness! Blessed, unfailing resource in everything! He went before His people to search out a resting place, and when he found a spot suited to their need, He halted with them, and spread His sheltering wing over them to protect them from every foe. 'He found him in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him. He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young; spreadeth abroad he wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.' (Deut. 32:10-12.) 'He spread a cloud for a covering, and a fire to give light to the night.' -- Psa. 105:39.

"Thus, then, all was provided for according to the wisdom, power, and goodness of God. Nothing was, or could be, lacking inasmuch as God Himself was there. 'And it came to pass, as the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee. And when it rested, he said, Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.'"

All of this was long ages ago. Now as we have seen, we are in the days when God through the greater than Moses, even the Lord Jesus Christ, is leading His people unto their promised inheritance. And He just as truly finds and provides for His people a resting place; yea, it is the rest that remaineth for the true people of God. Such as put their trust in Him and not in the arm of flesh shall not be put to confusion by any of the powers of evil, or the forces of darkness, but, like Israel of old, such shall see their enemies flee before them, and shall ultimately experience the great deliverance promised to all the faithful.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Dear Brethren,

Greetings in His dear name.

I am writing you as one who is earnestly seeking to know the Lord's will concerning those who have and are seeking to consecrate their all in His service. Only recently coming into present Truth under God's gracious guidance, I am having great trouble in trying to harmonize the thoughts given out by those claiming to be the sole channel used of the Lord at this time, when comparing and proving same with God's Word. I have all the volumes and I think every publication of the W. T. B. & T. S. and I find especially the Six Volumes a great blessing, though I am perplexed with the other publications. After weeks of careful study and prayer I find I do not seem to be "progressing" (according to the same channel) to the knowledge and understanding of this "new light," as I feel I ought, if this "light" is God's will; and having heard of your Institute . . . I am asking you if you could please send me any literature that you think would help me. Also please send me a few copies of free literature for distribution to those giving evidence of desiring a knowledge of the coming Kingdom and its

blessings. Enclosed please find Money Order for \$____, for which please accept one year's subscription to the "Herald," and send me the two volumes on the Book of Revelation and any other literature you think might help me . . .

I know I am going directly against the understood teachings of the W. T. B. & T. S. in seeking outside of their publications, but trusting in the Lord's protective love and guidance, I shall follow the Lord and the Apostle's exhortations to prove all things by the Scriptures, believing that if we are to be of "His very Elect" we shall not be deceived, My earnest prayers are that the Lord may bless and help all the household of faith and all who are in any way being used of the Lord in the "sealing of the saints."

With much Christian love,

Your brother in the one hope of our calling,

H. J. B. -- Can.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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SYNOPSIS OF BROOKLYN CONVENTION ADDRESSES

At the suggestion of some of the brethren, we are publishing below a synopsis of several of the addresses given at the recent Convention held in Brooklyn, believing they will prove of interest and encouragement to the readers of this journal.

ADDING TO THE FAITH

Address by Brother J. G. Kuehn

'And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith.' -- 2 Pet. 1 :5.

BUT some have not the full assurance of faith and therefore fail to claim all that God has promised, fail to be workers together with God, fail to add fortitude, knowledge and love to their faith; 'but are, as the Master said, "foolish and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." All such should take fresh courage, lay hold on the precious promises, claim them for their very own, and not throw away their confidence "which hath great recompense of reward."

God having highly exalted Jesus, giving Him a name above every name, and desiring that all should honor the Son as they honor the Father, set aside a period of almost two thousand years to prepare a bride for Jesus, a fit companion to be an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus, God's New Creation. God issued a call, inviting men here and there to this high station. He sent Jesus to purchase them from under the curse. He justified them freely from all things and accepted them in full consecration as probationary members of this Bride company He trains and develops them in the School of Christ and asks full obedience and heart loyalty even unto

death. He assures them of all necessary assistance in every time of need, to bring them off conquerors and more than conquerors.

All successful candidates must become character copies of Jesus and to this end God requires us to labor together with Him. This is why we must use all diligence to add to our faith. We develop this character in the School of Christ under the providential guidance of our Heavenly Father through bitter experience, by suffering with Jesus. We "take up our cross and follow Him."

You have heard the call, and love constrained you to accept; you offered yourself in full consecration and are now being made ready for the grand consummation so near at hand. Do not falter; do not become faint-hearted; claim the promises. It is God's power working in you, and Jesus proclaims Himself both willing and able to present you in the Father's presence without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

God's power is manifest in heaven and on earth; yea, in every tree, shrub, and even in the tiny bit of vegetation which breaks its way through the hard, sun-baked crust which may cover it.

It was God's power that made man out of that lump of clay. We may picture the creation of man-formed out of that lump of clay, perfectly formed -- a body, legs, feet, irons, hands, eyes, ears, mouth and lungs, but still a lump of clay; no life, no motion, no power there. Enters the breath of life and lo, we have a lump of clay able to see, to do, to talk, to think; man, who even after 6040 years of falling gives evidence of being "fearfully and wonderfully made."

Shall we say that God's power is limited in bringing about the New Creation? It is true that in Adam's case God did deal with inanimate matter, and that God, in creating Adam, did not create his character. Adam's experience developed the character. In developing the New Creature, God allows us the use of our old bodies for that very purpose, and then when that has been accomplished, He gives us the new bodies. It is in this character development in which we are workers together with God. But how does God work in us? The Scriptures answer, by His Spirit. The Master makes it plain when He states that the words which He speaks are spirit and are life. So then; if we plant the precious promises into the good ground of our hearts and water the seed, God will give the increase, and cause fruitage. We must plant and we must water, but God giveth the increase. The Scriptures assure us that if we do these, then an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto us into the everlasting joys of the Kingdom. ..

Brother, Sister, if you lack these things, if your spiritual life is at low ebb, examine yourself. You may be like the farmer who wished to raise a crop of corn; he had prepared the field, had plowed and harrowed, and was ready to cultivate the field and keep down the weeds. He waited, but not a sign of the growing corn. He had neglected to do the planting. Be sure to take the precious promises regarding your justification, your consecration, your sanctification. Make them your very own; plant them deeply in the

soil of your heart; water that seed with constant care; and the outcome will be glorious -- God will give the increase. The power of God in His Word is like the-power of God in the grain of corn; plant it in good soil, water and tend it, and God will give the increase.

WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?

Address by Brother Robert Lee Smith

"Who. shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

-- Rom. 8:35

In choosing this subject for our consideration I feel confident that you can all rejoice with me in that the great Apostle Paul was moved by the Holy Spirit to give utterance to such words, and then in the strength of the Lord and the power of His might he answers this momentous question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

As we read Romans 8:35-39 we observe that the Apostle indeed makes a brilliant effort to impress his hearers with a sense of their security in Christ. Are we enabled, by the Lord's grace, to answer this question in the words of the Apostle? Have we reached the point in the Narrow Way where we can say, "I am **persuaded** that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, **nor any other creature shall** be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It was evidently as the result of much tribulation, distress, and peril that the Apostle could say he was persuaded.

We may read what he says, and **hope** it is so; we may even **think** we **believe** it is so; but have our experiences been such that we can say, "I am **persuaded** that this is true?"

The same Apostle gives us the solution to the problem in Romans 5:1-5. After dealing with the subject of justification by faith and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, he adds that "We glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto **us**."

Now we can see that to say, "I am persuaded," must be preceded by triumphing in tribulation, realizing that patience is gained thereby. The again, the proper kind of experiences become ours by permitting patience to have her perfect work. Hope is reached through experience, hence we become confident and strong in the Lord, and therefore the same Apostle admonishes elsewhere, "Cast not away your confidence which hath great recompense of reward." So we can bear witness to the truthfulness of the statement that, "hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." Thus we are enabled to realize that this work is progressive and, if it is truly our experience, we have the witness of the Spirit that we are indeed the sons of God. In other words, we might say that our love corresponds with God's

love and then we can exclaim, "I am persuaded that **nothing** shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ."

Here we have a combination of faith, hope, and love: but, as the Apostle states, "The greatest of these is love."

Just think of it, dear brethren, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, **who is he** that condemneth?" Shall we be separated from the love of Christ because some individual, society, organization, or any other fabrication may claim the right to do so? "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, **who can be** against us?" And again, we can say, "Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us."

Yes, beloved brethren, whether we be on the mountain top today or in the valley of humiliation tomorrow, we can say, "I am persuaded." And even though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we will fear no evil, for we can say, "I am persuaded."

