

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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AWAKE THOU THAT SLEEPEST AND ARISE

*"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."
--- Eph. 5:18*

ST. PAUL'S letter to the Ephesians, specially chapter 5, verses 11 to 21 inculcates the transforming tendency of the Truth. Like all of the New Testament epistles, it is addressed, not to the wicked, not to the worldly, but to the Christian. The Lord's spirit, the spirit of truth and righteousness, received as a result of faith in the Redeemer and consecration to Him as a follower, a pupil, is the beginning of a new life, which starting in the will, should grow, develop, increase, until it permeates and fills all the avenues of life -- its affections, its ambitions, its cravings.

Today, as in the Apostle's day, those who have become the Lord's people through faith and consecration need to be informed respecting the possibilities of their new life, else they may permit it to lie comparatively dormant-permit it to be covered up, and finally to be extinguished, smothered by the old nature -the will of the flesh, its affections, its ambitions, its cravings. While, therefore, it is important that conversion should take place-a turning of the will, the intention, from sin to holiness, from self to God -- it is very important that conversion be not esteemed to be the end, but merely the beginning of the Christian's course. It is, of course, important that the begetting should be of the truth, and not of error, so that the new mind may be of the proper kind; but even when properly begotten of the truth, as a child of the Kingdom, it is essential that the new creature shall be nourished first with the "milk," subsequently with the "meat" of the truth, which God has provided for this very purpose.

In Danger of Complete Failure

New converts, like new-born babes, are much inclined to sleep; but while this in nature is profitable, in grace it is dangerous. For the new creature to sleep in self-satisfaction means death. The begetting of the spirit has been for the very purpose of energizing ; and hence, the Apostle here calls upon such "babes in Christ," fallen asleep under the spirit of the world and thus in danger of complete failure in the way of character development, saying, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee." (R.V.) The "new creature" is to recognize the fact that the whole world is dead -- not merely under a death sentence, not merely figuratively dead -- but in a death condition, as respects the highest and noblest things of righteousness and truth. Our begetting of the Holy Spirit of truth gives us merely a first suggestion of our own condition by nature, and the condition of the whole world, in trespasses and sin-in thought, word, and deed. It is necessary that the mind should first be awakened to seek for other things; it is necessary that the ear should hear the voice of Him who now speaks unto us from above -the anointed Head of the anointed Body; it is necessary that the eyes of our understanding should be opened that we may see the true situation of things. And all this is well represented in the Apostle's figure of awakening.

We regret to say that the general tendency with many brethren in positions of service in the Church is not to awaken the sleepers, but rather to lull them to sleep. This however, is not always, nor generally done with a view to serving the Adversary, and permitting the new life to become extinct, just as not many nurses and mothers wilfully contribute to the weaknesses, diseases, and death of the infants under their charge. In both cases good intentions are often thwarted by ignorance of the governing laws. Those who occupy the position of teachers, while not devoid of good intentions as respects the babe in Christ, lack the theoretical and practical knowledge which they should inculcate—they are babes in spiritual matters themselves, as the Apostle wrote in one of his epistles, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles [rudiments] of the oracles of God." -- Heb. 5 :12.

Energy of the New Creature Required

When the believing, converted, consecrated, begotten, sleeping, "new creature" has been awakened -- when the eyes and ears of his understanding have been opened, as above suggested, to see the true conditions of the world, and to realize himself as a "new creature" in Christ -- his next duty is to arise. His arising from the dead signifies the activity of the new mind, the new will, in directing and controlling his mortal body. This implies effort; the putting forth of all the energy of the new creature. It requires no effort to sleep, or to lie after one gets awake; but to rise requires the exercise of every muscle. Arising is not an instantaneous act, but a process requiring one movement after another, until it is fully accomplished; so also is the arising of the "new creature" from the dead conditions of sin and trespass against the laws of righteousness and truth and purity; it requires his every effort, and is a work of time. Indeed all experienced Christians who have followed the Apostle's injunction to arise from the dead, have found that it requires days, months, years, of energetic effort to rise up above, superior to the fallen tendencies of his own flesh, common to the world of mankind. He finds that even after he has risen fully up, so that he does not wilfully practice sin, nor countenance it in any sense or degree, he still must be on his guard lest he be entrapped by the weaknesses of his mortal body, or by the allurements of the world, or by the temptations of the Adversary, and thus stumble again over some of the things of sin and death from which he had arisen by the Lord's grace.

The Apostle in the previous verses has explained some of these things of sin and death to which the Lord's people should become thoroughly awake, and from which they should arise completely. In verse 3, he mentions some evils which should be "not so much as named among you -- as becometh saints." In verse 4, he mentions "foolish talking" as among the things of sin and death from which the Lord's people must arise. While we believe that the saints will make most progress themselves, and be most helpful, to others, by avoiding all kinds of light and unedifying conversation, and while we strongly recommend this course to all, nevertheless, we do not understand the Apostle here to refer to what might be designated as harmless jokes or levity. From the text we understand him to refer to coarse, lascivious talking, and to a more refined jesting with half-suggestions of profanity or vice, sometimes practiced by the educated and witty.

Living Epistles of Our Daily Lives

We are to arise from all such low conditions of thought, word, and deed as we find prevalent about us; because as children of God, begotten by His Spirit, we can have no fellowship with these things. We must regard them as the Apostle suggests, as "unfruitful works of darkness." The Apostle by this word, unfruitful, no doubt intended to give us the thought that sin is destructive instead of productive-that its tendency is toward death. On the contrary, the tendency of the new mind of Christ is toward fruit-bearing, development, blessing, uplifting, refreshment. Not only is this true in the individual Christian, but as our Lord's words suggest, the individual Christian exercises a preservative influence on others. Wherever he may live he is a shining light dispelling the darkness of sin; he is the salt of the earth, preserving the mass from corruption. The moral standing of the civilized world today is unquestionably largely due to the indirect influence of the Holy Spirit in God's people, which, as the Apostle declares, reproves the world. Our reproof of sin may always be through the living epistles of our daily lives which, as bright and shining lights, should ever reprove by manner, look, act, and tone, everything tending toward darkness and sin -- "let your light so shine before men that they seeing your good works may glorify your Father in heaven." Occasionally it may be proper, and still more occasionally it may be duty, for us to speak or to act in opposition to darkness, but the light of a godly life, testifying for the truth and exhibiting the Holy Spirit, is certainly one of the most forceful reproofs of sin that can be administered. While passing, we might have in mind the Apostle's words, "unfruitful works of darkness," laying emphasis upon the last word. Sin is figuratively represented by darkness; and, additionally' it generally prefers literal darkness for the accomplishment of its purposes. The Lord's children are children of the light, and are to walk in the light of truth; they are to have their hearts enlightened and their minds so illuminated as to make them burning and shining lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, blinded and darkened by the Prince of Darkness. And all such, while endeavoring to arise from the dead and to live separate from the world, are recommended to walk in the light of truth, and so far as possible to live in the light actually -- to see that their homes are well lighted -- recognizing that even the natural light is a foe to the darkness of sin.

Increasing Light for the Righteous

The Apostle suggests the necessity of taking the various steps above outlined, before the Christian will get fully into the light himself. It is after he has arisen from the dead by the Lord's help, by the help of the brethren, by the assistance of the exceeding great and precious promises of the Word, by the indwelling spirit of the Word; after he has arisen from the dead and indeed while he is arising from the state of sin and death, while he is attempting to bring his members into subjection to the new life, a new light is shining upon him -- his light is increasing, his knowledge of the Lord, his knowledge of sin, his knowledge of righteousness, his appreciation of truth and righteousness "in the inward parts," as the Prophet expresses it. The light shining upon him, and deep into* the recesses of his heart, may sometimes cause distress, as he finds that his own natural weaknesses and imperfections are even greater than he had at first been aware of; nevertheless, as a child of the light, begotten by the Father of lights, he loves the right, and hates the sin; and the more clearly the light shines upon him and shows him the blemishes of his own mortal body, the more he runs for and strives for the perfection which the Lord assures him he shall attain to in the

actual resurrection -- of which the present "rising to walk in newness of life," is but the figure.

The Apostle, progressing with the thought before us, declares that the one who thus arises from the dead is not even then to stand still. He must walk -- not after or toward the flesh and its standard, but after and toward the Spirit and its standard, and he will need to walk circumspectly -- with careful scrutiny of each footstep. The Apostle suggests that any other course than this would be foolish. We are to remember that our Adversary was more disposed to let us alone while we were asleep; but that now, when we are awake and seeking to walk after the Spirit, he will be on the alert to ensnare and entrap us; hence the need of our circumspection. The Lord gives us light, not only on our own characters, and upon sin and righteousness in general, but, additionally, He gives us light upon the road we are to travel. This light upon our pathway is the light shining from the Scriptures of which the Prophet declares, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet, a lantern to my footsteps." He who neglects the lamp, neglects one of the very important means of walking circumspectly. And alas, how many Christian people today, with the Bible in their homes, are neglecting to trim and use it as a lamp; if not standing in the dark, they are walking in the darkness, stumbling, or in danger of stumbling, continually. Let us remember the importance of this Lamp, and use it; to the intent that ours may be the "path of the just, shining more and more unto the perfect day."

"Because the Days are Evil"

God's children are to redeem the time -- to purchase opportunities for the new creature and its interests and concerns, at the expense of the old nature. We as new creatures are to exchange the things of darkness for the things of light; the opportunities for sowing to the flesh for the opportunities of sowing to the Spirit. The opportunities must be thus purchased else we will have none: if we give way to the inclinations of the flesh, its appetites and desires, it will consume all there is of time and opportunity, strength and influence, and leave nothing for the new creature, "because the days are evil"; that is because they are unfavorable to spiritual progress. They present thousands of temptations for worldly pleasure and worldly ease and worldly fame and worldly progress; and thus they multiply the tests which come upon us as "new creatures." We must remember that the Lord desires that these tests shall demonstrate the *degree* of our love, the *degree* of our sincerity, the *degree* of our consecration to Him; the more our love for the Lord and for righteousness, the greater will be our zeal in snatching time, opportunity, influence from the flesh and consecrating it to spiritual things. In so doing we will not be unwise, but will display our understanding of the Lord's will. (Verses 16, 17.) Unless we are awake, we cannot arise to present newness of life; and unless this arising to newness of life is accomplished, we cannot share in the First Resurrection.

Filling of the Spirit Cure for Sorrow

The Apostle contrasts two spirits. Under present conditions men naturally look for something to exhilarate them, to refresh, to revive -- to counteract life's trials, burdens, and sorrows. Many of the dead in trespasses and sins find this stimulant and relief from care, in various intoxicating stimulants -- wine, spirituous liquors, opium, etc., but the child of God is to look in a totally different direction for his stimulant, his exhilaration, his relief from care and trouble -- he is to be "filled with the spirit" of the Lord. He is not merely to have a little of it, but is to become intoxicated with it to the extent that it will change the general appearance

of all his surroundings and conditions in life. And cannot each advanced Christian, filled with the Lord's Spirit testify that this is true? -- that all things are changed from the new standpoint and its new hopes, new ambitions, new relationships? Can he not say, "Old things have passed away, all things have become new"? What need has he for the wine cup to drown his troubles, or smother his sorrows? He knows from observation if not from experience that all such exhilaration and oblivion to sorrow brings an after effect of pain: he knows also from experience and observation that-to be filled with the Lord's Spirit need not be a temporary oblivion to sorrow, but a permanent one, that "Earth hath no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure"; that even the deepest pains and sorrows of the heart are more than counterbalanced and cancelled by the joys of the Lord secured through the possession of a fullness of His Spirit.

The lightness of heart of the intoxicated "dead in trespasses and sin" often leads to bacchanalian revelry and song, repulsive even to the same person when sober; but the filling of the Spirit of the Lord leads to songs and rejoicing, not only with the lips, but with the heart -refreshing, comforting, and uplifting, not only to the singer but also to the hearer. It is this "new song" *in the heart* that constitutes the Christian a separate and distinct being from all others about him. "Thou hast put a new song in my mouth, even Thy loving kindness, O Lord!" Because it is in the heart, therefore, it must be in the mouth also, and must influence all the affairs of life; for we cannot but speak the things which have so wonderfully uplifted and refreshed our souls. And the speaking of these things is the proclamation of the Gospel, "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

Spirit Makes Us Humble

In our new attitude, figuratively risen from the dead and walking in newness of life with the Lord, our Redeemer and Head, all of life's affairs have a new coloring. Not only can we sing:

"Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers,
Have all gained new sweetness to me"

but we can glory in tribulations also, and give thanks for these, as well as life's blessings, to the Heavenly Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus; knowing, having the conviction, the assurance, that life's disciplines are working out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And not only so, but this dependence upon the Lord and filling with His Spirit makes us humble; so that we do not think of ourselves above what we ought to think, but think soberly. It is in view of the humility of this class that the Apostle suggests that they submit themselves one to another in the reverence of the Lord. Those who have the Lord's Spirit will have the brotherly kindness which is a part of it; and will be quite willing to defer to each other's preferences in many things -- in all things not contrary to the principles of righteousness -- in all things in harmony with reverence to the Lord, His Word, and the principles it inculcates.

It may not be amiss here to remind ourselves that the Scriptures show two kinds of symbolic or figurative intoxication: the one above described, filling with the Spirit of the Lord and its joys, and peace, and comfort -- the results of the fruitage of the vine which the Heavenly Father planted, of which Christ is the central stock, and of which His followers are all "branches." The other wine is a counterfeit, an illicit wine; it is not produced by the vine of the Father's planting, but from the grapes of the "vine of the earth." It is of this vine that the Lord tells us Great Babylon has made all the nations drunken -- the wine of her

inconsistency, of her infidelity. This is the wine or spirit of the world and of human tradition.

Many Today Intoxicated

Looking all about us we fear that many, who think they are filled with the Holy Spirit of the Truth, are really filled with this intoxication of human theories and uncertain teaching. Those intoxicated with this wine will shortly be aroused to a realization that it was sadly adulterated, and the affects will be painful. Those who are intoxicated with this wine of unsound doctrine are rejoicing not in the cup of the world and of devils, not in gross sins, but nevertheless not in the spiritual things. They glory in the prosperity of their particular organization; they are generally intoxicated with love for sectarianism and the outward show of works, so that worldly persons, dead in trespasses and sins, are often loved and bothered by those intoxicated with this adulterated spirit, while saints are spurned and treated as enemies because of faithfulness to God in rebuking the wrongful teaching and its doctrinal falsities.