Let us then take the pebble from the brook, as did David of old, and hurl it at this antitypical Goliath, no matter what may be his disguise, saying, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

"But," says the tempter, "you may have the Lord's love now, but you will lose it later on." Oh! How glad we are that the Apostle says "neither things present, nor things to come." What more can I say for your consolation and comfort, except that I rejoice that those words were written nearly nineteen centuries ago for you and for me. Let me put it in the words of the poet:

"Brightly beams our Father's mercy
From His lighthouse evermore,
But to me He gives the keeping
Of the lights along the shore.

"Let the lower lights be burning
Send a gleam across the wave,
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman,
Your may rescue -- you may save."

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

TO KNOW HIM AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

Address by Brother I. F. Hoskins

*"That I might know Him, and the power of His resurrection,
and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made
conformable unto His death." -- Phil. 3:10*

There comes before us in the context of the Apostle's words which we have chosen as our theme, St. Paul's personal testimony as to how the knowledge of the Gospel had affected him and wrought a complete change in his outlook in life. In this testimony he recounts what his earthly outlook and prospects had been earlier in life, that from the human standpoint they had been very bright and promising for the obtaining of earthly emoluments. But he declared that all these things that were, humanly speaking, of value and advantage to him he now counted as of no value, so appealing had been the Divine message, and so completely had Christ won his confidence. He had brought all and laid it at the feet of his Divine Master.

During the years since his conversion he often had occasion to tell why and how he became a Christian; though once an opponent of Christianity and a persecutor of the Church. Christ had laid hold of him and he declared that he would not be disobedient to the great truth and light which this glorious vision, this revelation of the Savior had brought him.

The great question which every Christian has to deal with since the Apostle's day has been this one involving the conditions on which one may obtain relationship with God, as His son, and of being ultimately approved of Him as fit to be exalted as a member of the spiritual Kingdom of which Christ is to be Head. The Adversary has ever been alert to mislead the Church. He has ever tried to entice Christian believers to compromise the matter of their devotion and service to God and has sought to make them believe that they should not go to such extremes of devotion and consecration to God and to spiritual things.

It is recalled that during the age of God's dealings with the Jews there were many pictures that contain important lessons; Israel was often seduced and tempted to depart from God, to compromise with the various interests and influences of idolatry. So it has been in the Christian Age with the professing Church -- the constant tendency to withhold from the Lord a measure of that which is represented in the covenant of consecration to Him. As the Adversary came to Jesus, the great Head of the Church, and sought to have him choose a more moderate and worldly-wise course, promising certain advantages and good results, so he has been appealing to the followers of Christ even unto this day to neglect their covenant of sacrifice and to permit a mixture of the world and the interests of this life and of the fleshly nature to enter in and hinder the full performance of the terms of their covenant.

Inasmuch as human tradition and the opinions of worldly and ambitious leaders in the Church have often perverted the truth and made void the Word of God, it has been necessary for the true Christian, on realizing the situation, to go back again and again to the words of Christ and the

Apostles to get a clear vision of just what the will of God is concerning him and his sanctification..

We have been asked in these days to consider that a serious mistake was made in the past when it was thought that the development of Christian character was such a valuable thing. But we must decide by the Word of the Lord as to whether or not such a teaching has been erroneous. Surely when the Apostle Paul declares that God has predestined that all who shall compose the Kingdom class must be conformed to the image of God's dear Son, he is stating the prime and fundamental condition that must be met by all who will attain the high exaltation of the heavenly Kingdom. In other words, the image of God's dear Son is nothing more nor less than the character-likeness of the Master, and the thought implied in the word conformed is that of being formed, or shaped according to a certain outline, impression, or image. One cannot study the New Testament carefully without being constantly impressed with the lesson which it brings to the hearts of the consecrated, namely that their first great commission here is to live the life of Christ, to seek such an abundant measure of the Spirit and to yield themselves with such self-abandonment and consecration to Him and to keep before their mind's that blessed image or spiritual character of Christ, as that they shall realize a gradual transforming in themselves, resulting in their becoming copies of the likeness of God's dear Son.

Whatever others therefore may claim or teach with regard to the terms of entering the Kingdom of heaven by the performance of great external works and in seeking to make a fair show in the flesh, we cannot afford to listen to any other voice, to any other teaching, than that of the divinely appointed instructors. And this is the sum of the lesson in the theme we are discussing this morning concerning the knowing of Him and the power of His resurrection. It was the character of the Lord Jesus that the Apostle Paul was seeking to acquire. He had given up all earthly prospects and was devoting himself to this great study, to this all-important theme -- Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He saw that as he went forth to faithfully perform his covenant he would know the Lord still better, he would know Him in the sense of becoming acquainted with Him, he would know Him as an ever present personal Friend, Guide and Counselor, and this knowledge would lead him to see his privilege of a share in the sufferings of the Master, as he said, "being made conformable unto His death." This is another way of stating that he was bearing the cross and was sharing in the sacrificial death of Christ. More than this, the Spirit of Christ working this transformation of character in the Apostle Paul, it was understood by him to mean that he was already living the resurrection life, that he was experiencing the power of the resurrection already, in the sense of the quickening of his mortal body and the making alive of the Spirit. He elsewhere implies this in addressing the Church-"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," etc. The consummation of the resurrection which he expected to experience of course was to be in connection with the Lord's return, when he with all the faithful would

share in His resurrection in the last and final sense, being made like Him, and in seeing Him as He is.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SUFFERING

Address by Brother A. L. Muir

*"But Thou, O Lord, knowest me; Those hast seen me,
and tried mine heart toward Thee " -- Jer. 12:3.*

Surely the words of the Prophet (Jer. 12:3) echo the thoughts of God's people during the Gospel Age, as they have sought to follow closely in the footsteps of the Savior! That mankind have suffering experiences is comprehensible since all have been born in sin and under the curse. But that those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior, and have given themselves fully to Him in consecration, should, endure great afflictions is not so easily understood. If we are able to understand the philosophy of suffering, it will enable us the more easily to grasp the reason for such experiences, and will help us to profit by them to a much greater extent.

In dealing with this subject we cannot hope to say everything about it in one discourse. We wish, however, to divide the subject under three heads; that so we may, in our own minds, classify our daily experiences, and derive the utmost blessing therefrom.

Suffering comes under three heads:

- (1) Sufferings produced through activity in the Lord's service.
- (2) Suffering resulting from inherent weaknesses prior to consecration:
- (3) Disciplinary experiences.

The first class of sufferings represent the highest form, because they result from direct service to the Lord in holy things. Please do not misunderstand me; I am not speaking of salesmanship, but rather of our daily activity in knowing God and His will, and then endeavoring by His grace to put that will into practice. Our own wills run in one direction, God's will generally goes the opposite way, and thus crossing ours produces the sufferings named.

St. Paul sets forth these sufferings in Col. 1:24. Here he reminds us that such afflictions are directly associated with those of Christ and are part of the privileges of the Christian way. You remember the same Apostle tells us that we may not only believe on Jesus, but also suffer for His sake, and in these sufferings we will surely develop a grander character than by any other means. Thus we learn that the earnest footstep follower of Christ, fully surrendered to the will of God, maintaining a faith that will not shrink, under the severest trials that come daily, due to fidelity to the principles of righteousness, will thereby rejoice in such experiences, and they will be a blessing to him as he continues serving God in singleness of heart.

The second class of sufferings, -- those dealing with our individual weaknesses, are outlined by St. Paul in Gal. 5:13-16. The most fully surrendered Christians, the longer they are in the way, bemoan the fact of their personal weaknesses and failings, and their prayers and conversations are always tinged with the thought of their own unworthiness. Alas, how often we find others parading their "mannerisms," and expecting their brethren to continually overlook and make allowance for these things. Oh, that we might all see the urgent need for mortifying these deeds of the body, and by love serve one another. How true it has been in Christian experience that those biting one another have eventually been consumed by one another, losing all interest in their "high calling"!

You will see, then, that this class of sufferings is not so valuable as the first, inasmuch as they are produced by certain weaknesses which we should be seeking by divine grace, to overcome and destroy. So, if we are enduring suffering from one another through our "mannerisms," or such things, let us take heed to our ways and not glory in these afflictions. Rather, let us seek grace to walk more closely in the Spirit and not fulfill the evil desires of the flesh.

And now the third and last form of suffering deals with disciplinary experiences from the Lord, and is mentioned in Heb. 12:11. Some have thought that chastening from the Lord is evident proof of sonship; that experience is the only teacher. It seems to us, however, that such is not always true, for in the earthly family those children constantly trying to anticipate the will of the parents are much more beloved than those always needing to be compelled to do the same will. So we believe it is in the family of God. Those who are daily seeking to do more perfectly the will of God, who are endeavoring daily to please the Father. By willingly seeking His will to be done in them, are surely more acceptable to Him than are those who require chastening in order to do the same will. Nevertheless, we can see the fatherly care of our God, how that if we do not seek to find His will, He will not for this cause reject us, but will send us such experiences meantime causing suffering in order that in the future there might be yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness in those rightly exercised in the sufferings.

Thus we may say that such sufferings are the lowest form, and we cannot, therefore, feel thoroughly satisfied with our attainment if we are only enduring the chastening experiences. We should, instead, be rising in the scale of Christian character, coming more fully to self-abandonment in Christ.

And so, summing up these things, we would say that all suffering is valuable to every one in proportion as we rightly understand its value. Those afflictions which come to us as a result of our fidelity to God and His Truth, which are due to having His will outwrought in us as fully as possible, these are the most valuable because they are similar to Christ's sufferings.

The sufferings brought upon us through our own neglect or carelessness, or through still exercising our "mannerisms," while valuable, will not fit

us for the highest place in the Throne, and the sufferings thus produced cannot be accounted "Christ's sufferings."

And then those afflictions due to our wandering from the straight and narrow way, and sent to us by a loving Father, ought to revive in us a desire to rise higher, by His grace, so that we might not always require chastening, but instead, be willing workers together with God. May the Lord assist us to this end.

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

Address by Brother J. J. Blackburn

*"Know therefore that the Lord thy God,
He is God, the faithful God." -- Deut. 7:9*

The element of faithfulness is beautiful wherever found. The exhibitions of faithful devotion seen even amongst the lower orders of creatures, present a pleasing sight; and this quality increases in grandeur as it may be found in all the succeeding planes of existence until it reaches the summit of perfection in God Himself. In Him we find a faithfulness made the more beautiful because exercised toward creatures so inferior to Himself. To be "faithful" implies the discharge of duty, promise or agreement, and God has condescended to bind Himself by unbreakable covenants to His earthly creatures, and in a very special way to his New Creation, the Church. And for their encouragement His inspired word abounds in reiterations of His integrity and faithfulness, and we are assured by the same Word that the great Creator, whose power and wisdom are displayed in all the far-reaching expanse of the universe, finds no greater joy than that of seeing His own glorious attributes mirrored in our characters. And He has promised us that as we "behold as in a glass," His glory, we shall be changed into the same glory and likeness "from grace to grace," by the operation of His Word and Spirit.

The inspired definition of God's character is beautifully concise, comprehending in three short words the sum total of His every grace. "God is love," and it is the exercise of His attributes that has brought into play every power he possesses. All things, animate and inanimate, are so arranged to bring the greatest good to His intelligent creatures. So we find Him "faithful in His love." And how well the poet has expressed it:

"The love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

Who can measure the love than can never be lukewarm, that can never be anything but intense, that "loved a world of sinners lost" to the degree of arranging their deliverance through a Plan that would involve the gift of His dearest treasure, giving Him up to humiliation, suffering, and death; subjecting Him to tests that wrung from His physical frame the bloody

sweat, and from His heart the cry, "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me."

Is it any marvel then that such redeemed ones are His peculiar care; that such as appreciate this unspeakable gift of His love become very precious in His sight? But Oh, How great that love! Could we measure His love for Jesus, then we could know His love for us, for it is written, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." And in this blessed love for us the blessed Master was, as always, manifesting the Father, for has he not said: "The Father Himself loveth you"? Has He not taught us to say, "Our Father"? And God must and will in His relationship as Father, excel in every fatherly virtue, the highest attainment of fatherhood ever known. This further guarantees to us the fulfillment of those promises wherein we are assured of His faithfulness as our "Keeper." "He that keepeth thee, will not slumber."

The godly of very Age have rejoiced in this feature of God's faithfulness, and all with one voice have declared, "There hath not failed one word of all his good promises." How blessed indeed is the one who can look through all the experiences of the pilgrim way and recount all the snares and pitfalls and dangers of the past, and say today, "Kept by the power of God," and meet every challenge of his relationship to the Lord with the inspired message of confidence: "I know Him whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Christ has died, God has justified, and neither death nor life, angels, principalities or powers, or any creature, can separate us from the love of God in Christ, our all in all.

He is our faithful Guide: "All the way my Savior leads me." The journey to the celestial city is intended to be educative and preparatory, hence its length and its diversified experiences. And herein we find oftentimes our greatest tests -- to follow where He leads with a faith that can firmly trust Him come what may. In His faithfulness as our Guide, He must often lead us through the valleys of humiliation and over the mountains of difficulty, for "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, .and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." And, precious thought, we know that all will work together for good, if we are rightly exercised thereby. If we humble ourselves under His mighty hand, we shall be exalted; if we ascend our mountains instead of tunneling through them, we may stand with Abraham and hear God speak a second time out of heaven, because of tests overcome. Or, we may find our trials but a mountain that separates us from all others below, to behold in transfigured glory, "none save Jesus only."

He is also faithful to forgive. "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be revered." How precious to the true child of God is His forgiving grace! "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." To properly appreciate the true basis for forgiveness and to realize a keen sense of the seriousness of our failures make His forgiveness sweet indeed. And how assuring the promise that true repentance will remove

our sins from us as far as the east is from the west -- a beautiful way of telling us that we have been separated from them and they from us in such a way as to forever roll them away. From north to south would be a traversable distance, but the east is forever rolling away from the west, and so He rolls our guilt away.

But even more, He is a faithful Rewarder. He seeks such to worship Him as do so in Spirit and in truth, and nowhere encourages service merely for the sake of reward. Nevertheless, He has spread along the Narrow Way those precious promises by which He would have us know something of the rewards awaiting the faithful. Every true saint will assuredly say with David: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." The joys and blessings of the present life well repay any service given, especially so when the imperfections of the service are remembered. But how faithful He is! "I will be thy reward." He rewards us daily by giving us much more than we merit, and when the work is all done and the stewardship finished, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nether hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of the things that God hath in reservation for them that love Him."

"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keepeth His commandments."

CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE

Address by Brother Ernest Whelpton

*"Cast not away therefore your confidence,
which hath great recompense of reward." -- Heb. 10:35.*

In worldly matters and by worldly men, the importance of confidence is recognized. Laborious efforts which yield no immediate return are long continued, because of confidence that ultimately the results will justify the efforts put forth and the hardships endured.

The people of the Lord well know that "in due season," they shall reap if they faint not; they shall, if faithful unto death, receive the crown of life. For these reasons those are counted happy who endure, and by these reflections we are made to see the vital connection between confidence and victory.

To appreciate the force of words, "Cast not away therefore your confidence," we must consider the argument which is brought to a climax in these words. Briefly yet vividly does the inspired writer describe Israel's tabernacle, explaining that though the priests repeatedly offered sacrifices, the taking away of sins was never accomplished. Then with a few quick and masterly strokes, he draws for us another picture and we "see Jesus," standing on the bank of the River Jordan.

It is the "One" who was in the beginning with God, but who had left the Father and had come to earth. He speaks and with deepest interest we

listen to His words. In substance He says, sacrifices and offerings have been repeatedly made, but sin has not been taken away. Though by the sacrifice provided for in the Law your will has been **foreshadowed** it has not been **performed**.

It is interesting to note how the "Body" was prepared. It was begun by the exercise of a holy power in such a way that, as foretold in the Scriptures, a virgin conceived and later bare a son, a holy child. Twenty-nine years of growth and the preparation is complete. He is the "Man" and the Man Christ Jesus gives Himself a Ransom for all, and thus is God's will done.

Quickly does the Apostle speak of the blessings thus secured. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once." We are sanctified, brethren, by this one offering though none were sanctified by the many offerings which year by year for centuries have been made. Sins are really taken away by this sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit witnesses to us, and the testimony is on record in Jer. 31:34, that they will no more be remembered. In verse 22 of the chapter in which our text is found, we are urged by the Apostle to draw near. "Let us draw near." In the type those who drew near to Jehovah had to be typically clean. The Apostle does not overlook these important matters. He shows that a way of approach to God has been opened up. But he also points out that provision has been made for our cleansing. Therefore he says, "Let us draw near in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil, and our bodies washed with pure water." It is as if he had said the time was when we could not draw near to God. We had sins and they could not be taken away. No sacrifice which would secure atonement was ever made or could be made. But now all is different; Christ has come and both a "way" of approach, and also means whereby we may be cleansed having been provided, we may with a true heart in full assurance of faith "draw near."