Let us, dear brethren, beware of the natural wine and its drunkenness -- of the cup of devils, gross sins and immoralities; let us beware of the still more deceptive wine mixed by misguided teachers, which has a form of godliness, and which tends to stupefy and to give illicit joy; let us, however, having made sure of the Lord's cup, drink thereof and be filled with the Spirit of our Master and with His joys.

THE WORD OF GOD OUR SPIRITUAL FOOD

By Archbishop Leighton (about A.D. 1675)

THIS is the end of the ministry, that you may be brought unto Christ, that you may be led to the sweet pastures and pleasant streams of the Gospel; that you may be spiritually fed, and may grow in that heavenly life, which is here begun in all those in whom it shall hereafter be perfected.

As the milk that infants draw from the breast, is most connatural food to them, being of that same substance that nourished them in the womb: so when they are brought forth, that food follows them as it were for their supply in that way that is provided in nature for it; by certain veins it ascends into the breasts, and is there fitted for them, and they are by nature directed to find it there. Thus as a Christian begins to live by the power of the Word, he is by the nature of that spiritual life directed to that same Word as his nourishment.

Whereas natural men cannot love spiritual things for themselves, desire not the Word for its own sweetness, but would have it sauced with such conceits as possibly spoil the simplicity of it; or at the best love to hear it for the wit, and learning, which, without any wrongful mixture of it, they find in one delivering it more than another. But the natural and genuine appetite of the children of God, is to the Word, for itself, and only as milk, "sincere milk"; and where they find it so, from whomsoever, or in what way soever delivered unto them, they feed upon it with delight.

As Some Appropriate the Word

Desire the Word, not that you may only hear it; that is to fall very far short of its true end; yea, it is to take the beginning of the work for the end of it. The ear is indeed the mouth of the mind, by which it receives the Word (as Elihu compares it, Job 34:3), but meat that goes no further than the mouth (you know) cannot nourish. Neither ought this desire of the Word to be only to satisfy a custom; it were an exceeding folly to make so superficial a thing the end of so serious a work.

Again, to hear it only to stop the mouth of conscience, that it may not clamor more for the gross impiety of contemning it; this is to hear it not out of desire, but out of fear. To desire it only for some present pleasure and delight that a man may find in it, is not the due use and end of it; that there is delight in it, may help commend it to those that find it so, and so be a means to advance the end; but the end it is not.

To seek no more but a present delight that vanisheth with the sound of the words, that die in the air, is not to desire the Word as meat, but as music, as God tells the Prophet Ezekiel of his people. "And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well upon an instrument; for they hear thy words, and they do them not."

To desire the Word for the increase of knowledge, although this is necessary and commendable, and being rightly qualified, is a part of spiritual accretion, yet take it as going no further, it is not the true end of the Word. Nor is the venting of that knowledge in speech and frequent discourse of the Word and the Divine truths that are in it; which, where it is governed with Christian prudence, is not to be despised, but commended: yet certainly the highest knowledge, and the most frequent and skilful speaking of the Word, severed from the growth here mentioned, misses the true end of the Word. If any one's head or tongue should grow apace, and all the rest stay at a stand, it would certainly make him a monster; and they are no other, that are knowing and discoursing Christians, and grow daily in that, but not at, all in holiness of heart and life, which is the proper growth of the children of God.

And as we ought in preaching, so you in hearing, to propound this end to yourselves, that you may be spiritually refreshed, and walk in the strength of that Divine nourishment. Is this your purpose when you come hither? Inquire of your own hearts, and see what you seek, and what you find, in the public ordinances of God's house. Certainly the most do not so much as think on the due intendment of them, aim at no end, and therefore can attain none; seek nothing; but sit out their hour, asleep or awake, as it may happen, or, possibly, some seek to be delighted for the time, as the Lord tells the Prophet, "to hear as it were a pleasant song"; if the gifts and strain of the speaker be anything pleasing.

That the Heart May Be Quickened

Or, it may be, they want to gain some new notions, to add somewhat to their stock of knowledge, either that they may be enabled for discourse, or, simply, that they may know. Some, it may be, go a little further: they like to be stirred and moved for the time, and to have some touch of good affection kindled in them; but this lasts but for a while, till their other thoughts and affairs get in, and smother and quench it; and they are not careful to blow it up and improve it. How many, when they have been a little affected with the Word, go out and fall into other discourses and thoughts, and either take in their affairs secretly, as it were,

under their cloak, and their hearts keen a conference with them; or if they forbear this, yet, as soon as they go out, plunge themselves over head and ears in the world, and lose all which might have any way advantaged their spiritual condition. It may be, one will say, "It was a good sermon." Is that to the purpose? But what think you it hath for voter praise or dispraise? Instead of saying, "Oh! how well was that spoken," you should say, "Oh! how hard is repentance! how sweet a thing is faith! how excellent the love of Jesus Christ!" That were your best and most real commendation of the sermon, with true benefit to yourselves.

How sounds it to many of us at least, but as a well contrived story, whose use is to amuse us, and possibly delight us a little, and there is an end?-and indeed no end, for this turns the most serious and most glorious of all messages into an empty sound. If we keep awake, and give it a hearing, it is much; but for anything further, how few deeply beforehand consider, "I have a dead heart; therefore will I go unto the Word of Life, that it may be quickened; it is frozen, I will go and lay it before the warm beams of that sun that shines in the Gospel: my corruptions are mighty and strong, and grace, if there be any in my heart, is exceeding weak: but there is in the Gospel a power to weaken and kill sin, and to strengthen grace: and this being the intent of my wise God in appointing it, it shall be my desire and purpose in resorting to it, to find it to me according to His gracious intendment; to have faith in my Christ, the fountain of my life, more strengthened, and made more active in drawing from Him; to have my heart more refined and spiritualized, and to have the sluice of repentance opened, and my affections to Divine things enlarged; more hatred of sin, and more love of God and communion with Him.

"TRACE IT BACK"

"In the beginning God." -- Gen. 1:1.

"Could the Bible begin more inspiringly than with those four words? Man is so made that he must search for origins. When he sees a beautiful house, he knows that it had a builder, he scouts the idea that it could have come about by mere chance. But he is not satisfied with learning the name of the builder; he must know whence came the stone and the brick and the wood that make up the house. Even here he refuses to stop. He wants to know who made the materials that the builder put together in the house, and thus he traces back all effects.

"Now, only two answers to this question of origins are possible. We can trace everything back to chance or to God. As some one has said, as we go back in our search we can come either to Fate or to Father. But Fate is blind and the world we see around us is a most marvelous piece of intricate work. Fate is cruel, and the world is full of evidences of love. Only an obstinate and stupid mind can see Fate as the origin of the universe. The thoughtful soul sees in it all the hand of his infinite Father.

"What we find, as we thus trace things back, will decide our life attitude. Is it Fate? Ours will be an attitude of gloom, suspicion, doubt, antagonism, despair. Is it Father? Our attitude will be one of cheer, confidence, faith, love, and hope. Let the last be our view, for it is the truth.

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. -- Amen."

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." -- Gal. 6:14.

IF there was ever a time when the truths connected with the cross of Christ needed a fresh emphasis, surely that time is now. Serious indeed is the widespread rejection of the Bible teaching of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus by the great mass of Christians today. Because of this we are not at all surprised to note the alarm of some as they observe that more and more the tendency of all higher education of the present day is away from the cross. It must seem to such that, humanly speaking, eventually this precious truth must be crushed to the earth, unless the masses of church membership can be aroused to a concerted action against it. And doubtless there is much of sincerity and hope of victory in some of the strenuous efforts being made today in defense of the doctrine of salvation through faith in the shed blood of Christ. With all such sincerity and effort, the more enlightened prophetically and doctrinally, should properly sympathize. A clearer knowledge of the meaning of the cross, and the fact that there is much beating of the air on the part of others less enlightened, should not interfere with our sympathies toward them, even as Paul was glad to have Christ preached by friends or opposers. It is always well to remember that God is overruling in all such matters and that even the wrath of devils may be made to praise Him.

But while deeply interested in every honest effort made in defense of the cross, we are usually unable to do more than maintain an attitude of sympathy toward many thus engaged. Very often we find that those who claim loyalty to the cross and full faith in its sin-atonement aspects, deny its real meaning and efficacy by other serious and blinding errors. Under such circumstances co-operation and association would be almost impossible without involving ourselves in a compromise displeasing to the Lord. It therefore becomes our privilege now to emphasize the pure message and the comprehensive meaning of the cross of Christ in which we glory.

Let Us Examine Ourselves

In this connection it is well for us to be first of all properly critical of ourselves. The Scriptures teach that judgment and examination should first begin with our own conduct. They teach that unless we first judge ourselves we are immediately disqualified as competent judges of others. While therefore we might properly conclude that the truths centered in the cross needed special emphasis for the sake of those who may be abandoning it, or in a mistaken way defending it, are we sure that we ourselves fully grasp all its significance? Too often the tendency is to approve ourselves by making comparisons. We judge the views of others by their relative nearness to our own interpretations, and noting the greatness of their deflections therefrom, we begin to compliment ourselves accordingly. This the Apostle said was a great mistake. "They measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." (2 Cor. 10:12.) The reason is so obvious that he did not need to explain why: They were overlooking the one and only standard approved of God -- the Christ of the cross.

It is therefore a source of real profit for the sincere in heart to apply the searching light of truth to the emotions of the heart and the acts of life; for knowledge always brings increased responsibility and must never be mistaken for a sure evidence of immunity from guilt. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The prayer of the sincere is always, "Search me, O God, and know

my heart: try me, and know my thoughts." Let us then examine ourselves to see whether we be in the faith. Let us stand before the cross that we may read; mark, and inwardly digest its messages to us; for it is only when the cross speaks to us, and our hearts are tuned to its messages, that our confession of faith becomes a thing of value.

Reveals Exceeding Sinfulness of Sin

The first message of the cross has to do with the reality of sin. It presupposes the inquiry: Why was the cross necessary at all? And the answer is found permeating the whole of Scripture, namely God's uncompromising hatred of sin. From the story of Abel's acceptable offering in the dawn of history, to the shout of the redeemed hosts beyond the restitution glories of the coming Age, we hear the strain, "When I see the blood, I will pass over", "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins"; "He died the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God"; "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." Ah! yes, the cross speaks of a broken fellowship, a disinherited race, a dead and dying world, because of a broken law. It speaks of the wrath of God revealed in the curse of death that relentlessly sweeps the race into the tomb. It teaches that sin is a hateful thing in the sight of God, so hateful that His anger must burn against it. It cannot be mitigated or modified. Neither can it be forgiven, for His law, which cannot be altered or amended declares -- "The wages of sin is death." The cross therefore most emphatically reveals the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

It is most important that we learn this lesson of sin's hatefulness. God has desired to deeply impress this fundamental truth upon the minds of all His creatures. His law as given to Israel emphasized it. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses," "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (Heb. 10:28; Jas. 2:10.) All the intelligent creatures of heaven and earth must therefore know that He will make no agreement or covenant with sin. He will enter into no arrangement whereby sins may be graded or classified as greater or less heinous. Sin is sin, and death its unavoidable wages. If sin had been forgivable, and God's nature and veracity remain unaffected thereby, we might well inquire, Why the cross? But since His holiness and character are such that He cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance, all is clear. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "With His stripes we are healed." The demands of justice were met in Him, and now God can be just and the justifier of them who believe in Jesus, and for His sake obtain forgiveness from all their guilt and sin.

By Grace Are Ye Saved

But the point to be remembered is that our unchangeable God has never changed His attitude toward sin. This message of the cross He intends shall be indelibly stamped upon our hearts that we may hate and flee from evil -- loving righteousness and hating iniquity. If the searching light of the law of Moses revealed man's exceeding sinfulness, as Paul teaches that it did, then the testimony of the cross comes with even greater force. And if the punishments under the Law illustrated God's dealings with sin, that lesson is reinforced with emphasis in the story of the cross, where God must turn His face from the one who bore our guilt. We bring our sins to the cross, but we cannot, and praise God, we need not, take them beyond it. They must end there in our hatred of them, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord or live in His presence. A true perception of this truth, learned best at the foot of the cross, will prove a great factor in cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The

second message we may read from the cross is, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Learning this in a definite way will represent encouraging progress. It is a truth that God has needed to teach men in all ages. From the day when Adam sought to cover himself with his cloak of withering leaves until the present, man has been prone to insult the holiness of God by his subterfuges. The altars of Cain and Abel have stood side by side in all generations. On that of Cain may still be found the offerings of human efforts and provision, from which God must withhold His approval. On that of Abel the shed blood has always been found, testifying constantly to the believer's acknowledgment of helplessness aside from the atonement secured through the shedding of the blood of Christ.

It was this truth doubtless that inspired the writers of those beautiful hymns, "Rock of Ages," and "Face to Face"

"Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know,
These for sin could not atone;
Thou hast saved and Thou alone.
In my hand no price I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

Then, when the toils of the way are passed, and clinging to the cross has kept the soul anchored through storm and calm, the song will be

"And I shall see Him face to face
And tell the story, saved by grace."

That Will Be Glory Indeed

How difficult it has been for many to get the proper view of the relation of works and grace. That certain works are essential, no one can dispute. Again and again we are reminded of the need of diligence in our stewardship of talents possessed, of diligence in "working while it is called day," for finally we shall be called upon to render up an account of our privileges. But meditation before the cross will quickly remove any misunderstanding regarding the value of our service to God. It is while we gaze thereon that we really discover how very unprofitable we are, and it is there we realize in truth that,

"Were the whole realm of nature mine
That were an offering far too small."