It is interesting to note how this "way" was opened for us. As the priest in Israel's tabernacle service went year by year into the Most Holy, he passed through or under a vail. His going in did not open a way for others. As he came out, the vail dropped down as it had been before. As the sacrifices thus offered could never take away sin, so they could never open a "way."

Let us look now at the crucifixion scene. Jesus has for several hours been hanging upon the cross. The voice which was heard three and one-half years ago saying, "I come to do Thy will," is heard from the cross of agony this time saying, "It is finished." Evidently the moment that He yielded up His spirit the vail in the Temple was rent from top to the bottom.

In Heb. 9:12, the Apostle declares that Jesus by His own blood has entered in once into the Holy Place. The fact that when He died the vail in the Temple made with hands was rent, must surely be intended to signify that a way is **open** into the Temple not made with hands. The inspired writer says that this way is for us. At what a cost to Him was this new and living way opened for us! What a cost to **Him**, but free to **us**! We may come to the Father by Him, in His name. Precious name! How we can appreciate

that there is no other name **given under** heaven and that there need be no other since He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

The living one is now introduced to us as High Priest over the house of God, and thus after we have been made to see Him as a **sacrifice** for us, we are made to see Him as a Priest over us. And such a priest -- holy, harmless, kind, sympathetic, etc., one who having suffered, being tried, is able to succor them that are tried. With what profit we may consider Him who "**endured**" to the end.

What assurance should be forming in our minds as the divinely inspired Apostle three important and closely related truths. How our hearts respond to His appeal. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

But not yet has this earnest pleader reached the climax of his argument, nor yet is he ready to say, "Cast not away **therefore** your confidence." He has still somethin to present, which will add to to the force of his "therefore," when he shall use it.

He turns to this other side of the case as he says, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after you were enlightened, you endured." Does he suggest a connection between their enlightenment and endurance? Let us see. An enlightened child of God knows of the promise -- if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him; that if we be dead with Him we shall live with Him; that if faithful unto death we shall receive a crown of life. Now, says the Apostle, knowing these things look back upon your lives since you were enlightened. Have you been reproached for the name of Christ? Then happy are you. You have that as an evidence of a vital relationship with that great One, who died to redeem you, and who as your great High Priest even liveth to make intercession for you.

It is a time of trial, a time for shaking everything which can be shaken. Many are falling, and the work of many others are being burned. Those who are quiet and confident are strong. A clear grasp of the great basic truths presented here by the Apostle is a basis for this confidence and strength. Such dwell in the secured place of the Most High, and are covered with His wings. No evil shall befall them, nothing shall by any means hurt them.

OUR GREAT BURDEN BEARER

Address by Brother H. A. Friese

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee." -- Psa. 55:22

Resting on this Labor Day from our usual tasks, we are very glad to be permitted to meet so many of the Lord's children in the sweet fellowship of this Convention. Jesus offers to be our great Burden Bearer. Have we burdens? Yes -- so has the world. Since the disobedience in Eden the world has been full of heavy burdens. But in the midst of the sorrow and

turmoil, we hear Jesus saying, "My peace I give unto you." Our dear Brother Kihl-gren, now passed beyond the veil, told of a little bird serenely singing from its nest between the two great falls of Niagara, unafraid of the mighty roar of the cataract, peaceful in the security of its dwelling. So we may have His "perfect peace" in the midst of life's storms, for "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. 91:1) -- shall be completely protected by Jehovah. And we know the "secret place of the Most High" is the condition of full consecration to Him -- a dwelling place secure where no enemy can enter, no foe can injure.

Before leaving home in Springfield this morning we read the "Manna" text -- "There shall no evil befall thee" -- and Sister F. said: "Leave the book open there for me. That Scripture is good for you to take with you and for me to reread while here at home."

St. Peter comforts with: "Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7). All your care? Yes. The great cares? Yes. The little cares? Yes. A brother in charge of machines had serious trouble with one. After having tried all known remedies in vain, he took the matter to the Lord, there in the factory. Coming back to the machine, he soon had it running smoothly. There is not one care He won't bear. He has been all the way before us. His own burdens were heavy -- Gethsemane to the cross. At the end of that stress our dear Redeemer was so weakened physically that he was unable to bear the cross upon which he was soon to be crucified. They compelled Simon of Cyrene to bear the cross. Do we envy Simon that great privilege? If so, the opportunity to help bear the "cross" for members of the Lord's body is yet ours. ("Manna," Oct. 24.) "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." We may help bear one another's burdens by our sympathy and counsel, and by our prayers. "The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

The Psalmist counsels: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he **shall** sustain thee; He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." (Psa. 55:22.) The Lord will send the aid, even though it be impressed upon a Simon of Cyrene of the world. A deeply consecrated brother was in dire financial need. On the very day that he had reached the end of his resources, having taken the matter to the Lord, and waiting upon Him in firm faith, that day a letter arrived from a far distant land with the needed aid. God had started to help many weeks before so that it should arrive in time. Our Father is never too late in sending deliverance -- it will always be in time. Let us increase our faith and trust in Him. No burden can be too great for Him to bear for us. Let us not be like the heavily laden wayfarer, who after accepting an invitation to ride, still kept the load on his back. When asked why he did not lay off the burden from his shoulders, he replied: "O, Sir. It is enough for you to carry me without carrying my burden also."

God's rich promises are his signed checks given to his children. But as some one has said, "Unclaimed promises are like uncashed checks -- they may keep us from bankruptcy but not from want."

"Casting all your care upon Him." Business cares? Yes. Home cares? Yes. Cares of our relationship to the world? Yes. Daniel, though premier of a great kingdom, found time to kneel in prayer to Jehovah three times a day. Financial cares? Yes. Employment cares? Yes. Family cares? Church cares? Cares of our own defects, our mistakes, our discouragements? Cares concerning our loved ones? Cares for our future destiny -- life and death? Yes, our great Burden Bearer will take them **all** for us, and give a song instead.

Our **rest** will be in exact proportion to our **trust** in Him. Complete trust brings complete rest. "When He giveth rest, who can make trouble?" Let us "Cast on Him each burdening care, "remembering that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think," and that "The **Father Himself loveth you.**"

"When darkness seems to veil His face,
I rest on his unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

"His oath, His covenant, and His blood,
Support me in the 'whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He, then, is all my hope and stay."

THE EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols." -- 1 John 5:21.

THE SIN of unbelief is back of all unfaithfulness and disobedience. It was that which caused Israel of old to run after idolatry. They were ever inclined to mistrust Jehovah and thus failed to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Their unbelieving hearts desired the gods of the heathen round about, of wood and stone, such as their eyes could see and their hands could handle.

The creation of the golden calf in the wilderness was one of the outstanding examples of the idolatrous heart: "And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your, sons, end of your daughters, and bring them unto me And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf; and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." It showed that they had abandoned all idea of the presence and character of the true God. How quickly they must have turned aside out of the way to have made such a gross, terrible mistake!

The Christian, though living under the greater advantage of this Age, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and taught to look away unto Jesus, is not immune from this evil of allowing the affection to become fastened upon some golden calf of his own making, upon some object or thing, to at

least the partial exclusion of the things of the Spirit; and a state of idolatry has set in.

Idolatry in the Heart

"The human heart loves something that can be seen," says another, "it loves that which meets and gratifies the senses. It is only faith that can 'endure, as seeing Him who is invisible.' Hence, in every age, men have been forward to set up and lean upon human imitations of Divine realities. Thus, it is we see the counterfeits of corrupt religion multiplied before our eyes. Those things which we know, upon the authority of God's Word, to be Divine and heavenly realities, the professing Church has transformed into human and earthly imitations. Having become weary of hanging upon an invisible Arm, of trusting in an invisible Sacrifice, of having recourse to an invisible Priest, of committing herself to the guidance of an invisible Head, she has set about 'making' these things; and thus from age to age, she has been busily at work, with 'graying tool' in hand, graying and fashioning one thing after another, until we can, at length, recognize as little similarity between much that we see around us, and what we read in the Word, as between 'a molten calf' and the God of Israel.

" **'Make us gods!'** What a thought! Man called upon to make gods, and people willing to put their trust in such! My reader, let us look within, and look around, and see if we can not detect something of all of this. We read, in 1 Cor. 10, in reference to Israel's history, that 'all these things happened unto them for ensamples [or types], and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.' (Ver. 11.) Let us, then, seek to profit by the 'admonition.' Let us remember that although we may not just form and bow down before 'a 'molten calf,' yet, that Israel's sin is a 'type' of something into which we are in danger of falling. Whenever we turn away in heart from leaning exclusively upon God Himself, whether in the matter of salvation or the necessities of the path, we are, in principle, saying, 'Up, make us gods.' . . . Our only safeguard is to be much in the presence of God. . . When we get out of the Divine presence, there is no accounting for the gross errors and evils into which we may be, betrayed."

The Golden Calf of Human Leadership

One of the most glaring demonstrations of idolatry and apostasy amongst God's professing people throughout the Age, and one of the most fruitful sources of evil. in the Church has been along the line of setting up a human headship, a man-made authority in the Church. The invisible Christ and the guidance of His Spirit have been repeatedly rejected as insufficient and unsatisfactory. The boastful and blatant claims of a fellow mortal or of a number of fellow mortals who assume superior prerogatives in the Church are soon recognized and they are preferred as teacher and authority, displacing Christ. The people must have some literal system that they can "belong to," some man-made institution with its head or authority setting aside Christ, and with its machinery, its creed, its tests of fellowship; and so this golden calf becomes to them their ark of safety,

their Divine channel, "God's organization," through which they receive instruction and through which they offer themselves and their service to God. And they will hear nothing but the boasts, warnings, and threats of man's authority, while the Master with His Spirit and His gentle voice of entreaty are lost to their ears.

No such human system or channel did Christ and the Apostles set up. They constantly pointed to the work of the invisible Spirit, and admonished that all believers rest in the unfailing headship, of Christ's authority alone. All who are following the Divine instruction shall never be misled by the perversions of truth, or the subversions of the Word of God that come from the golden calf of human authorities.

Christ Our All-Sufficient Leader

"We are called to live by faith; we can see nothing with the eye of sense. Jesus is gone up on high, and we are told to wait patiently for His appearing. God's Word carried home to the heart, in the energy of the Holy Spirit, is the ground of confidence in all things, temporal and spiritual, present and future. He tells us of Christ's completed sacrifice; we, by grace, believe, and commit our souls to the efficacy thereof, and know we shall never be confounded. He tells us of a great High Priest passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, whose intercession is all-prevailing; we, by grace, believe, and lean confidently upon his ability, and know we shall be saved to the uttermost. He tells us of the living Head to whom we are linked, and from whom we can never be severed by any influence, angelic, human, or diabolical; we, by grace, believe, and cling to that living Head in simple faith and know we shall never perish. He tells us of the glorious appearing of the Son from Heaven; we, by grace, believe, and seek to prove the purifying and elevating power of 'that blessed hope,' and know we shall not be disappointed. He tells us of 'an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God,' for entrance thereinto in due time; we, through grace, believe, and know we shall never be confounded. He tells us the hairs of our head are all numbered, and that we shall never want any good thing; we, through grace, believe, and enjoy a sweetly tranquilized heart.

"Thus it is, or, at least, thus our God would have it. But then the enemy is ever active in seeking to make us cast away these Divine realities, take up the 'graving tool' of unbelief and 'make gods' for ourselves. Let us watch against him, pray against him, believe against him, testify against him, act against him. Thus he shall be confounded, God glorified, and we ourselves abundantly blessed."

THE SECOND PRESENCE OF OUR LORD

Part II

CHRONOLOGICAL AND PROPHETIC SIGNS

"We have a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn. -- 2 Pet. 1:19

In carefully examining the Bible testimony relative to our Lord's return and the various associated events, we are heeding the words of Jesus, "Take ye heed, watch and pray" (Mark 13:33). Those who have obeyed the Master's admonition have realized that one of the most inspiring and sanctifying lines of study is this which concerns our Master's return, and our gathering together unto Him. As saith the Apostle, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John 3:3). This thought is borne out in the Revelation visions. As for example, when presenting the symbolic picture of the judgment vials poured out in connection with the Lord's presence and the end of this Age, the solemn admonition is given, "Watch and keep thy garments white."

The watchers in the end of this dispensation were promised that they would not be left in darkness respecting the momentous events with which this Age would close and the dispensation be introduced. Surely it was in order that the Lord's people might know certain important facts associated with His return, that He admonished them to watch. And says the Apostle: "Ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief [as it will others of mankind]. -- 1 Thess. 5:1-4.

Not Fancies and Vain Imaginations

In consideration of the urgent appeals to the Church to give heed to the more sure word of prophecy, the special dispensation of truth relative to the times and seasons of the Master's return, should be expected as a result of careful and prayerful study in association with the signs of the times. And may we not suppose that it was to quicken and ripen the true saints in the end of the Age that the light of prophecy was provided long in advance of the time of the end. It is in every way proper that God's faithful children should long to know when the great King of Glory shall be revealed to bind the Prince of Darkness; and when "the children of the light shall shine forth as the sun and that darkness be scattered; when the saints shall be received into full Divine adoption and the groaning creation released from the bondage of corruption; and when our Heavenly Father's glorious character shall be revealed to an astonished world, causing all who love righteousness to bow their hearts in adoration and love and obedience.

On the other hand, there is in these days most urgent need on the part of the Lord's people to guard against allowing too loose rein to their desires, fancies, and imaginations in their studies of prophecy, and in the examination of various Bible pictures, symbols, and parables, which relate to the end of this Age and the coming of the Lord. Failing to be exercised in proper sobriety in this matter, many are engaged in the wildest fancies and in announcing as truth that which is of a highly speculative character -- mere vagaries. Such teachings do not encourage the spirit of a sound mind, but generally lead in the direction of vague conclusions and fanaticism. How evident it is that the knowledge of these holy things was intended only for

those who possess a proper state of heart, thoroughly loyal to the Lord; a large measure of the Lord's Spirit is also most necessary. And associated with the search for the truth must be holiness and humility, which alone can pave the way for the entrance of the light, by enabling the true disciple to remove a prejudice from his heart, and to search diligently to know what has been revealed.

Not Two or Three Future Comings

In the article dealing with the Lord's Second Presence, published in the preceding issue of this journal, we observed certain Scripture testimony that marks a period when Christ will be present in the end of this Age for a time unknown by the masses of men; and that subsequently through the fiery judgments of the day of trouble all the world will come to recognize that presence. But we did not wish to imply in any of the conclusions drawn that this secret presence of the Lord and His later revealing to all would represent two comings of Christ in the end of this Age. Here at this point we pause to note the fact that there are those who claim that the various references to our Lord's coming in the end of this Age represent two comings; some claim three, before the Kingdom is established and His reign known to all. Advocates of this thought say that the return of Christ to this planet and His coming as Bridegroom to take the last members of the Bride, represent two distinct comings. A third coming is also claimed, based upon the Lord's words: "They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 24:30.) It is further taught that this thought respecting a third coming at our Lord's Second Advent is borne out by the Revelator's statement wherein the New Jerusalem is described as coming down from God out of heaven. -- Rev. 21.

We would not be able to concur in the conclusion drawn that there are two or three comings of the Lord in the end of this Age. We believe that we are permitting confusion to enter our investigation at once by such unwarranted assumptions. For instance, if we are to take the view that there are two or more comings of Christ in connection with the inauguration of His reign, then there must be two or more departures or goings away on the part of the Savior. He could not be said to come a second and third time without first taking His departure the same number of times to some other place. And if after returning at His Second Advent He should soon depart again, to where would He go? and what is His mission in departing? The same question may be asked with regard to what is claimed to be His third coming. We inquire where is there any testimony whatever in the Scriptures saying that Jesus, after returning to the earth at His Second Advent, departs and returns to heaven, and then comes a second and third time successively? We know of no word whatever either by Jesus or any of the Apostles bearing out any such thought.

Various Manifestations of the One Coming

All must admit that the Bible teaches two Advents of the world's Redeemer. The first one was when He came in the form of a sin offering, pouring out His soul unto death. As He was about to conclude His

mission then, He said to His followers: "If I go away, I will come again." He did not say, If I go away, I will return two or three times at My Second Advent. No, His second coming to the earth is referred to in the singular as one great event following His First Advent.