We then come in humble acknowledgment that our sacrifice is so small, our little all so insignificant, and our service so imperfect, that we are lost in the marvel of His condescending grace. Thus Jesus taught us, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants." He said this, not to discourage our efforts, but, to encourage our acknowledgment of His grace in permitting us to be His servants at all. When with unobscured vision we behold His face, and see the unspeakable glories of the heavenly courts, we will then fully realize how very imperfect our works are. How little inclination we will then have to ask a reward for service rendered. Just to be there and to see Him face to face will be glory indeed.

How strange it is then that while we may sing,

"He has called us to a station,
We could ne'er by merit win,"

we are nevertheless so prone to stress what we are doing for God, rather than to say, "Hear what the Lord hath done for me!" All this will be changed as we meditate on the greatness of His work on the cross for us. How could one sit before the cross and drink in the message of His grace and not feel utterly unworthy of it all? How could such an one ever entertain the thought that his services were worthy of so great a favor as his salvation represents. Before the cross we learn that our works -- the works enjoined upon us by the Scriptures -- are the expression and manifestation of the love and gratitude. of our hearts, the result of that deep realization of indebtedness that sings,

"O! to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Lord, Thy goodness, like a fetter,
Binds my grateful heart to Thee."

What Shall I Render unto the Lord

Another message written upon the cross reveals the meaning of that full consecration of our all to God that Jesus taught and exemplified. This message is most important also. It is God's definition of the term, "A covenant by sacrifice," such as the Church is invited to make. It is also the criterion of the only acceptable kind of consecration whereby membership in the Church is possible. Furthermore, it stamps as imposters any who claim such consecration, when the life of sacrifice and self-denial does not support that claim. This reality is observed in the exacting demands of the cross, in the consecration of Jesus. Its bitter cup of ignominy and shame -- the final fulfillment of His covenant -- must be drained ere God's will had been fully done. With Him it was by way of the cross that He would enter into the Father's approval. From Jordan to the tomb it was an actual experience of a baptized will that delighted in the consuming processes whereby the consecrated life was being given up. With constant reiterations He expressed His intention to finish His baptism, drink the cup the Father had poured for Him, and give up all that He had.

Hence, as we study His life and observe the reality of His suffering and sacrifice, we realize that it is eminently important that we ask ourselves certain heart-searching questions: Does my life of consecration involve self-denials and sacrificings similar to that of Jesus? How real will my share ilk His Kingdom be if it is on a par with my actual, consecrated experiences now? Can I stand beside His Apostles and truthfully say, "I have left all to follow Thee. What therefore shall I receive?" Has my consecration vow been an empty promise, or has it truly been "a covenant by sacrifice," a life totally different from what it would have been had no such covenant been made ?

On this point our Lord was most emphatic: "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." The fire of loving devotion burning in His own heart continuously, wholly consumed all that had been laid down without reserve in consecration, and to us He says, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me., *cannot be* My disciple." Let us take heed that we entertain no modification of these words, but let us seek more and more of His Spirit of fervent love and consecration as it is clearly written upon His cross for our enlightenment and example.

The Power of God unto Salvation

A further message written prominently upon the cross speaks to us of its power. The ultimate purpose of our calling is the attainment of the character-likeness of Christ. Thus it is that we progress from the first step of reconciliation to the further act of consecration, and then learn the purpose of God in accepting us as sons. "This is the will of God concerning you, even your sanctification." As we have seen, the holiness of God forbids fellowship with sinners, and limits all but His adopted sons to the outer courts of communion. But for those who are received into His family as sons, He has willed their transformation, and predestined their characters, requiring that they be "conformed to the image of His Son." So while the cross has spoken to these of forgiving love, and the removal of the sins of the past, and then led on to a full consecration representing love and gratitude, much more must yet be done. There must be experienced a power that will accomplish in the consecrated life all that the Lord requires of those whom He will finally accept as sharers with Him in His Kingdom glories.

As we ponder upon this aspect of the cross, in its many lessons to us, we must surely feel the power of its influence urging on to a full experience of all that it makes possible to us. In this connection we recall two of the Apostle's statements: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." What Paul meant by "the power of God unto salvation" was not merely the act of love revealed in the forgiveness of our Adamic guilt, but also the "mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead," dwelling in us and "quickening our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us" -- the power that raises us up to walk in newness of life, and cleanses us from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord; the power that works out our full development as new creatures in Christ Jesus. That power Paul found in contemplating the crucified Christ and the Gospel centered therein.

But how is this lesson learned from the cross? The reply is that it is the result of the foregoing messages received into good and honest hearts. To use a familiar phrase, it is the "cause and effect" of our response to the love revealed to us through the cross. When sin is seen in all its hatefulness, and God has shown us His attitude toward it as we have learned it from the cross, when we have properly grasped the fullness of His grace as the cross teaches it, when our grateful hearts have responded in full consecration to Him who died on the cross for us, and our souls cry out for the sanctification awaiting us through Him, then every aspect of the cross becomes a power in our lives, constraining us to apprehend the whole will of God for us. This is the "effect" produced by the "cause" for such appreciation and devotion.

The Real Test of Loyalty to the Cross

Love is the greatest thing in the universe, and the cross its greatest manifestation. Our love therefore will habitually linger near the cross, and whatever we may learn there of the will of God will become to us the sole object of life. Thus when we hear Jesus say, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," we will understand that after all, the test of our character will be the reaction of our desires toward all that pleases Him and glorifies our Heavenly Father. When we have progressed to this point, we will possess the tangible evidence of the power of the cross.

When we can read the commands of Jesus that embrace our relationship to God and the brethren, and meditate on all the grandeurs of character-likeness to Christ set forth by the Apostles, and then know that all within us yearns for the fullest measure of these attainments, we know the power of which Paul writes. When

the character that God predestined for the Church in ages past becomes our greatest purpose in life, and we can truthfully say, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness," and when God can say of us as He did of Jesus, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity," then we know the power of the cross of Christ, our lives and conduct being the evidence that this is true.

In the days of Paul, "denying the faith" had a very comprehensive meaning. To him it did not necessarily mean a rejection of the cross, or as we would say, "a denial of the Ransom." To the Apostle it was sufficient for an individual to fail to demonstrate the power of the Gospel in his conduct. Let us note his words: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work, void of judgment." (Titus 1:16, Margin.) "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Others he describes as "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (1 Tim. 5 :8 ; 2 Tim. 3 :5.) Such characters were "the enemies of the cross of Christ" -- rather an infidel than a pseudo-Christian, who by his conduct would bring reproach upon the cross by failing to exhibit its transforming effect in the life.

While it is important therefore to shun all teachings that reject the cross as the symbol of atonement between God and man, it is also a matter of supreme importance that we examine ourselves carefully and guard against such conduct as would mark us as deficient in these essential evidences of faithfulness to the lessons of the cross. Loyalty to the cross will require of us the fullest measure of the mind and spirit of Christ. His teaching and example all lead us to the foot of the cross.

LOYALTY TO GOD, HINDRANCES AND SUCCESS

"And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid." -- Ezra. 3:11.

LOYALTY to the Lord, and faith in His promises, are costly. The Lord has so arranged the matter, to the intent that only those who are willing to pay the price may enjoy these blessings. Only the faithful and obedient are willing to pay the price. Thus the Lord proves His people, separating the merely nominal believers from the true, selecting to Himself His "jewels," His "peculiar people."

This principle applied to the Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity, in response to the Lord's provision through the proclamation of King Cyrus. Out of the great hosts of all the tribes of that nation carried captive there were only forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty (42,360) of the proper faith in God and the Abrahamic promise, and of the true zeal and courage, ready to respond. The remainder of the nation had become so comfortably settled in Babylon, socially and financially, that their interests in these things outweighed their faith in the Abrahamic promise. Thus God sifted the nation, and in this motley group from all the tribes He had the jewel class -- the very best and most loyal part of all the seed of Abraham. As the Apostle explains in respect to the elect Church in this Gospel Age, so we might say of these Jews returning from Babylonian exile, that there were not many of them great or wise or learned or noble, according to the course and wisdom of this world.

Hopes Deferred, Trials Many

Nor had their trials ceased with the surrender of brighter prospects in Babylonia. They left their friends in Babylon, full of zeal, and to some extent admired by their more worldly-wise compatriots, who preferred to remain in the foreign land. The escort granted them by the king, the presents of money, and the costly vessels of the temple service, were with them, and their hopes ran high as they began their journey of nearly 800 miles, about the distance from Philadelphia to Chicago. According to tradition they must have been about four months traveling, whereas an express train in our day would make the distance in seventeen hours.

The toilsome journey ended, they finally rested at Jerusalem, only to find still greater discouragements. But a very few of them had ever seen the place before, and those few had seen through the eyes of childhood, for it had now been seventy years since the captivity commenced when Daniel and his companions were taken, and the city had lain waste a large portion of this time, according to the Word of the Lord. (2 Chron. 36:21.) The wall and the temple had been demolished by Nebuchadnezzar's orders, and many of the private residences were also left in ruins, and now for seventy years of such desolations, the place was a wilderness. Trees were growing in what formerly were streets. Everything was disorder. Any other class than those full of faith and zeal, as these were, would have been utterly discouraged. We are to remember that the Lord thus tries our courage, and faith, and zeal, not to destroy these qualities, but to deepen and fix them -- to establish us, to develop us in character. As with the typical Israelites there, so it is now with the spiritual Israelites--all such trying experiences, under Divine providence, will work out to our advantage if we will but persevere in our faith, and love, and zeal.

It required more than a year to put themselves in reasonable condition for living, and then their attention turned to the rebuilding of the temple. That they should have begun so soon to think of the house of the Lord speaks well of their spiritual condition. We read, "They sang one to another in praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, For He is good, for His mercy endureth forever toward Israel." (R. V.) We have a description given in Ezra, chapter 3, of the laying of the foundation of the temple, and the priests and the Levites, appropriately robed, making a joyful noise before the Lord, as representing the faith and confidence of the people in the precious promises associated with that temple and with that city. Alas, poor Jews! we sympathize with them greatly as we remember that as a nation they clung to those Abrahamic promises for over 1,600 years, and yet finally rejected the Prince of Life, and in consequence were left desolate, as a house, or nation. The Apostle remarks, concerning their faith in the Abrahamic promise, "unto which promise our twelve tribes instantly serving God hope to come." How glad we are for this downtrodden race, that although Israel hath not obtained the chiefest favor, but only the "elect" have obtained it, while the rest were blinded, nevertheless God's mercy and favor still have them in mind, and assure us that they shall obtain mercy through our mercy shortly -- that the blindness that has been on Israel, during the selection of spiritual Israel, will surely pass away, furnishing them the chief opportunity for reconciliation to God, under the New Covenant provisions of the Millennial Age. -- Heb. 8:10-12.

A New Song in My Mouth

As with the mind's eye we see those poor but faithful Israelites, out of all the tribes, praising God as they laid the foundation of the temple, it suggests to us how much more the spiritual Israelites who have returned from mystic Babylon should shout and sing the praises of our King from our higher standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of His grace and truth. Speaking of us, the spiritual Israelites, the Prophet declares, "Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." All spiritual Israelites who are in the right attitude of heart toward the Lord, are full of songs of gratitude and praise -- not always audibly, however, for many can best sing and make melody in their hearts unto the Lord; and indeed the Psalm of Life, which each of the Lord's followers declares in actions and words to those about him, is the best testimony, the best praise we can raise, more to the glory of our King than any others.

If the Israelites who remained in Babylon, whose faith and courage were insufficient, could have witnessed the scene at a distance, they doubtless would have shouted for joy, that they had not undertaken such a pilgrimage and such a work of restoration; but as Paul and Silas could sing in the prison, with their backs bleeding from the cruel lash, while others enjoying every luxury of life in the same city were miserable, so it was with those returned Israelites. Full of faith and hope they were also filled with joy as they looked forward in prospect for still further favors from the Lord, in harmony with His glorious promises. And so it is with the Lord's people today: our rejoicing is not because of temporal favors and advantages and privileges, but on account of those joys which are ours through faith and hope, inspired by the Divine promises--the culmination of the same promises for which the natural

Israelites were aspiring, and which are secured to us through the great Jew of the seed of Abraham, our Redeemer, our Bridegroom. The shouts were discordant -- some of joy, some of weeping. Those who looked forward in hope shouted for joy. Those who looked backward, and pictured before their minds Solomon's grand temple, wept as they thought of the insignificance of the present one in comparison. And so today among spiritual Israelites, there are some who weep for the past, when they should be rejoicing for the future. The Apostle exhorts us to "forget the things which are behind, and to press forward to the things which are before." The lessons we learn from past experiences, even from adverse experiences, while they should be kept in memory, need not be mourned over by spiritual Israelites, for they can call to mind that the merit of Christ's sacrifice covers all of their unwilling blemishes and mistakes. Carrying with them their experiences they should press forward to fresh victories and fresh joys in the Lord.

"First Pure, Then Peaceable"

It should be remembered that these 42,000 people, about 35,000 of whom are supposed to have belonged to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and Levi, and the remainder from the other nine tribes, occupied only a small district in Palestine, about twenty-five miles square, Jerusalem being the center. The remainder of the territory of Palestine was more or less settled by immigrants. The king of Babylon followed the practice of moving the captives from one nation into the territory of another, so that their old associations being broken up they would be more dependent upon the Babylonian government and lose their own natural traits. These people of various nationalities that had settled in Palestine had acquired some of the traditions of the land and its religious customs, and in our

Lord's day, about 566 years later, they were known as the Samaritans. Of them our Lord said, "Ye believe ye know not what; we know what we believe, for salvation is of the Jews." Respecting the same people, we remember our Lord's commandments as He sent forth the twelve Apostles and later also the seventy disciples to proclaim Him, He said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." -- Matt. 10:5, 6.

These mixed peoples, whom we will for convenience call Samaritans, paid little attention to the Jews returned from Babylon until they heard of their project of rebuilding the temple on its own site, the consecrated site, for it is supposed that Abraham's typical offering of Isaac was made upon this very "dome of the rock" upon which the temple was built, a rock that to this day is held sacred by Musselmans, Jews and Christians. The Samaritans had been unneighborly up to this time, but now seemed to catch an inspiration from this temple building as they remembered the ancient glories of the nation of this land, whose great king, Solomon, had built the first temple. Ceasing to act as enemies, the Samaritans proffered their assistance in the building of the temple. We cannot doubt that they were sincere in this proposition, and that really their religious fervor impelled them to make it.

Many who have read of the rebuilding of the temple think the Israelites made a great mistake in rejecting their aid and declining to affiliate with them. But such are evidently in error, since our Lord Jesus by His conduct and words fully substantiated the thought that the Samaritans had nothing whatever to do with the true temple and its building. God had been sifting the true seed of Abraham to select from it the faithful few, and now to have invited the Samaritans to come in and join them in the temple building and temple services would have been to bring in a semi-heathen mixture, which the Lord did not desire. Why the Lord did not desire it can be seen only from the one standpoint -- not that it was His wish to send those Samaritans to eternal torment, nor that He wished to destroy them in the Second Death, but that He has for future development a great Plan of Salvation which will affect every nation, people, kindred, and tongue, including these Samaritans. In the interim He wished to develop the typical seed of Abraham, and subsequently the spiritual seed of Abraham, to be His agents and representatives in conferring His blessings upon all nations.

"Which Temple Ye Are"

We find the same thought abroad today; troubling those who have come out of Babylon, and who are wishing to build the true temple of God -- the holy temple, the antitypical temple, "which temple ye are." The foundations of our temple were laid at Pentecost, under apparently very unfavorable conditions from the world's standpoint a dead Leader, and a handful of a few hundred disciples scattered and considerably discouraged. Nevertheless, those who recognize the Lord's hand in the matter see things differently: with the eye of faith they discern in Jesus the great Rock of our Salvation typified by the "rock of the dome," the top of Mt. Zion, on which the altar of sacrifice stood. The same eye of faith now discerns that the twelve Apostles are the foundation stones of Divine appointment, built upon the Rock Christ Jesus; and that upon the ministries of those appointed representatives of Christ, a glorious Church, a glorious temple of the Lord is being erected. Those who then had the eye of faith shouted for joy, and all who since possess the same spiritual vision rejoice in the greater work which the Lord is accomplishing, as they see the preparation now of the "living stones," which, by and by, in the First Resurrection, shall be brought together

complete as the glorious temple of God, in and through which all the families of the earth may have intercourse with God to their blessing.

Samaritans Amongst Spiritual Israelites Today

There are numerous "Samaritans" today who really have neither part nor lot in this great temple and its construction. These Samaritans are found in various churches and groups of professing brethren, men and women of good character and of religious inclinations. Some of them are "good Samaritans," ready to relieve the sick, the indigent. Worldly wisdom says that these should all be recognized as "Israelites indeed," even though they be not fully consecrated to the Lord to do His will. Many are inclined to upbraid others now as the natural Israelites were upbraided for refusing the fellowship and co-operation of the Samaritans of their day.

There is but one course for the Lord's people to follow: they should appreciate whatever is good in these, their neighbors and friends; they should deal justly and kindly with them, but they should remember that, as oil and water will not mix, so likewise there cannot be any real union between the consecrated and the unconsecrated in respect to their religious views and their endeavors to co-operate in the Divine service. Their standpoints are opposite, affiliations are injurious to both parties. If the spiritually begotten ones, the Israelites indeed, attempt to meet the ideas of the Samaritan class, they will be compromising their own covenant with the Lord. Likewise, if the Samaritan class or the broadminded (?) class of our day be encouraged to affiliate with the consecrated, it will injure them in that it will deceive them into thinking that they have become joint-heirs in the Divine promises; whereas none can inherit under those promises except through faith in the Redeemer, circumcision in the heart, and a full consecration unto the death. Such only become regularly and legitimately Israelites indeed, probationary members of the "very elect" Church.

When their co-operation in temple building, etc., was declined, the Samaritans became the bitter opponents of the Jews, whom they, no doubt, described as bigoted. Consistently with their views of the subject they did all in their power, politically and otherwise, to hinder the temple building, and thus the trials and difficulties of the servants of God were greatly increased and multiplied.

So it is today. Those who are faithful to the Lord, "the people who do know their God," are esteemed to be religious bigots and fanatics by some of the respectable, who profess to have larger and broader views, and who, in harmony with their erroneous conceptions of the situation, are more or less acting in a way to hinder the real work of the consecrated, the preparation of the living stones of this temple. We need to understand the situation properly, otherwise we would soon be discouraged, and think of God as being against us because He permits such opposition. But with the right view of things before our minds we may realize that all the oppositions of the partly consecrated are really beneficial to us, helpful in that they serve to do the chiseling and polishing of our characters, necessary to fit and prepare us for honorable stations in the temple of glory soon to be completed. One thought not to be lost sight of is, that in the Lord's arrangement, we are the stones, He the master workman -- and all the trials and difficulties and oppositions and perplexities and disappointments of our experience are the chisels and wheels and emery-sand for our preparation. From this standpoint only are we able to follow the Apostle's advice to -- rejoice in tribulations also.

WHOLESOME COUNSEL FROM ABOVE

*"Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it:
but the instruction of fools is folly." -- Prov. 16:22.*

THE Scriptures generally instruct that the power of comprehension, of understanding, especially in connection with the knowledge of God and an acquaintance with Him and His will, are of the utmost importance. The Apostle Paul prayed for Timothy -- "The Lord give thee understanding in all things." The Master's promise to His disciples as their present heritage was that the Holy Spirit would guide them into an understanding of spiritual truth and show them things to come concerning God and His will and purpose; that such understanding would be the power of God fortifying them against evil and enabling them to go forward in the overcoming life; and that it would constitute them living examples of the value and efficacy of the Christian religion.

The comprehension which the Spirit of the Lord imparts becomes a fortification to the man of God against self-deception. Again the Wise Man admonishes, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." Here is a solemn warning against self-deception -- against pursuing a course of conduct which is radically wrong, being opposed to the spirit and intent of the Divine Law and yet which may be made to seem right by a line of false reasoning, suggested by the will of the flesh and apparently founded upon the Word of God, yet denying its fundamental principles of righteousness. The delusions of Satan also greatly help along such deceptions and thus the blinded one is urged along in a course which seems to him to be right, but the end of which is disaster and death.

False Teachers and Strong Delusions

Followers of Christ should above all things guard themselves against the folly of this way. To do this, we must ever remember that even though through Christ we have a standing of justification before God, the human heart, which we still have, is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9), and that it requires constant watching and purging to enable us to put into practice the Apostle Paul's rule -- in simplicity and godly sincerity have your conversation in the world. (2 Cor. 1:12.) Truly it requires humility, sobriety and godliness to carry out the Apostle's advice. If the heart be puffed up with pride, or is ambitious for vain glory, or if it be selfish, or in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world, then we should beware; for there is great danger of getting into that way that seemeth right to a man because blinded by his own perverse will or fleshly mind. The Adversary is always ready to take advantage of the self-will and perversities of the natural mind, and to make darkness appear as light. That there have been many strong deceptions through all the ages of man's history, must be conceded by all who are at all informed. "The whole world Beth in the wicked one," says the Apostle, and in these circumstances humanity is largely and badly deceived. Those who have escaped the condemned state and darkened condition of mind, are warned that they must be on guard against subtle, deceptive, and misleading influences and teachings whose name is legion. Many warnings are given in Holy Writ concerning the perilous delusions of the last days in which we are now living. Concerning the present trial time of the Church, Brother Russell wrote: "The studied effort of false teachers -- false brethren developing in the very midst of the Church -- is to offset the Truth by plausible forms of error, to unsettle confidence both in the Truth and in all teachers of the Truth, thus to lead away disciples after them and their theories.

They Will not Endure Sound Doctrine

"In consequence of the allurements of these false teachers, and of the unfaithfulness of many to the love and service of the Truth which they have received, a class in the midst of the Church will give much encouragement to the ambitions of these false brethren; for, says the Apostle (2 Tim. 4:3, 4), the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own desires [desires for something new] shall they gather to themselves teachers, having itching ears [for new and strange things]; and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

"Nor will this class be only a small minority; for, in order that the faithful may not be discouraged when brought face to face with these things, they are forewarned (Psa. 91:7) that, before this conflict ends, a thousand shall fall at their side and ten thousand at their right hand. Thus, realizing that God foreknew it all and that the accomplishment of His glorious purposes is not in the least endangered thereby, they may still have confidence and joy in view of the glorious consummation of His Plan, and of their promised position in it

"Such 'evil men,' says Paul (Ver. 13) 'shall wax worse and worse [more and more bold and aggressive, as' they receive encouragement from that rapidly increasing class who will no longer endure sound doctrine], deceiving [others] and being deceived' (themselves -- becoming more firmly intrenched in the snares of their own weaving, so as to make it impossible to extricate them). But, nevertheless, the time is coming when they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifested unto all men, as was the folly of Jannes and Jambres, who could not forever withstand the teachings of Moses, the servant of God. -- Ver. 9.

"Then St. Paul proceeds to call attention to 'the ground of Timothy's confidence in himself as a faithful teacher of Divine Truth, saying, 'But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me.' -- Ver. 10, 11."

Keep Thy Heart

The best safeguard which Christians have against the snares of Satan is that understanding which the Wise Man describes as "a wellspring of life unto him that hath it." Such understanding is not merely that of the head but of the heart specially; for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," and "out of the heart are the issues of life." If the heart be wrong, the head will seek to justify it, and in so doing will pervert judgment and truth. Therefore take heed and "keep thy heart with all diligence."

Not only will the "wise and understanding heart" keep the feet in the paths of righteousness, but also "the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips," so that he shall speak forth "words of truth and soberness," words of wisdom, of kindness, and of love. Oh how important that the fountain should be sweet, that thus the stream that issues from it may be healthful and refreshing to all within the range of its current! Truly, "Pleasant words [of wisdom, of counsel, and of loving kindness] are as a honey comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones [in that they refresh and comfort and stimulate courage and thus fortify the soul and strengthen it to noble deeds]."

How different is the picture of the ungodly man! An ungodly man diggeth up evil [apparently finding a morbid satisfaction in searching for it], and in his lips there

is a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife, and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor and leadeth him into the way that is not good. He shutteth his eyes .to devise froward things: moving his lips, he bringeth evil to pass." Thus, as Isaiah says, "the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." -- Isa. 57:20, 21.

The Knowledge Resulting from Experience

Is it any wonder then that the Lord has repeatedly and solemnly impressed upon the minds of His children the importance of a real heart knowledge and understanding of His will and of the right way in which they should go! Was not this the substance and effect of the Apostle Peter's admonition (2 Pet. 1:5) ? Beginning with those who already have some knowledge, enough to be a basis for faith, he exhorts them to add to their faith fortitude (Common Version, virtue); he implies that if they hold to their faith against the attacks of the enemy it will develop fortitude, and added grace and character. And when he says, "Add to your fortitude knowledge," we would understand him to mean that if faith be held firmly, and fortitude of character result, this under the Spirit's guidance will bring the faithful one to deeper and wider expanses of knowledge; or, as the same Apostle suggests, the faithful one will grow in both grace and knowledge; and the Holy Spirit, through its begetting will enable such to know, appreciate the deep things of God, the things freely given unto such by God, the knowledge of God resulting from our experience in the school of Christ. It is concerning this knowledge, not merely concerning the intricacies of doctrinal matters, but the heart sympathy and communion with the Lord Himself, that the Apostle Paul exclaims, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

Development of other Graces

This knowledge received into a good and honest heart, will bring .forth the fruitage or grace of character here termed "self-control" (Common Version, temperance). As is elsewhere stated, "He that bath this hope in him, purifieth himself," controls himself, purges out more and more of the old leaven. Following and connected with the attainment of such self-control would come patience: for the self-mastery would teach the necessity for sympathy with and patience toward others. This patience in turn would lead to and develop the next grace mentioned, namely piety -- a condition in which the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, influencing all the thoughts and words and deeds. This condition further develops brotherly kindness-a love for all who are brethren and yoke-fellows in the cause of righteousness and truth, the cause of God. And brotherly kindness leads to that still broader and deeper experience designated the chief of all graces, namely love, love for God, love for the brethren, love deep and pure and true, which thinketh no evil and is not puffed up, is not easily offended; rejoices always in the truth and never in iniquity. This is the climax of Christian attainment in the present life-the grace of all graces, which never fadeth, and which will but be perfected when we receive the new resurrection body.

Indeed blessed then is the man that hath learned the right ways of the Lord and walketh therein with a perfect heart. Such an one, unlike the wicked who go about digging up evil, delights himself in doing good and in speaking forth the words of truth and soberness. He is slow to anger, and studies carefully how to rule his own spirit, which is surely a great work, and worthy of the ambitions and

efforts of every Christian. Truly, how sweet -and blessed are the closing years of a long life devoted to this most worthy end, of ruling one's own spirit in harmony with the principles and precepts of the Word of God; when, as Whittier has beautifully expressed it,

"All the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of the strife
Are rounding into calm";

and when the hallowed influences of ripened Christian graces are manifest to every beholder. Surely, the hoary head in such cases "is a crown of glory," if it be found in the way of righteousness.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren

Greetings in our Master's dear name! Because we think it would encourage you to continue in the Lord's work when a word of cheer from those on the other side of the ocean (even from the small and backward Holland) reaches you, we resolve to let you know of the proceedings of our spiritual growth, since we got into connection with your beautiful exposition of the Truth.

Being tired of the general buffeting which we had to undergo, because we did not agree with the now generally accepted ideas of the Lord's commands, we almost got into spiritual lethargy. But being inspired by the example of the faithful in the past, we tried to get at the rock-bottom of everything, at last crossing your way and, thank God, our drowsiness gave place to greater activity. This activity brought a feeling of peace and assurance in the Lord's leading. We were strengthened at the same time by the Christian-like articles of the "Herald," which lack anything akin to boastfulness and noisy advertisement of self, but overflow with love for the brethren and the Lord. It made us remember the old time articles by our beloved Brother Russell.