Let this great question of our Lord's Second Presence be seen in its true light -- that it stands closely related to His First Advent. At His first coming He laid the foundation for the world's redemption in the sacrifice of Himself. His Second Advent is for the purpose of establishing His Kingdom and of giving to humanity the blessings purchased by His death. Lifting our mental vision, do we not see that all the Divine testimony referring to our Lord's coming again, the time of the Second Presence, etc., is so much testimony which bears witness to the fact that at the divinely set time there would be an official assumption by our Lord of His glorious office as King of kings and Lord of lords-the commencement of the exercise of His power in the establishing of His reign of righteousness? and that the various references to His Second Advent, which are construed by some to mean two or three comings, all refer to the one second coming, describing various manifestations and from different standpoints, or setting forth one or more transactions or developments associated with that one Second Advent? As for instance, Christ's return to the earth, and then His receiving His followers unto Himself, surely relate to the one thing, the one event, that is, the one Second Advent of the Master. Especially must this be so, as the Master does not tell us that after coming to earth in the end of the Age, He returns to heaven again and then comes back to receive His Bride. There is no intimation of two or three comings in connection with the inauguration of His Kingdom, there being no necessity for any such procedure. When we read, "They shall see Him coming in the clouds of heaven," etc., we find no intimation that this is still another coming to the earth; it is the one Second Advent, the one return of Christ that is referred to in all of these references, namely the assumption of His office as earth's new King.

When He Shall Be Revealed to All

All of these references which Jesus makes to His return in this connection, represent His answer to the important question that His disciples had asked: "What shall be the sign of Thy presence and of the end of the Age?" In His answer, as we have already seen, He told of various happenings and events throughout the Age, matters which have since become history,. He went on to set forth the facts of His secret presence for a time when only the faithful watchers would know of the fact of His return. He furthermore explained that as the various occurrences and developments resulting from His presence, the overthrowing of the present order of things, etc., became manifest, then humanity would "See the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven"; that is, they would discern in the clouds of trouble in the ecclesiastical heavens, not that the Lord was on the way, but the fact of His coming in the sense of His presence having already become an accomplished fact. They would realize that the judgments of the Lord represented in the time of trouble will have come be-

cause earth's new king will have been present and executing the judgments written, causing the overthrow of the kingdoms of this world, preparatory to the erection of His own Kingdom instead.

As for the statement in Revelation 21 concerning the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, there is no reference in this to Christ's second coming; though it is descriptive of one of the manifestations or results of His Advent. The language is highly symbolical: The New Jerusalem stands for the new government; and "coming down from God out of heaven," is another way of saying that the new government is of Divine origin -- it comes from God. The Second Advent of Jesus must have taken place before that time in order to have prepared the way for the inauguration of that Kingdom.

What Are the Proofs?

We come now to that point in this discussion of this subject that more particularly concerns the consecrated children of God living at the present time. A considerable number of the Lord's people in modern times, earnestly taking heed to the Master's admonition to watch, to examine the more sure word of prophecy and the signs of the times, believe that for some time we have been living in the day of the Lord's Second Presence. The brethren associated together in the work of carrying on this ministry, the publishing of this journal, etc., count themselves amongst this class of watchers. Yet, as the months and years have been rolling by and a number of events that were anticipated did not transpire at the time set, and several important calculations have failed of fulfillment thus far, there is a manifest tendency amongst many brethren to fall into a state of spiritual stupor and slothfulness, especially with regard to these matters that relate to the Lord's presence -- matters concerning which Jesus earnestly admonished: "I say unto all, watch." And some becoming doubtful on one point or another have raised the questions, When did our Lord's Second Presence take place, and what are the substantial proofs that we are living in His presence? The earnest, sober, and reverent review of this question cannot fail to bring spiritual profit.

Bearing in mind that we are not looking for any literal, bodily manifestation of our Lord's presence, none are expected to offer as evidence of His presence the claim to have seen any visible or fleshly appearance of Christ. None who believe in the Lord's presence have seen any such manifestation. Our only evidence and testimony on the subject must, therefore, be according to faith in the sense that they are based on prophetic forecasts that describe the circumstances and events connected with Christ's Second Presence. It is because it is a matter of faith that Jesus said that there would be those in the end of the Age who would deny His presence when it had become an accomplished fact. And St. Peter likewise declared that there would be scoffers in the last days making such denial also. -- Matt. 24:48, 49; 2 Pet. 3:3, 4.

Not the Day or the Hour But the Fact of His Presence

The question before us is, Are the Bible prophecies descriptive of the day of the Lord's presence meeting fulfillment today? Our answer is, Yes we believe the signs are strong and convincing. We may regard the evidence as being twofold: That which pertains to the chain of events fulfilling prophecy, and that which relates to the chronology, or the time periods of the world's history. Both of these deserve careful consideration. We believe, however, that of these two lines of proof, the one involving history fulfilling prophecy may be considered the more important and substantial, for therein we see set forth those circumstances and that confirmation of events foretold by the Savior to be in evidence in the early stages of the period of His reign designated His "Parousia."

We would guard against the thought, however, of any one being able to fix any exact time, day, or year, for this or that thing to come to pass. The Lord's people today should be profiting by the experience of some in the past, who have permitted their imagination to run to wild extremes. Many who have believed in the literal or visible manifestation of Christ and fixed the exact day and hour of his manifestation, or for some special event to transpire, and have been time and again disappointed on account of the failure of their hopes. By this time we should learn that neither chronological nor prophetic testimony was necessarily intended of the Lord to enable any one to definitely know and understand, even after the Lord's presence has become a fact, the day or the hour, or the precise year when He became present; the particular point of time of that event being of far less importance than to be able to recognize the fact of the Lord's presence after it has occurred. It was on this very point that Brother Russell made the following interesting statement:

"In considering the Second Advent we must not, any more than at the First Advent, expect all the prophecies to mark one particularly eventful moment of our Lord's arrival and to call all men to the fact of His presence. Such is not God's usual method; and was not the case at the First Advent. The First Advent of Messiah was not marked by any sudden or surprising demonstration, out of the usual order of things, but it was manifested and proved by the gradual fulfillment of prophecy showing to the thoughtful observer that the events which should be expected were being accomplished on time. It is of less importance that we discover the exact moment of His arrival than that we discern the fact of His presence when He has arrived, even as at the First Advent it was important to be able to recognize His presence, and the sooner the better, but much less important to know the exact date of His birth. In considering the Second Advent, the act of coming, and the moment of arrival are too frequently the thought, whereas it should be thought of **as a period of presence**, as was the First Advent. The precise moment at which that presence would begin would then seem **less important**, and His object and work during the period of His presence would receive the greater consideration." -- "Studies," Vol. II, pp. 106, 107.

Prophetic Time Periods as Guide Posts

In harmony with the foregoing, in our examination of the chronological or time periods mentioned in Daniel and Revelation, our conviction becomes more and more settled that no one of these, nor all of them together, were intended to enable us to fix the **precise** time when any of the great occurrences in the end of the Age would come to pass. As set forth in the quotation above from Brother Russell, we see that these time prophecies have been given more as index fingers along the way indicating marks of progress or steps of more or less importance leading to the full inauguration of Messiah's glorious reign.

Take for instance, the time period indicated in Daniel's vision recorded in the 7th chapter of "a time and times and the dividing of time," or the three and one-half times: This, as many Bible student will agree, is given as the period of time during which "the little horn" which came up on the fourth great beast, Rome, would exercise a persecuting power over the saints -- a period of 1260 years, reaching from approximately 539 A. D. to 1799 A.

The same period is indicated again in St. John's vision where He is describing the holy city trodden under foot "forty and two months," and the two witnesses clothed in sackcloth prophesying "a thousand two hundred and three score days." (Rev. 11:2, 3.) The end of the 1260-year period (counting a day for a year) did not mark the time of the Lord's Second Presence, nor the setting up of the Kingdom, but it did indicate a stage in the progress of events.

Again, in our study of another portion of Daniel's prophecy, particularly the 11th and 12th chapters, we have met with other prophetic time periods, one of these also being 1260, another 1290 and another 1335 year-days. (Daniel 11; 12:7, 11, 12.) This portion of Daniel's prophecy, as has already been pointed out, deals to a considerable extent with the Moslem power.* While as we have pointed out in the Daniel exposition, these time periods are important as marking the ending stages of the great Turkish or Moslem power (the last one the 1335-year period reaching to our day and possibly extending to 1934), yet none of these endings can be said to definitely establish the day or year when our Lord's presence became due, nor the precise year of the climax or culmination of the Age. Such was not the purpose of these time limits. Rather, they are given as signals along the way by which all who are awake might be on their guard, so that as the last days of the Age would arrive the watchers would be able to recognize the situation, that they would be living in close proximity to the establishment of the Kingdom, and thus enter into the, privilege of lifting up their heads, knowing that their redemption draweth nigh. For instance, the revealing angel declared to Daniel in response to the queries regarding the treading down and persecution of his people and concerning the time of their deliverance, that the 1335 year-days would reach unto the era of blessedness; that the end of the days would see the deliverance of the holy people, the Hebrew race, and that Daniel himself would stand in his lot at the end of those days.