Remember, dear brethren, that we were at a disadvantage as regards the Truth, from a human standpoint. We had furthered the work of the Watch Tower in Holland to such an extent that we became identified with it. All those brethren down here that are connected to said Society, came to a knowledge of its exposition by our preaching. When our eyes were opened and we took our turn to the faith once delivered to the saints, the cry of the opposition tarred and smirched us, so that we were made impossible, being denoted as imposters and hypocrites, lawless and children of the Devil. One of our brethren was called the Devil himself, and those who were weak . . . were warned against him and threatened with excommunication if they ventured to intermingle with any of the brethren that stayed by said brother.

Furthermore we had no communication whatever with foreign brethren, so we could not exchange opinion, and because the brethren in Holland in general are not versed in the English language, neither in the German, they were not acquainted with the Truth sufficiently to appreciate to the full the cunning and subtle way which was used by "God's Organization" to entrap those humble children of the Lord. Therefore, we could not have the assistance, morally and spiritually, of others of like precious faith, as for example, in England and America. The strife was ,a hard one indeed, but praise the Lord! He has led to the

victory and established us in His Truth. Notwithstanding our fewness of number (some 10 in all!) the Lord is blessing us increasingly every day. In the last time using you to make our cup of joy run over. Hold on brethren, even if you do not see direct results of your work. Please remember that the Lord is using it to do that which He intended it to do.

We have taken the liberty, without your consent, to translate these articles into Dutch, on behalf of aforesaid small number of kindred brethren. Of course we take it for granted that you would not object to our doing so. Mind brethren, we are not making any corporation's distribution of these translations. It is simply and solely for our brethren. We are remembering you all daily at the Throne of Grace that the Lord may always keep you humble and meek, because there is danger in such a lofty and responsible position. Headiness and boastfulness may easily creep in, as you are aware yourselves by the examples in the past and also in the present.

We once more thank the Lord for His benevolence to bring your admonitions to us in such a far-away land (terra incognita !) We shall thank you for a word of consent to our act of translating your publications.

May the Lord bless you and keep you faithful unto the end that you may hear the "Well done, good and faithful servant." We remain,

Your brethren by Grace,

P. C. D. and M. B. -- Holland.

Dear Sirs

Please find enclosed seventy-five cents for which please send me by return mail the "Divine Plan of the Ages," also send with it six copies of "When the Morning Cometh." I want some of my friends to read them. I had one handed to me on Saturday and have read it with *much* benefit to my soul.

Yours working for the Master,

N.U. -- N.Y. N. U.-N. Y.

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

For a long time I have desired to send for your journal, "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," and so now my soul longs for its helps, and the sweet spirit of its fellowship. I have had two copies that were sent to me some time ago, which I have read over many times, always with the same blessing and encouragement. You no doubt have seen the great devastation the Watch Tower has wrought against the Truth, and our beloved Pastor, Brother Russell. If they had deliberately set out to defame him and his work, they could not have better accomplished their design. I am so anxious to be affiliated with those dear brethren who still hold the Truth in righteousness, and who can supply me with literature to help tell the old, old story of God's love to the groaning creation.

In the name of the Lord . . . I will be glad to have you send me a few tracts and if I can use more, will let you know later. And also send me a copy of "Light After Darkness." I will order some books from you later, and try to do my part in financing this means which we have to serve our dear Lord.

After long years of grief for what looked like the overthrowing of the Lord's work, and many fiery trials and much weeping and' praying for guidance, I have come to the conclusion that we who are still holding the Truth, are passing

through this crucible, to prove if we have loved the Truth, and will keep it, regardless of all that can be brought against it and us.

There are just a few who like myself are still clinging to the Rock of Ages, the Truth as we learned it from our dear present Lord. All others have gone on believing what has been taught against it, even if they have to use a typographical error to prove it to themselves.

One very dear sister wrote me that she had searched the Bible through and found Scriptures to prove that Satan was the builder of the Pyramid, and I thought, Why not search and find Scriptures to prove it was like we have always believed it to be.

My heart surely goes out in warm Christian love to all who are still walking in this very Narrow Way; and I do long for their sweet fellowship, for I am, still developing a character which I hope will be pleasing to my Lord.

With Christian love and God's blessing on all of this way,

Your sister in the Anointed,

Mrs. E. A. M. -- Okla.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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SIGNS AMONGST THE JEWS

*"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, with your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." -- Isa. 40:1, 2.*

IN the closing pages of his exposition of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," published by our Institute, our late beloved Brother R. E. Streeter, makes the following significant statement:

"The signs of the full end of the Age are to be looked for in' three special directions or sources. These are:

- "1. Signs amongst the Jews.
- " 2. Signs amongst the Gentiles.
- " 3. Signs in the Christian Church, both the true and false.

"In all these directions the signs of the complete end are described. The Apostle Paul gives what is probably the most significant sign, and evidently the final one to be looked for in the first direction above mentioned, as indicating the change of the Kingdom class. He says: 'Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.' (Rom. 11:25.) When it becomes apparent that the truly orthodox of the Jewish people get their eyes open to see that Jesus Christ is their Messiah, and come to an understanding of what is referred to in the Scriptures as the 'hidden mystery,' that of gathering out the joint-heirs of the heavenly Kingdom from amongst the Gentiles, which is clearly stated to be the special purpose of God for this Age, during the period of Jewish blindness -- then, and not until then will the Age reach its full end. Those who will live to witness that may know that the Kingdom in all its power and glory will be ushered in immediately. We believe that some Christians may possibly witness

some of the events and developments leading up to and in close proximity to that time." -- pp. 627, 628.

With such thoughts as these in our mind we were much interested in learning recently of the progress of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America, Chicago, Illinois. The purpose of this organization's existence is stated in the pages of its Quarterly Magazine as follows:

"1. To furnish a corporate witness to the Jews of the saving power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

"8. To aid through the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in a world witness to the Jews concerning the Messiahship of Jesus Christ."

Some Hebrew Christian friends of our acquaintance having extended us a hearty invitation to attend their Fifteenth Annual Conference, we were at once struck with the spirit of its active members. It was in the following language that the Rev. Jacob Peltz, General Secretary of the Alliance, brought this conference to the attention of the delegates

"I have been reading again the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, giving the account of the first conference of Hebrew Christians held in Jerusalem nineteen hundred years ago. We do not know how many Hebrew Christians attended this Jerusalem Conference. Likely all the Apostles were there, including Paul. Some of the more important personages in attendance were the Apostle James, who presided over the conference; Paul and Barnabas, who had come fresh from their missionary journeys and electrified the delegates when they declared 'what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them'; and the Apostle Peter, who made a passionate appeal for Christian liberty. The issues and results of this conference were momentous. We are still reaping the fruits of the wise decision of those early spirit-filled Hebrew Christians

"Let us earnestly pray for our conference the presence and power of the same spirit that came upon the Jewish Apostles of old when they met in Jerusalem long ago."

As a sample of the challenge which this Alliance is making to the Jews to take up the study of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ, we cannot do better than quote the following from one of their leaders, Dr. Max I. Reich:

"THE PRESENT DUTY OF ISRAEL; JEWS ON THEIR HONOR"

After introducing his subject under the above caption, this writer proceeds to state:

"Now we have long felt that in three directions particularly, the Jewish people owe a debt to truth and honor to which we would respectfully draw their attention.

I. Getting at the Sources

"It is very important that the Jewish people should get their understanding of Christianity direct from the Christian sources, as far as documentary evidence is concerned, that is from the New Testament. Orthodox Jews, who are still by far in the majority, seldom look at a New Testament. They have gathered impressions from their Talmud and from their other books, such as the infamous *Toldoth Jeshu*, a medieval lampoon of Jesus of Nazareth, which have given the beginnings of Christianity an anti-Christian twist in their minds. It is clear that the Talmud, composed several centuries after the birth of Christianity, when the

feeling of Jews had become embittered against Christians on account of the evil treatment they were receiving at their hands, can hardly be expected to be an unbiased witness. The account which the Talmud gives of the origin of Christianity is shockingly blasphemous.

"We maintain that the Jewish people owe it to truth and honor to allow the Christian records to tell their own story. They will find themselves in a familiar atmosphere when they begin to read the Gospels. They are thoroughly Jewish. Take away the Jewish background of the Gospels; eliminate everything that has its roots in the history or religion, in the national, social and synagogal customs, modes of thought, idiosyncrasies, feelings, aspirations, which are properly Jewish, and very little would be left.

"Moreover, he would soon be impressed with the crystal bright honesty of the writers. The most painstaking effort to disparage their sincerity has failed to make out its case. Nineteen centuries have been refreshed by the stream of life that flows through their writings. They tell a story too wonderful to have been invented. They narrate enough of themselves to let us see that they were intellectually and spiritually incapable to have *imagined* their Hero. If He is a miracle in personality, to have drawn upon their imagination in describing Him would have constituted a miracle in literature. The pen-portrait of Jesus in the Gospels must have been preceded by a life actually lived to make the story possible.

"Jews must learn to look away from the poor copies of Jesus in His professed followers to the original. At the best, even true disciples are still Christians *in the making*. They are unfinished articles. Why judge of Christianity by them alone? Even Jews resent it if their nation is appraised according to some particularly unworthy representative. They point us to Abraham. So believers in Christ point to Him. And His Face shines out from the pages of the Gospels. No Jew has the right to speak the final word concerning Him till he has honestly tried to come face to face with Him there.

II. A New Attitude Towards Jesus of Nazareth

"For many centuries Jews, tried to forget Jesus. The very name once so common in Jewish nomenclature (it stands for Joshua, and there was more than one called by that name in the New Testament) ceased to be used. The Jewish people has, done its best to obliterate His memory.

"However, that has not been an easy matter. During their long exile the majority of them have been forced to live in close proximity to the Christian Church. They have by Divine providence to do with each other, though they both have often wished to shirk this responsibility.

"Now the Person of Jesus is a perpetual challenge to both Jew and Gentile. Every generation must take up the challenge afresh. He forces men to account for Him, to explain Him, to say *who He* is. Men cannot for any length of time leave Him alone. The very insane opposition to Him in some quarters proves this. And when the world thinks it has at last done with Him, He springs a surprise on it: He causes a new wave of spiritual influence to proceed from Him, which draws the weary multitudes with their sins and their sorrows, their diseases and their burdens, their perplexities and their bewilderments, to gather around His feet.

"This has been the history of the last nineteen centuries. It may not be easy for a Jew, with his deeply ingrained prejudices, to give to Jesus the proper place that belongs to Him. Personally I look for Jews to learn of Him and to grow in the

knowledge of Him, as the first Jewish disciples did. The confession of the skeptical Thomas: 'My Lord and my God,' comes at the end and not at the beginning of the Gospel story.

'But Jews are in honor bound to be fair with Jesus. Cannot they recognize His moral superiority? Can they not see in Him the crystallization of all that God intended to set forth in Israel? Is He not the incarnation of the essence of what the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets taught? Do they not feel in His presence they are in the presence of immaculate purity? He never confessed sin! Do we not feel instinctively that He is different from even the holiest saints who, we know, were the greatest penitents also ? And as men listen to Him, what consummate wisdom, what crystal purity, what sublime poetry! Never man spake like this Man! Perhaps the rabbis have said many beautiful things also, but they said many foolish and puerile things, which Jesus did not say. What drew the first disciples to Him? They did not come with a ready-made creed. They felt His superhuman wisdom. They said: 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' I appeal to my brother who is a Jew, to begin with Jesus thus: Let him be a respectful listener to Him. Let Him make His own personal impression on thee. And then give Him the place in thy thoughts and feelings thy experience in His Presence has compelled thee to give.

"There is a day almost within sight when the Spirit of Grace and of supplication will be poured out on the Jewish people. Then will they look upon Him whom they have pierced; not only on the cross, but by their long repudiation of His Messianic claims, and great will be their mourning. They will mourn for Him as for a first-born, and be in bitterness for Him as for an Only One. See Zech. 12:10. All the great names Israel has been so proud of will be forgotten then. *Only One* will remain worth mentioning. In the loss of Jesus of Nazareth, Israel lost her Only One, for whose sake, that He might be 'the Glory of Israel,' Israel has been formed and preserved from millennium to millennium till our day. -

III. The Revision of the Trial of Jesus

"There is a third matter concerning which Jews are on their honor, and that is the necessity of revising the trial of Jesus which ended in his being handed over to the Roman government to be crucified. That trial was clearly a travesty of justice. It was a mock trial. And until it is officially revised it casts a deep shadow over the Jewish people.

"Let it not be forgotten that the condemnation of Jesus was the act of the Sanhedrin, the official representative of the Jewish nation. There is considerable talk just now of reviving that institution.

One of its first acts will have to be the reexamination of the evidence on which the terrible verdict was based in the days of Annas and Caiaphas. Jewish Christians particularly will have to insist on this being done.

"What a misnomer the name of the president of the Sanhedrin then! Annas means 'merciful.' Josephus has a good deal to say of him. He was a man who had blunted his moral sense by a life of cruel selfishness. Before this cunning and unscrupulous politician the holy Jesus was placed for judgment! Annas set aside the just provisions of the Jewish law in that trial. He conducted a private investigation, when Jewish justice demanded publicity. He based his accusation on an admission extracted by an ensnaring question to the accused; he condemned him in the face of Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Num. 35:30. Another illegality was the fact that the trial before Annas was held between two and three o'clock at night.

"Though the accused should have been considered innocent till his guilt had been proved, Jesus was sent 'bound' to Caiaphas, as if he had been legally convicted. Then followed another illegal night examination. Then instead of waiting for witnesses to come forward, the unjust judges actually *searched* for such. And not finding *true* witnesses they manufactured *false*, and their witnesses *contradicted* each other! Finally Jesus was condemned *on His own confession*, contrary to a fundamental principle of Jewish jurisprudence (See Mishna *Sanhedrin VI, 2*).

"Truly the words of Isaiah were fulfilled on that occasion: 'How is the faithful city become a harlot! She that was full of justice; righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers.'

"Are we not right in claiming that this shameful mockery of justice should be revised? Jews, in the persons of their representatives, must set themselves to this matter and wipe this blot off their escutcheon. I know that through ignorance they did it. Hence mercy waits for their repentance. And when they will have ceased to be at odds with God about Him whom the builders rejected, and who in His Church has become the head of the corner, but Israel's stumbling stone and rock of offense, then will He become Israel's foundation stone. And a new and more glorious Israel will be erected on this 'sure foundation' than the Israel of her most glorious past. And from this new and regenerated Israel will flow, as from the glory-filled temple seen by Ezekiel in his closing vision, rivers of blessing to the uttermost parts of the earth."