See special issues of this journal presenting expositions of this prophecy-February 1, March 1-15, November 15, of 1924 and March 15, April 1, June 1, of 1925.

The Era of Blessedness at Hand

Realizing therefore today that applying this time prophecy to the period of Turkish rule over the Jews and finding that the farthest limit or end is but a few years in the future, the Lord's people should logically be prepared to see around them certain signal indications that the Divine promise, both as it relates to the Jewish nation and to Daniel himself, is nearing fulfillment. Such remarkable signs are indeed to be observed in the awakening that lids been going on amongst the Jews in modern times, leading to the creation of the Zionist Movement and in the immigration of many thousands of Jews to their home land, and in the remarkable reclamation of the land of promise that has been prospering in recent years. Perhaps the most signal manifestation that the 1335 year period is drawing to its full end is to be observed in the breaking of the Moslem yoke that held the land of Palestine in complete subjection for so many centuries, preventing the Jewish race from claiming it as their home. This power or yoke, as is known .by all, was burst asunder in December, 1917, when General Allenby and his troops entered Jerusalem and took possession of Palestine. This event has been regarded by all prophetic students as one of special significance, and as indicating a most important step in the direction of the restoration of the Jewish race.

While we are not able to ascertain from this last prophetic time period in Daniel's prophecy definite information as to the exact time when our Lord's presence became due, we may properly see in it a strong intimation or sign that the Lord's presence is already an accomplished fact, and that the progress of events relating to the Jews in recent years represents some of the effects of the presence of the Lord, as represents has to do with both the gathering of the Church and Jewish restoration. In fact, it seems quite apparent that the era of blessedness covers a definite period of time associated with the Second Advent and comprehends all the events occurring in the early stages of His presence, such as the resurrection of the sleeping saints and the change of the living ones, and the full establishment of the promised Kingdom.

Still another of the time prophecies that stands related to our subject as a whole is the one found in the 8th chapter of Daniel -- the period of 2300 year-days, marking the cleansing of the sanctuary. While at one time this prophecy was thought to indicate the time of the Lord's Second Presence, it is now seen to refer not to the precise time of His Second Presence, but to a work of cleansing and preparation of God's people to be ready for the presence of the Lord shortly after -- at the end of the 2300 years. We are in agreement with other Bible students in understanding this prediction relating to the spiritual temple to have reached fulfillment about 1846. Thus while it is seen not to establish anything with regard to the exact time when the Lord's presence became due, yet, it can properly be taken as one of the prophetic signals along the way.

The Prophetic Seven Times of the Gentiles

One of the most interesting of the time features and one having an important bearing on our Lord's Second Presence is that of the symbolic "seven times," or 2529 years of universal Gentile dominion in fulfillment of the word of the Lord to Moses; that Israel's continued obduracy and disobedience would finally incur a dispensation of special punishment of "seven times." (Lev. 26:17, 18, 24, 28.) Long centuries passed, but the time came after many generations of Israel's waywardness and idolatry; this was in the days when the kingdom of Babylon and arisen to considerable prominence. The reigning king was Nabopolassar. He was in his declining years and his son Nebuchadnezzar, in a large measure was evidently intrusted with the responsibilities of the kingdom, so as to be co-regent with his father some two years before his death. With the accession of Nebuchadnezzar on the throne the divinely appointed time had come and the celebrated proclamation was issued, giving all nations, including the Jews, over into the hands of Babylon's new king, Nebuchadnezzar.

This is set forth in detail in Jeremiah's prophecy (27:4-27), also in the book of Daniel (1:1, 2); again in chapter 2, where is recorded the dream of the great image at which time Nebuchadnezzar was told, "Thou art this head of gold." This, as nearly all historians and chronologists agree, was approximately in the year 606 B. C., in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. History shows that the king of Babylon began his universal reign at once; and at that time the kingdom of Judah became a vassal kingdom under the yoke of Babylon from which it never recovered. Thus the lease of power to the Gentiles or the symbolic "seven times," began to go into effect. It was about 19 years after, that the Jewish kingdom fell and the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple took place (Jer. 52:12). Of the removal of Judah's last king, Zedekiah, we read: "Remove the diadem, and take off the crown; . . . I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." -- Ezek. 21:26, 27.

As has already been acknowledged by many Bible students, the lease of Gentile power, commencing in Nebuchadnezzar's first year, 606 B.C., reaches unto approximately 1914 A.D., at which time the lease was due to run out.* But as it was about 19 years after the commencement of the universal kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar before the complete downfall of the Jewish kingdom and before the crown was removed from Judah's last king, so it has been found interesting as well as logical to calculate the "seven times" of 2520 years from 588 B.C. when the Jews were completely subjugated and this brings us to approximately 1934 A.D.

* For an exhaustive examination of the subject of the times of the Gentiles, their beginning and end, and dealing with chronology in general, see the special issue of this journal, May 15, 1926, supplied upon request.

Thus from all the facts we are able to gather it would seem that the times of the Gentiles in the last and final sense are due to run their full course by the last date named above, when there might be reasonably expected, events and developments of the very great moment in evidence. We are making no predictions, nor hastily arriving at any visionary or fanatical conclusions. We are patiently biding the time and waiting for the days to disclose what may be the program of events. The most we are doing is exercising our privilege of soberly looking at the facts of prophecy and history in the light of present day developments, and thereby recognizing that there is a remarkable synchronizing of circumstances and events in these days with the prophetic times.

But what we are observing particularly in this connection is that while tracing these important endings of the prophetic "seven times" down to our day and somewhat beyond, and while recognizing that these endings of Gentile rule are vitally related to Christ's Second Presence, there is still nothing in this line of testimony that establishes the **exact** time -- day, month or year -- when Christ's presence is due to take place. The most that we can gather from these facts showing the full running out of Gentile dominion in the near future, is that the Second Presence of Christ may reasonably be regarded as a fact already, realized, inasmuch as earth's new King must be present a period of time prior to the fall of present kingdoms, and in advance of the setting up and reign of His Kingdom. He must be present, as we have seen, to accomplish the work of assembling and gathering together those who shall constitute the personnel of His Kingdom, and he must be present also for the purpose of executing the judgments and putting into operation those elements and agencies that are to break into pieces the various powers of human government. Seeing then that Gentile dominion is all but at an end, while we cannot from this fix any exact year when Christ's presence became due, we can logically conclude for the above reasons that we are living in the days of the Second Presence of the Son of God.

A THORN IN THE FLESH

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." -- 2 Cor. 12:7-10.

THIS was the language of an overcoming saint, meekly bowing to the Divine will. Noble and loyal and true; and strong in character as the Apostle Paul was, he yet realized that he was a member of the fallen race, and, in common with all humanity, subject to frailties. God had called him

to a most important and glorious work -- that of bearing the Gospel to the Gentiles; and, for the benefit of the whole Church, to him were granted special and wonderful revelations, even above all the other honored and beloved Apostles.

He was caught away in mental vision to the third heaven -- the New Dispensation, the Millennial reign of Christ -- and shown things (doubtless the Plan and purpose of God, as now made manifest to us, largely through his writings, in the light of these last days but) not lawful to be uttered then, because not then due to the Church. (2 Cor. 12:4.) Upon him devolved the care of all the Churches of the Gentiles, and great were the responsibilities of his office. Though the position was a most laborious and trying one, requiring great fortitude, zeal, energy and self-denial to fill it, it was also one of great honor.

"The Messenger of Satan to Buffet"

And this Apostle appreciated the honor of such intimate fellowship of service with the Lord, and manifested his appreciation by untiring zeal and enthusiasm. But even in this the Lord recognized a personal danger to His beloved and faithful Apostle -- a danger of pride and self-exaltation, which, if it should develop, would soon unfit him for further service and rob him of his future reward. So the thorn in the flesh was permitted to come. It came, not from the hand of the Lord, though by His permission; but, as the Apostle affirms, it was "the messenger of Satan to buffet" him.

A thorn in the flesh is always a painful thing; and whatever this may have been, it was something severely trying to St. Paul. At first he thought only of the pain and annoyance it caused him, and of its hindrance to him in the Lord's work; it was a messenger of Satan that he was anxious to get rid of. Three times he besought the Lord for its removal. But no, it had come to stay, and the Lord mercifully made him to realize that though it was very undesirable to the flesh, it was, nevertheless, profitable to him spiritually; for otherwise he might become too much exalted.