While it is far from our purpose to convey the thought that orthodox Jews are, in any material numbers, getting their eyes open to see Jesus as their Messiah, but believe on the contrary that this happy condition is still future, yet every indication in that direction is heart-cheering to the true saint of God, and it is for this reason that the matter is brought to the attention of our readers. It was our Lord Himself who said:

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things know that it is near, even at the doors." -- Matt. 24:32, 33.

Many will recall the words of our dearly loved Brother Charles T. Russell in this connection, written in 1897:

"The sprouting of the fig tree may have been but a casual remark, but we incline to think that it was not. The peculiar circumstance narrated of our Lord's curse upon a fig tree which bore no fruit, and which withered away directly (Matt. 21:19, 20) inclines us to believe that the fig tree in this prophecy may be understood to signify the Jewish nation. If so, it is being signally fulfilled; for not only are thousands of Israelites returning to Palestine, but the Zionist movement, as all know, has now assumed such proportions as to justify Conventions of representatives from all parts of the world to meet year by year to put in practical shape the proposal for the reorganization of a Jewish state in Palestine." -- *Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. IV, p. 604.

Certain it is that God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew, and if as the Apostle has pointed out, their temporary downfall and removal from the place of chief favor was the occasion of God's salvation being extended to the Gentiles, what still more marvelous blessings will come to the Gentiles as a result of the restoration of the Jews to favor again? As another has paraphrased the related passage:

"If their partial fall be the world's wealth, the occasion by which 'the unsearchable wealth of Messiah' (Eph. 3:8) has been as it were forced into

Gentile receptacles, how much more their fulness, the filling of the dry stream with its ample ideal stream? . . . What blessings for 'the world' for 'the Gentiles' may not come through the vehicle of such an Israel?" -- Rom. 11 :12.

And again, (verse 15):

"If the throwing away of them . . . was the world's reconciliation, the instrumental or occasioning cause of the direct proclamation to the pagan peoples of the Atonement Of the Cross, what will their reception be, but life from the dead?" -- H. C. G. Moule.

That the ministry of The Hebrew Christian Alliance is bearing some fruit was abundantly evident in the testimonies of Hebrew Christians which formed an impressive part of each evening's service of their Conference. Many of these testimonies showed a very real experience of "suffering for Christ's sake," many having had to endure ostracism and persecution from relatives and friends because of their confession of Christ. One dear sister, who years ago had been persuaded by her relatives to secure a divorce from her husband because of his fidelity to Christ, told how the Lord had in due time opened her eyes, too, to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and won her to Himself. Not long after this, she was reunited to her former husband in the bonds of marriage. No wonder there was a calm assurance, as in tones full of conviction she, who had at one time been so ashamed of Jesus, gave as her testimony: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

We, who, by faith in Christ Jesus, have become sons of God; who have been baptized into Christ, and have clothed ourselves with Christ, recognize that in Him there is neither Jew nor Gentile, but if we are indeed members of the one Body, then Christ is all in all. In that new creation, in which we are being remolded so as to become like Him, we know that all such distinctions will cease. (Col. 3:10, 11; Gal. 3:26-29.) Those having this spirit will appreciate the following lines from the pen of the writer already quoted, and echo his sentiments, as he sets forth that which shall end not only his, but our quest:

THE FAIRER ZION

Zion, thy stones to us are dear,
None love thee more:
How oft thy walls in dreams appear
On alien shore!

Mother of sorrows! Ah we know
And feel thy pain,
Having, too, drunk the cup of woe,
Again, again.

We seek thy good; God grant thee peace!
For now has come
The hour that grants thy son's release
To turn back home.

Yet we have seen a light above
The noon-day sun,
The glory of the Prince of Love
Through suffering won.

A radiance in His once-marred Face
That turns to dross
The best of earth, and gives us grace
To face the Cross.

High in God's sinless Paradise
He fills the throne;
A fairer Zion meets our eyes
Where He has gone.

Where burning seraphim adore
With covered face,
While ransomed penitents explore
His wealth of grace.

Soon, soon, with hosts unnumbered, we
Loosed from all sin,
In robes of shining purity,
Shall enter in.

Where, wand'rings and temptations past,
In God's deep rest,
Our eyes shall see that which, at last,
Shall end our quest.

Max I. Reich

LOCATING OURSELVES IN THE GRACE OF GOD

*"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
that we are the children of God." -- Rom. 8:16*

THE question of solemn concern for all God's people is that of determining their relationship to Him, their place, the measure of their development in the school of Christ, and their general standing before the Lord. While God's children are still sojourning in this house of their pilgrimage, there are, of course, many things that they do not know, and as the Apostle says, they see now through a glass darkly; but when the great day of God's revealing is fully ushered in, then everything will be made clear and plain, then they shall see as looking directly in each other's face -- "face to face."

But while waiting for this time, there are certain things that it is important for us to know definitely and without doubt. Admitting that we might not be able to locate others in relationship to the Divine Plan, should we not be able to locate ourselves? And if so, how may this be done? Surely we should be able to locate ourselves in respect to our standing in the grace of God. It becomes a question of our knowing the various steps to be taken and corners to be turned, and we should know just how many of these we have taken and just about where we are. It is well and profitable at times for all disciples of Christ to carefully review and note the steps of a righteous man, called of God to joint-heirship with His Son.

Steps toward God

First, there must be that definite longing for righteousness, truth, purity, which will imply a drawing by the Lord's Spirit along the lines of the less depraved faculties of our fallen nature. Our response to this drawing is to seek righteousness and to seek meekness. To all such the Lord says, Draw near unto Me and I will draw near unto you. Numerous steps then of obedience to the Lord may be taken after the first one of turning our back upon that of willful indulgence in sin. Each step will bring us a little nearer to the Lord and to righteousness and should show us more clearly than before that "in our flesh dwelleth no perfection," that we cannot measure up to even our own estimate and imperfect conception or interpretation of the Divine law -- that we need special grace and help from on high. It may properly be said that this entire course of approaching unto the Lord and to righteousness is one of justification, in the sense that it tends to harmony with God and His righteous requirements. The soul that thus reaches the place where it cries out after the living God, by this time sees clearly the need of the Savior, that Jesus is the Redeemer. Such an one hears the message, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." And such respond, "Lord, gladly will I go to the Father through you."

Second, the reply of the Savior as to what are the terms of securing discipleship and Divine favor in its fullness, points us to the next step in the way to God, and accepted, brings the desired blessing. The Master's words are, "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me." Nor does the Lord urge haste in making the decision. The haste is left to the suppliant, whose love of righteousness and desire for fellowship with God will be measured by his haste in accepting the terms of discipleship. To one and all the Master says, "Sit down first and count the cost." Do not hastily put your hand to the plow and then draw back. Those who hesitate and take long years in counting the cost, will very probably not decide in favor of the Christian race, for the Adversary will come along with too many persuasive arguments to discourage them in the great undertaking. The wise and reasonable course is to proceed at once to soberly and carefully weigh the proposition, and having considered it in all its phases, to recognize that it is but the reasonable service to give up all of self with earthly hopes, aims, prospects, joys, entirely into the Father's hands, as a grateful expression of gratitude, a willing sacrifice; and joyfully accept the prospect of suffering trials, testings, and provings in the present life, and if faithful, to realize at last the glory, honor, and immortality on the heavenly plane promised.

The Office of the Advocate and the Spirit

It should really not require long for a mature person of loyal and appreciative heart to realize that the Lord's service is a desirable one and that the price, our little all of earthly life and possession, is insignificant. Indeed, the zealous and faithful one will speedily, say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do." Then comes the Redeemer's part. For in harmony with the Father's Plan He now stands as Advocate for all such as have come unto the Father through Him. His intercessions avail for all true applicants and gain for them a complete standing in righteousness and justification in the presence of the Father. He advocates their cause as their representative in the heavenly court, approving of them and of their consecration, having additionally, by the imputation of the merit of His own sacrifice, made up for their deficiencies, that they may be made the righteousness of God through Him. We see thus our Lord Jesus, the Advocate, presents our case and covers our blemishes; and our sacrifices are

accepted of the Father -- up to the time when the last member shall have been received -- up to the time when the door to this High Calling shall have been closed, when the last of the wise virgins shall have entered beyond the veil.

In the example of what took place in the formation of the Church in the beginning of the Age, we see that the Father's acceptance of consecrated believers was indicated by their adoption and begetting of the Holy Spirit and the commencement of the sealing the impressing upon them as new creatures of the Divine likeness, disposition, or spirit. All of the members of the Church since that time have had this experience of the spirit, and we of today should all know very positively whether or not we have taken the two definite steps noted foregoing. If we have not taken these steps, we have the solution to our failure to enter into and enjoy the spiritual life.

The Fruit of Abiding in Him

But let us consider further that it is not sufficient that we take the steps above mentioned, not sufficient that we have received the Holy Spirit, and have been accepted of the Father; for we have been instructed and admonished concerning a work of grace that is to follow; and we must be sure that we continue to abide in Christ. The beloved John touches the keynote of the matter when he says, "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (1 John 2:6) This proper abiding in Christ is sure to be productive of those results designated by the Apostle "the fruit of the Spirit."

For the purpose of forming and establishing the Church in the beginning of the Age, the proclamation of the Gospel was accompanied by miraculous gifts. But that purpose having been accomplished and the Church started on its way, those miraculous manifestations passed away as the Apostle Paul points out. (1 Cor. 13:8.) Instead of the gifts came the fruits of the Spirit as evidences or proofs of acceptance by the Lord and induction as members or branches of the Vine. To be sure, the fruit buds are small at first. They need much of the husbandman's faithful care. Thus our great heavenly Husbandman prunes us--He cuts away the earthly things to which we are prone to cling. Indeed, He leaves us without much earthly support except that which is connected directly with the Root, the Vine. Thus separating from earthly ambition, in harmony with our consecration unto death, the Spirit of the Lord comes into us, more and more producing fruits of the Spirit, even as the juices of the vine go to the branches and its clusters. Our Master assures us that such prunings are an evidence of our membership in the Vine and of our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ; for the heavenly Husbandman thus treats all true branches of the true Vine. All experienced Christians should be able to see something of these fruits and graces. Our spiritual energy should be manifested in a variety of ways toward the Lord, toward His brethren, and toward all mankind in proportion as we have contact with them.

Amongst other manifestations of Divine favor will be increasingly the desire for fellowship with the Lord in prayer and through His Word -- a love of the Divine Plan, a delight in everything that is righteous, just, true, noble -- a desire to promote all such interests to the extent of our opportunities. Evidence of faithfulness will be seen in our being accounted worthy to suffer reproaches and persecutions for the Lord's sake and the Truth's sake, and our acceptance of these as of Divine providence. Still other indications of harmony with the Lord will be observed in our increased appreciation of His Holy Word, a deeper insight into its precious teachings, and an increasing pleasure in serving it out to others -- not for vain glory, in which the energy of the flesh may have opportunity to display

itself, but for the Lord's glory and for the good of those who desire to know His will.

Several Things that Inevitably Follow

Obviously, the most vital manifestations of the spiritual life and of genuine relationship with God are to be looked for in the working of the Spirit in the inner soul and life of the individual disciple, rather than in a display of outward work. In other words, it is that regeneration or making alive of the Spirit in contrast to the putting to death of the flesh and the subduing of its propensities. It is what St. Paul designates the "putting off" of the one and the "putting on" of the other.

"I have noticed," says another, writing along these lines, "that wherever there has been a faithful following of the Lord in a consecrated soul, several things have, sooner or later, inevitably followed. Meekness and quietness of spirit become in time the characteristics of the daily life. A submissive acceptance of the will of God, as it comes in the hourly events of each day, is manifested; pliability in the hands of God to do or to suffer all the good pleasure of His will; sweetness under provocation; calmness in the midst of turmoil and bustle; a yielding to the wishes of others, and an insensibility to slights and affronts; absence of worry or anxiety; deliverance from care and fear -- all these, and many other similar graces, are invariably found to be the natural outward development of that inward life which is hid with Christ in God. Then as to the habits of life; we always see such Christians sooner or later laying aside thoughts of self, and becoming full of consideration for others; they dress and live in simple, healthful ways, they renounce self-indulgent habits, and surrender all purely fleshly gratifications. Some helpful work for others is taken up, and useless occupations are dropped out of the life. God's glory, and the welfare of His creatures, become the absorbing delight of the soul. The voice is dedicated to Him, to be used in singing His praises. The purse is placed at His disposal. The pen is dedicated to write for Him, the lips to speak for Him, the hands and the feet to do His bidding. Year after year such Christians are seen to grow more unworldly, more serene, more heavenly-minded, more transformed, more like Christ, until even their very faces express so much of the beautiful inward Divine life, that all who look at them cannot but take knowledge of them that they live with Jesus, and are abiding in Him.

Solemn Questions

"I feel sure that to each one of you have come some Divine intimations or foreshadowings of the life I here describe. Have you not begun to feel dimly conscious of the voice of God speaking to you, in the depths of your soul, about these things? Has it not been a pain and a distress to you of late to discover, how full your lives are of self? Has not your soul been plunged into inward trouble and doubt about certain dispositions or pursuits in which you have been formerly accustomed to indulge? Have you not begun to feel uneasy with some of your habits of life, and to wish that you could do differently in certain respects? Have not paths of devotedness and of service begun to open out before you, with the longing thought, 'Oh, that I could walk in them!' All these questions and doubts and this inward yearning, are the voice of the Good Shepherd in your heart, seeking to call you out of that which is contrary to His will. Let me entreat of you not to turn away from His gentle pleadings! You little know the sweet paths into which He means to lead you by these very steps, nor the wonderful stores of blessedness that lie at their end, or you would spring forward with an eager joy to yield to every one of His requirements. The heights of Christian perfection can

only be reached by each moment faithfully following the Guide who is to lead you there; and He reveals the way to us one step at a time, in the little things of our daily lives, asking only on our part that we yield ourselves up to His guidance. Be perfectly pliable then in His dear hands, to go where He entices you, and to turn away from all from which He makes you shrink. Obey Him perfectly the moment you are sure of His will; and you will soon find that He is leading you out swiftly and easily into such a wonderful life of conformity to Himself, that it will be a testimony to all around you, beyond what you yourself will ever know."

Treading the Same Path with Him

The writer in the foregoing excerpt has presented the logical as well as the Scriptural sequence of progress, experience, and attainment on the part of those who are in the school of Christ and who by faith yield themselves submissively to God's will. And the great question with all such will be, Am I having experiences common to all who are associated with Jesus? Such will indeed have for their motto, "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." And how did our Master walk? He lived daily and hourly in harmony with the will of His Father; He was fully submissive to the Divine will, even though it meant sacrifice unto death, even the cruel death of the cross.

Whoever then has the Lord's Spirit and is controlled by the same will and holy influence, is a member of the Body of Christ and will seek to walk after this fashion, to do the will Of God in all things. It will mean a walk of holiness and full devotion to God. In other words, those who profess to be the Lord's followers, profess to be Christians, and should see to it that their walk in life is in harmony with their profession. As disciples of the great Teacher we realize that it is our place to recognize Him as our Pattern and as our Instructor in the glorious things which the Father has invited us to share with Him. If therefore we say that we are in Him, this profession should be borne out by our walk in life. Evidently the Apostle in referring to the walk of Jesus has reference in particular to His experience after He made His consecration. He walked in this way three and a half years. It was a walk, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. We then are to walk as our Master walked in our general deportment; and while we cannot in an imperfect body measure up to all the perfection of Jesus, who was perfect in His flesh as well as in His spirit, we can however tread the same path in the same direction toward the same glorious goal toward which He walked; and so doing faithfully day by day, we shall by His grace attain the same exceeding great reward.

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom, of Heaven." -- Matt. 5:20.

DURING the long period between the Prophet Malachi and the ministry of Jesus, many changes had taken place in Jewish customs and institutions. It is not generally remembered that approximately four hundred years had passed after Malachi had foretold the appearance of the Messenger of the Covenant, before Jesus appeared on the scene, at His First Advent. And without this knowledge it is rather difficult to grasp the peculiar aspects of Jewish religious life when our Lord began His ministry, or to understand why the scribes and Pharisees were

recognized by Jesus as the greatest hindrances to those who were seeking the way of truth.

Four hundred years is a long period in the history of any people. Great changes must necessarily take place. Language and customs, parties and institutions will be constantly undergoing changes as political influences and religious practices mold the character of the nation. And these four centuries had brought many political and religious changes to the Jewish nation, as the history of the Maccabees will show. Furthermore, during that long time, God had sent them no prophet to direct their religious life, as He had done up to the days of Malachi. Under these circumstances it is not hard to understand that many departures, and numerous innovations would characterize their worship when John the Baptist and Jesus began their respective ministries.

Pharisees and Sadducees under the Searchlight of Truth

It was during these centuries that the two main religious parties -- the Pharisees and Sadducees -- developed into the position and prestige they occupied at the time of the First Advent. The Pharisees were the holiness element, coveting pre-eminence, because of their strict interpretation of the Law. The Sadducees represented an element of society opposed to many of the Pharisaical traditions and endless washings, rites, and burdensome requirements. They also opposed certain vital principles and doctrines set forth in the Law and the Prophets, such as the resurrection of the dead, etc. But it was the Pharisees who came in for the special condemnation of John in his preparatory work, and later on received from Jesus a severe and terrible arraignment, in which He employed language calculated to represent the deepest possible abhorrence of their external punctiliousness, made the more abominable by their hypocritical, self-righteous boastings.

In thus exposing their true character Jesus was acting on the principle that where great opportunities have been enjoyed, great claims made, and great prerogatives assumed, corresponding character and faithful conduct will be expected. Precept and example, teaching and life, must harmonize before His judgment seat. They had claimed a superior holiness -- "trusting in themselves that they were righteous and despising others"; they had made much of being separated from all other sects and parties, and assumed the right to be judge of all; and they had become quite dogmatic in the assertion of their sole right to interpret the Scriptures. On all three points they utterly failed under the searching examination to which the life and teachings of Jesus exposed them. Hence His repeated warnings against their practices.

"Happened unto Them for Ensamples"

When, therefore, our Lord warned His disciples to "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy," He was warning them against an insidious influence that would always constitute a pitfall in their pathway -- an influence which must be carefully guarded against. Leaven works gradually. Beginning in a small way it spreads its influence until the whole is leavened. Be the mass ever so pure, and the movement away from Babylonish bondage characterized by the most devout searching for light and liberty, yet, as Jesus taught, the Kingdom of Heaven continues to be "like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened," and the utmost vigilance is still required to escape the leaven's baneful effects.

Jesus knew human nature well enough to know that where His teachings did not become rooted in the character of the individual, sooner or later, where there was a desire to appear religious, the Pharisaical characteristics would manifest themselves. Past and present Church history presents the evidence that the "leaven of the Pharisees" appears and reappears as, revival and reformation, apostasy and falling away, follow in successive order through all generations.

Let us then take a comprehensive survey of the years between the days of Malachi, *Israel's last Prophet*, and the appearance of Jesus at His First Advent; or, viewing the same period as the time between the end of the general movement from Babylonish captivity and the time when the most holy of that nation were gathered out as the elect Israelites indeed. The spiritual mind will need no further explanation to see the application of so important an object lesson. Surely Paul's statement may be considered here: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (1 Cor. 10:11, 12.) The history of natural Israel has been recorded for the special benefit of the spiritual sons, and the wise in heavenly wisdom will not fail to.. note the lessons taught them through this house of servants.

Religion Had Sadly Declined

We cannot do better while engaged in this survey than to quote from the historian who has given this subject an exhaustive study. His description of the gradual growth of Phariseeism comes to us not only as a matter of history, but as an aid in understanding the import of the warning given by Jesus.

"The priestly orders and offices had been thoroughly reorganized after the return from Babylon, and the temple services and annual feasts continued to be observed at Jerusalem with strict regularity. Besides, a new and most important religious institution had arisen, which almost threw the temple with its priesthood into the background. This was the synagogue with its rabbis. It does not seem to have existed in ancient times at all, but was called into existence *after the exile by reverence for the written Word*. Synagogues were multiplied wherever Jews lived; every Sabbath they were filled with praying congregations, exhortations were delivered by the rabbis -- a new order by the need of expounders to translate from, the Hebrew, which had become a dead language -- and nearly the whole of the Old Testament was read over once a year in the hearing of the people. Schools of theology, similar to our divinity halls, had sprung up, in which the rabbis were trained and the sacred books interpreted.

"But in spite of all this religiosity, religion had sadly declined (by the time of Jesus' ministry). The externals had been multiplied, but the inner spirit had disappeared The representative religious men of the time were the Pharisees. As their name indicates, they originally arose as champions of the separateness, of the Jews from other nations. *This was a noble idea, so long as the distinction emphasized was holiness*. But it is far more difficult to maintain this distinction, than such external differences as peculiarities of dress, food, language, etc. These were in course of time substituted for it. The Pharisees were ardent patriots, ever willing to lay down their lives for the independence of their country, and hating the foreign yoke with impassioned bitterness. They despised and hated other races, and clung with undying faith to the hope of a glorious future for their nation. *But they had so long harped on this idea, that they had come to believe themselves the special favorites of heaven, simply because they were descendants of Abraham, and to lose sight of the importance of personal character*. They multiplied their Jewish peculiarities, but substituted external observances, such as

fasts, prayers, tithes, washings, sacrifices, and so forth, for the grand distinction of love to God and love to man.

Traditions of the Elders Substituted for the Word of God

"To the Pharisaic party belonged most of the scribes. They were so called because they were both the interpreters and copyists of the Scriptures and the lawyers of the people; for, the Jewish legal code being incorporated in the Holy Scriptures, jurisprudence became a branch of theology. They were the chief interpreters in the synagogues, although any male worshiper was permitted to speak if he chose. They professed unbounded reverence for the Scriptures, counting every word and letter in them. They had a splendid opportunity of diffusing the religious principles of the Old Testament among the people, exhibiting the glorious examples of its heroes and sowing abroad the words of the Prophets; for the synagogue was one of the most potent engines of instruction ever devised by any people: but they entirely missed their opportunity. They became a dry ecclesiastical and scholastic class, using their position for selfish aggrandizement, and scorning those to whom they gave stones for bread as a vulgar and unlettered *canaille*.

"Whatever was most spiritual, living, human, and grand in the Scriptures they passed by. Generation after generation the commentaries of their famous men multiplied, and the pupils studied the commentaries instead of the text. Moreover, it was a rule with them that the correct interpretation of a passage was as authoritative as the text itself; and, the interpretations of the famous masters being as a matter of course believed to be correct, the mass of opinions which were held to be as precious as the Bible itself grew to enormous proportions. 'these were 'the traditions of the elders.' By degrees an arbitrary system of exegesis came into vogue, *by which almost any opinion whatever could be thus connected with some text and stamped with Divine authority.* Every new invention of Pharisaic singularity was sanctioned in this way. Peculiarities were multiplied until they regulated every detail of life, personal, domestic, social, and public

Blinded Regarding Vital Issues

"This was the chaff with which they fed the people in the synagogues. The conscience was burdened with innumerable details, every one of which was represented to be as divinely sanctioned as any of the Ten Commandments. This was the intolerable burden which Peter said neither he nor his fathers had been able to bear. This was the horrible nightmare which set so long on Paul's conscience. *But worse consequences flowed from it. It is a well-known principle in history, that, whenever the ceremonial is elevated to the same rank with the moral, the latter will soon be lost sight of.* The scribes and Pharisees had learned how by arbitrary exegesis and casuistical discussion to explain away the weightiest moral obligations, and make up for the neglect of them by multiplying ritual observances. Thus men were able to flaunt in the pride of sanctity while indulging their selfish and vile passions

"The scribes also, busied themselves with this element in the Scriptures [the Messianic prophecies] and the cherishing of Messianic hopes was one of the distinctions of the Pharisees. But they had caricatured the prophetic utterances on the subject by their arbitrary interpretations, and painted the future in colors borrowed from their own carnal imaginations. They spoke of the Advent as the coming of the Kingdom of God, and of the Messiah as the Son of God. But what they chiefly expected Him to do was, by the working of irresistible force, to free

the nation from servitude and raise it to the utmost worldly grandeur. *They entertained no doubt that, simply because they were members of the chosen nation, they would be allotted high places in the Kingdom, and never suspected that any change was needed in themselves to meet Him.* The spiritual elements of the better time, holiness and love, were lost in their minds behind the dazzling forms of material glory. Such was the aspect of Jewish history at the time when the hour of realizing the national destiny was about to strike."

Is There a Repetition of History Today?

If some future historian should undertake to write the history of our day -- this last day exodus from Babylon -- would his record be materially different from the one foregoing? Would it be a story of a great revival of Bible study, of increasing facilities for understanding the Word of God, of places for such study opening up all over the land, and of multiplied teachers capable of assisting in recovering the Scriptures from the neglect of the past? Would the story then follow the beaten path and record the failure of the many to properly value such opportunities; and would it repeat the history of the past by relating the retrogression that so often has followed such exceptional opportunities for permanent advancement? The possibilities of such a record being written are so real, that it becomes the duty of all the faithful to diligently observe the Master's warning and be on guard against the leaven that so insidiously undermines the faith and character of the individual and effectively paralyzes any reformation movement.

"Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered;
Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock.
Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,
Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.
She knows Omnipotence has heard her prayer,
And cries, 'It shall be done, sometime, somewhere!'"

TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES AND THE FLOCK

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." -- Acts 20:28.

ST. PAUL'S story of his Ephesian experiences, as he summoned them up, on the shores of Miletus, in his parting address to the Elders of the Church, is amongst the most touching and pathetic to be found in the record of human suffering and patience. -- Acts 20 :18-35.

The Apostle, writing during these eventful months, speaks of himself as "a man doomed to death and made a spectacle to the world; for Christ's sake, a fool, weak and dishonored; suffering hunger and thirst, when work was scant and ill-paid; having no certain dwelling-place, because unable to hold a situation long together through the plotting of his foes; hated, buffeted; reviled, persecuted, defamed; made as the filth of, the world, and the off-scouring of all things. When he tells the story of the afflictions which befell him during his residence in Asia, he says that he was weighed down exceedingly beyond his power, insomuch that he despaired even of life; that he was pressed on every side, perplexed, pursued, smitten down, groaning in the tabernacle of his body and always bearing about

the dying of the Lord Jesus. In addition to all these things that were without, there pressed on him daily the care of all the churches. There was also his anxiety about individuals, as he ceased not to admonish every one of them night and day with tears." s

We are not to understand the Apostle to be speaking boastfully, but rather as a plain rehearsal of matters which his hearers would fully concede and of which he boasted nothing. The rehearsal was given, not for his own sake, not as indicating personal vanity and self-praise, but with a view to quickening the recollection of his hearers and making the lesson of the hour more impressive. He reminded them that for the space of three years they had known him intimately, the manner of his life, his devotion to the Lord, to the service of the Truth, and to the service of the brethren. He reminded them of his humility of mind; that he had not been with them as a boaster; that his conduct had not been haughty and overbearing; that he had not sought to "lord it" over the Church, but on the contrary, he had endured amongst them many trials and difficulties with the Jews, with "false brethren."

"Bound in the Spirit"

They knew of his work, his endurance, and of his holding back nothing from them that would be helpful to them; that he had taught them both publicly and privately as circumstances opened to him opportunities. He had testified both to Jews and to Greeks that there is only the one Gospel of Christ, to be accepted through faith and by turning away from sin. By calling attention to these elements of his own character he was laying the foundation for his subsequent exhortation to them that they should copy his zeal, his fidelity. He had been a faithful overseer or bishop, watching over their interests. He had been a faithful pastor, guiding their welfare, and seeing to their nourishment in spiritual things. Knowing the truthfulness of these presentations and having the whole situation in mind, they would be the better prepared to receive from such an one his parting exhortation-the great lesson which he had to give them.