My Grace is Sufficient for Thee -- My Strength is Made Perfect in Weakness

This implication of weakness the Apostle humbly accepted. He did not resent it and begin to boast of his strength and to reproach the Lord for not exerting his power for its removal; but, on the contrary, with grace and gladness he accepted the Lord's judgment of his heart, and His estimate of his strength, and appreciated the love that thus cared for him personally, while through him He was ministering to the whole Church.

Yes, praise the Lord! He chooses His own instruments, and whets and grinds and polishes them for the more effectual service, and wields them with force and power in the service of His people; but in all the painful and laborious service He has special care, also, for the willing and faithful instrument. He will not suffer it to be tried beyond that which it is able to endure; nor will He suffer it to be exalted without some counterbalancing thorn in the flesh to preserve its equilibrium.

The answer to the Apostle's prayer, although not in accordance with his request, was a blessed consolation -- My grace [My favor] is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect [made manifest] in [your] weakness."

"Most Gladly Will I Glory in My Infirmities"

This is also the blessed consolation of every truly submissive heart. How many of the Lord's people are tempest-tossed and sorely tried in these days; and, doubtless, many of them have earnestly besought the Lord to remove this or that trial or affliction; but the piercing thorn still remains for their discipline and perfecting! Let all such, like Paul, give ear to the Master's voice -- "My favor is sufficient for thee." What if other friends forsake thee, and hosts of foes seek to overwhelm thee, if thou hast My favor, My love, is not that sufficient? And what though the flesh be weak and the heart sometimes faint, My strength shall supply your lack; and while you walk in . the way of My appointment your weakness shall only the more manifest the power of God working in and through you.

What sincere child of God has not realized in times of greatest need and weakness, the power of God on his behalf supplementing his weakness with strength from above? And when the task was accomplished to which the Lord had called him and for which he felt so incompetent of himself, has he not realized in the .outcome the wonder-working power of God ?

In view of such a gracious provision to supplement his weakness with Divine strength, the faithful Apostle meekly responded, "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Having put forth all his own energies and faithfully used his own ability to its fullest extent as a wise steward, it was his joy to recognize the hand of the Lord working with him -- by .miracles and signs and with demonstrations of the spirit and of power. (Heb. 2:4; Acts 19:11; 1 Cor. 2:4.) These demonstrations of Divine power, supplementing Paul's faithful use of his natural abilities, were the Lord's endorsement of all he did -- the manifestations of Divine approval, both to himself and to others, and, consequently, cause for great rejoicing.

To Rejoice in Tribulation Not Possible Except One is in Fullest Accord With God

With the Apostle it is also the privilege of all God's children to have their weaknesses supplemented by Divine grace, while they meekly and faithfully use their talents in the Lord's service. And so all the faithful may rejoice in tribulations and infirmities, while God overrules the former, and supplements she latter to his praise.

But to rejoice in tribulations, to endure meekly and patiently a sore thorn in the flesh, and even to glory in such personal infirmities as make the power of Christ the more manifest, is not possible except to those whose hearts are in fullest accord with the loving purposes of God. If the heart be influenced by pride or ambition or love of fame or wealth or any worldly craving, joy in tribulation is impossible. But if the old ambitions and

desires of the flesh are kept under, and faith, love, hope and zeal are all alive and active, we shall have the consciousness of the Divine favor, and then we can rejoice in every experience.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren in Christ,

Greetings!

I am writing you at this time asking that you will please change my address . . . You will find enclosed \$1.00, for which please send me one dozen copies of the "Herald" containing the Memorial of Brother Streeter, and the balance may be used for postage.

I feel, dear brethren, that I ought to try to express my gratitude to you at this time, for your help and assistance in aiding me to be led by the Spirit into a clearer understanding of the Holy Word and the full liberty in Christ, which such understanding always gives. I owe much of this to the teachings of the "Herald." . . . I pray and thank God for his guidance through the Holy Spirit, which has brought joy, peace, and blessing out of the turmoil and confusion in which I was enveloped; each step of knowledge bringing a corresponding step of obedience, and each step of obedience taken bringing in turn a clearer understanding of His Holy will. Through the assistance of these means of grace, which the Lord has supplied, I have been enabled to uproot the erroneous teachings of false leaders and those who have the Nicolaitin spirit, and install our Lord as the rightful Head, taking Him for my Instructor and Guide, and His Word as the infallible rule to measure and test all I receive. Surely my heart is full of gratitude toward Him for His unlimited goodness and mercy to me. I often say, "Why has He been so gracious to me?" . . .

I am especially grateful that in His kind providence He has supplied us with the volumes of Revelation, thus assisting us to a greater appreciation of our privileges, as prospective heirs of the Kingdom and of being co-workers with Him. The Bible seems almost a new book to me, although I have been a student of it almost fifteen years -- I should say more a student of Pastor Russell. Now, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, I am beginning to be a real Bible student. We, as a class, are enjoying lovely fellowship and study together. We are hoping that in the near future it may again be our privilege to have one of the dear brethren with us in the west coast.

Praying His rich blessing upon you,

Your sister in the one Hope, F. P. -- Wash.

Dear Brethren in Christ,

We are very pleased to have "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," now coming so regularly to us, and also to have the two volumes of Revelation by the late Brother Streeter, for which we feel so grateful to you and our

loving Lord, who has furnished us with such useful helps. It is just like getting bright rays of sunshine after clouds and darkness.

Last year's Chronology number of the "Herald" was the means of bringing us into touch with you. We rejoice that there is still evidence that our Lord has those who can write for the edification of His Body members in all parts of the earth loving messages of truth, so that in this very evil day we may be helped more and more in character development in His likeness.

We are trying to follow Him and to hold to sound words of doctrine. We truly appreciate your work and labor of love in ministering to us the precious Word of life. And we in turn are so happy to pass on to other hungry ones the blessing we ourselves are receiving.

To our Father and Christ Jesus our Redeemer, be all praise and thanksgiving.

Bundaberg Class -- Aus.

Dear Brethren in Christ,

It is with joy I write to you. I cannot wait any longer, but must tell you how the "Herald" loaned to me brought me back to life and joy and hope in the Lord. It is certainly sweet to get the real spiritual food in place adulterated doctrines which do not stir up the Holy Spirit within nor make one long to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

I used to receive the "Herald" but turned it down some years ago, in favor of the "Watch Tower." It was surely a great mistake when I look at it all now. I have been praying to God to open my eyes for I could not see clearly. I thought that the "Channel" people were all that they should be, but many things I heard convinced me that all was not right. The "Towers" were all on service and as I could not get out in the service it all worried me, for if you were not in the service you were condemned, and if you left them you were headed for the Second Death. I was so sick of seeing "organization," that that word and others got on my nerve. And the "new light" and the multitudes that were going along with them all made me wonder; but I wonder no more, for I have "come out of her." I will stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made me free.

The article called "Instant in Prayer" is most beautiful and uplifting, and on the one on "Love," oh, how much I needed that lesson, and also the one on "Faith," they all came just in time -- heaven-sent answers to my prayers in which I asked God to show me the way, to open the eyes of my understanding so that I would not be tossed about with those new doctrines, which showed not the spirit of Christ. They say, Get out on the battlefield, the King is in action! Go out in the service! Service is the cry! St. Paul said, "Forget not the assembling of yourselves together and so much the more as ye see the day approaching;" and then again he admonished to build one another up in the most holy faith. That is what we all need, to be built up as a spiritual temple, a habitation of God, not of the world. . . .

Wishing you all an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Your sister by Divine favor, L D. -- Que.

Dear Brethren in Christ,

Greetings and much love in Jesus' dear name! Just a line to thank you again for the "Herald." It is the only source of comfort I have apart from Brother Russell's writings and the blessed Bible.

I do so much love the spirit of the little paper you publish, I would like to have it sent to the enclosed addresses. . . . I am longing to help in some way and this is the only way I see open. I am doing this in harmony with the Scripture, "Cast thy bread upon the waters."

I am not attending any of the meetings here, and will not be doing so for the present; but I want you to know I am delighted with the ministry of the "Institute," and am longing for the day when all shall know as they are known. I feel so unworthy of the love and care the Lord has showered upon me." I dislike to think I am here doing nothing to show Him my appreciation of his loving kindness. So I have resolved to renew my consecration and seek for ways and means of serving my King and Master, recognizing his words: "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of these My little ones, ye do it unto Me."

Please find enclosed Money Order for \$_____ to cover cost of the subscriptions, etc., and the balance to be used as you see best. I never fail to remember you and your ministry in my prayers every night. . . .

Your sister by Divine grace alone, B. G. -- B. C.