He informed the brethren that although possessed of his physical liberty, he felt a bondage or restraint upon his mind that he could not shake off; that he must go to Jerusalem; that this was the Lord's providence for him; and that at the same time he received assurances from others through the "gifts" that bonds and imprisonment awaited him at Jerusalem. Then he adds these courageous words: "But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." The Apostle had become apparently more intimately acquainted with the Ephesus Church than with any of the others. Apparently it was one of the most flourishing of them all. He had, by the Lord's providence, spent more time with them, and evidently the results procured justified the prolonged stay. Partings between friends are always grievous. And parting with no hope of seeing each other again this side the veil is a doubly severe ordeal.

"Preaching the Kingdom of God"

Incidentally we note the message which the Apostle delivered and which he here particularly emphasizes as the Gospel of Christ -- "preaching the Kingdom of God." It is right that we should recognize that this is the same Gospel which we are preaching today, or, if not, that we are not preaching aright. The grace of God was manifested in the gift of His Son, that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. The grace of God was further manifested in an outline of how the death of Christ was designed to bring blessings to our race:

(1) By ultimately establishing a Kingdom under the whole heavens for the rule of mankind; for the suppression of sin and death; for the uplifting of those bound by these enemies.

(2) As a precedent to that general blessing to the world, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven," the Divine proclamation first calls out the "little flock" to be joint-heirs with their dear Redeemer in that Kingdom. Thank God that these precious truths, respecting the grace of God and the Kingdom of God, so long covered and hidden from our sight by the traditions of the Dark Ages, are now coming forward, are now being revealed by the enlightenment of our eyes by the Spirit -- that we might know the things that are freely given us of God, and that thus we might be assisted in making our calling and our election sure.

Secret of Success Filled with the Spirit

No wonder the Apostle could add the forceful words, "I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." What he preached to the Church at Ephesus during his three years' stay amongst them is surely the same message which, by Divine arrangement, has come down to us in his epistles addressed to the various churches. Surely from these epistles we now assent that Paul was very patient in reproving, instructing, encouraging the Lord's dear people. He was much used of the Lord because he had given himself, his will and all so thoroughly to the Lord. What an example was the Apostle for all of us!

The One, the only One, to whom we dare submit our wills fully, completely, is the Lord. He invites this full submission of the will to Him; and we, in His name and as His ambassadors, may freely invite our children, our friends, our neighbors, to this same full submission of their hearts to the Lord. The more fully consecrated the will, the greater the submission, the more blessed should be the experience--the greater the usefulness in the Lord's service. This is the substance of St. Paul's exhortation, "Be ye filled with the Spirit," sanctified, set apart wholly unto the Lord. In proportion as this condition of consecration or will -- submission is attained -- in such proportion we may be used of the Lord as His mouthpieces, His instruments, ready for His service, the service of the Truth, the service of the flock. St. Paul was a noble example of such a full self-consecration to the Lord; of such a filling with the Spirit; of such an emptying of self-will; of such a deadness to the world, its will, its plans, its service.

No wonder the Apostle was able to assure the brethren that they might follow him, as he was following Christ. Christ was filled with the Father's Spirit. St. Paul, a loyal follower in His footsteps, had a similar filling experience though of smaller capacity. And all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must similarly be filled with His Spirit, the will of Christ, the will of the Father -- and be dead to earthly ambitions. The Apostle's thought in calling the elders was to impress

upon them that, like himself, they not only were consecrated to the Lord, but, as teachers in the Church, they had a double responsibility -- in respect to themselves and in respect to the Church of which the Lord had made them overseers.

Special Trials for Elder Brethren

Notice his words, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers [bishops] to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with the blood of His own [Son]." -- Ver. 28.

Several points in this are worthy of careful attention. The Revised Version, quoted above, says, "In the which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops," thus agreeing that the general Scripture statement that the elders of the Church are not over the Church in the sense of a superior or "clergy" class, but in the Church -- members of it -- overseeing members, assisting members, by appointment of the Lord through the channel of the Church. Note the two points:

(1) They needed to take heed to themselves and to take heed to the flock. Whoever attempts to do shepherding in the Church will need, first of all, to watch himself lest he fall into temptation, for, as the Apostle declares, Those who accept the position of elders in the Church, pastors, overseers, are exposed to special trials, special difficulties. They need primarily to take heed to themselves, lest, having preached to others, they themselves become castaways.

(2) Those who accept the ministry or service of the Church as Elder-brothers under the Divine regulation should realize that they have assumed a weighty responsibility respecting which they must "give an account to God." (Rom. 14:12.) This does not mean fault-finding with the brethren. It does not mean merely preaching to them; nor merely visiting the sick and counseling the troubled. It means an oversight, a care of all the interests of the congregation and the individuals of it in their every detail. Those who are overcharged with the cares of this life are not in a condition, in any sense of the word, to accept the responsibilities of this service in the Church of the living God and should not be invited to do so; should not be voted for as Elders. Only those who seek first the interests of the Lord's Kingdom and the righteousness which it represents are in any sense or degree properly suited to such service in the Church. They should consider it a part of their responsibility to notice how the dear brethren and sisters are progressing, especially in their spiritual interests. They should feel it a part of their duty to warn, to encourage, to assist all of these, as opportunity may offer.

It is not the prerogative of all the brethren and sisters in the Church to endeavor to set each other right, unless it be in some personal matter specially related to themselves. Then Matt. 18:15 should be strictly followed. An Elder, however, by his very election, has been asked to take such an oversight of the affairs of the congregation, to give such advice, to give such reproofs, as the nature of the case may seem to demand-in meekness, remembering himself also, lest he should be tempted, if not along the same lines, then possibly along some other line of temptation. He, too, of course, should follow Matt. 18:15.

Grievous Wolves and Perverse Talkers

The Apostle, by way of impressing this duty of oversight upon the elders, reminds them that the Lord purchased this flock with the precious blood of the Lamb of God, and that this value in the Lord's sight should be so deeply impressed upon their minds that they would be willing to lay down their lives for the brethren in any service which they could render.

Emphasizing the caution already given, the Apostle prophetically declared that there would be great need of their taking heed to themselves, because of their own selves, of the flock itself, and especially amongst the Elders, men would arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them; desirous of being leaders, they would not hesitate to produce a schism or division in the Church to help along their ambition. The word perverse (here) in the original signifies distorted, twisted. The thought is that those who begin to lose the Spirit of the Lord, begin to lose their clearness of appreciation of the Truth. As personal and selfish ambitions cloud their vision, they see the Scriptures more vaguely and feel free to twist or distort them to make them support their ambitious sentiments. How true the Apostle's words; how great a danger there is along these lines, especially to the Elders, the overseers of the flock! Evidently selfish ambition is one of the greatest of foes with which they must contend.

Nor do these ambitions suddenly germinate, bloom and bear fruit; the process is a gradual one and hence the more dangerous, the more deceptive, the less likely to have our notice. How important then that all of the Lord's flock, and especially the Elders, take heed to themselves and scrutinize their conduct, and above all, the motives lying behind their deeds! And how important it is to remember that absolute purity of the will is essential. Every admixture of selfishness, however little, is a poisonous virus which, if unchecked, would lead to the Second Death. "Take heed to yourselves," is the admonition, for, the Apostle goes on to say, that of their own selves should men arise telling truths in a distorted fashion, for the purpose of drawing away disciples after them; for the purpose of being leaders in the flock; for the purpose of having praise and honor of men. Ah, how dear the price -- the loss of Divine favor and of eternal life

"Grievous wolves" are ferocious wolves. For a time they may deceive the sheep by an outward manner and outward profession, covering their wolfish nature. They and the outward conduct by which they deceive are Scripturally designated, "Wolves in sheep's clothing." The Shepherd certainly knows their character before it becomes manifest to the sheep; but the docile, innocent sheep are deceived until these wolves begin biting and devouring and scattering the flock. The howls of anger, malice, hatred, envy, and strife are noted in the Scriptures as "works of the flesh and of the devil"-not works of righteousness and peace and love, the Spirit of the Lord. The wolf does injury with his mouth, and so do these -- slandering; backbiting, and doing every evil work.

St. Paul warned the Elders of the Ephesus Ecclesia what to expect, and his words are true. Hymenaeus and Alexander, Phygellus and Hermogenes, and Philetus are mentioned by name. (1 Tim. 1:20 ; 2 Tim. 1:15 ; 2:17.) The same principles are still at work. The same warning still needs to be heeded. Indeed, the Scriptures in general imply that the severest experiences along these same lines are due to come upon the Church in "the evil day" with which this Gospel dispensation will close.

"Night and Day with Tears"

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Here are two points set before us: first, the duty of the Elders of the Church to watch against these evils so graphically portrayed; to watch for the interests of the flock as against the wolves; to watch to give the wolves as little opportunity as possible to tear the flock and backbite them; and to warn the sheep lest any of them, becoming inoculated with the rabies of the wolves, should display signs of hydrophobia and begin backbiting

one another, with the usual symptoms of hydrophobia -- with an apparent thirst for water (Truth) yet a refusal to drink it.

Second, the Elders are to watch also against those sure to arise "of your own selves." Proper watching will begin with our own hearts, saying, Lord, is it I ? And proper watching will in time discern such characters as Hymenaeus and Philetus and, following the Apostle's example, will expose them -- not from any feeling of bitterness towards them, but in the interests of and for the protection of the flock. St. Paul reminds the brethren that such was his own course -- one of great watchfulness, interest, care, over then and over all the Churches of Asia Minor. The expression, "night and day with tears," shows us clearly that the great Apostle felt properly the weight of responsibility resting upon him as a servant of God and an ambassador of the King of kings and an over-shepherd and overseer of the Lord's flock -- as a "minister of the New Covenant," delegated by the Great Head to assist in calling out those who will be the members of His Body, for their instruction and building up in the "most holy faith," that eventually they might all come, to the full measure of the stature of manhood in the Body of Christ, as the great Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King of the world.

Divine Assistance Provided

The exhortation closed thus, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." The Apostle's thought seems to have been that his words, his earnest exhortation, might not only awaken them, but lead them to inquire as to what defenses could be depended upon for the crisis thus pointed, out. He draws attention to the fact that God, the great Center of all our blessings, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, is on our part, is on the part of all those who are seeking to co-operate with His arrangements. By way of further explanation he mentions the Scriptures, the Word of God's grace, the Gospel message. He tells them that they, and we also, may be assured that the Word of God is able to build us up, to give us the necessary development of character, of heart and head, and to give us ultimately a share in the great inheritance which God has in reservation for all those who are sanctified by this message.

Let us lay this well to heart: neglect of God's Word of grace, neglect of His promises, means a deficiency of strength to bear the trial which is our portion. It means also the opening of the door for Satan to put light for darkness and darkness for light for our confusion. It means that those who will not give strict heed in following might be unable to distinguish between the bleating of the sheep and the howl of the wolf ; might be unable to distinguish between those who are holding fast and blowing on the trumpets of the Lord's Word and those who are seeking to cause divisions amongst the sheep and speaking perverse things -- misrepresenting facts, that they might divide the flock and draw some after themselves.

Let us make no mistake. It is a question of inheritance or no inheritance, amongst them which are sanctified. He who is faithful in that which is least acknowledges the Lord and His provisions in connection with all of his blessings, temporal and spiritual, will be prepared to look forward with continued zeal and will receive the Shepherd's care accordingly. On the other hand, those who do not appreciate the Lord's provisions and the "meat in due season" will not be prepared; will quite likely be deceived by those who endeavor to deceive them and draw them aside to themselves.

As an Example to the Flock

St. Paul had already pointed out that the lesson of the Law was that the ox that threshed the corn should be allowed to have a share of it for his nourishment; and that similarly those who minister to the Church in spiritual things legally, justly, should have a share in the temporal blessings of those whom they serve. He had also pointed out that if he had served the Church spiritual things of immeasurably more value to them than earthly things, it would be a small thing indeed for the Church to minister to his temporal needs. But, while noting these as points of equity, which should be observed by the Church, he did not require these things of them. It would be to their advantage to see these matters in their proper light and to act accordingly. But if they did not see their privileges in serving him and other ministers of the Truth in temporal matters, he perceived that this offered him a still larger opportunity for self-sacrifice, self-denial in the service of the Truth. Their neglect he did not resent, saying, You have refused me temporal necessities, I will refuse you spiritual comforts. On the contrary, his reasoning was this: These dear sheep need the spiritual blessings and I am so glad that I am privileged by the Lord to be His servant in dispensing them. The more it may cost me in the way of self-sacrifice, self-denial, the more it will evidence to the Lord my love for Him, for His Truth, for His flock, and the more I will have of the Great Shepherd's favor, because I will be more like the great Redeemer, who bought the sheep by the sacrifice of Himself.

On these lines the Apostle proceeds to call attention to his course -- not boastingly, but for their advantage, that they might be the better able to discern what would be the proper character of an under-shepherd of the Lord. He says, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel." He was not serving them for the accumulation of wealth, nor to secure the comforts of the present life. He coveted their hearts. He coveted the pleasure of bringing them into relationship with the great Head of the Church as members of His Body. He appreciated his privileges as a minister of the New Covenant along these lines -- preparing the members of the Body of Christ, the Mediator, and helping them to make their calling and election sure to the glorious things promised in the Word.

Source of His Victory Outside Himself

He continues, "Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." Apparently some of those who were of St. Paul's company had no trade or could find no profitable employment, while the Apostle's trade of sail-making, tent-making, was apparently a lucrative one, furnishing employment in the various seacoast cities visited. Apparently the others were largely dependent upon this leader for things temporal, as well as things spiritual. He had never complained. He did not now complain. He merely drew their attention to the proper course which he believed he had followed, which he believed was pleasing in the sight of the Lord. He commended to them a similar spirit of love for the Lord and love for the flock and love for the Truth -- to the self-sacrificing degree. Thus they might be faithful stewards of God's mercy, faithful overseers of His flock. His own form of stating the message is summed up thus, "I have showed you an example, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Reviewing the Apostle's story of his labors and sufferings for Christ, another has beautifully commented:

"As the result of it all we wonder how such a man, under such drawbacks and in face of such opposing forces, could be more than a conqueror. Evidently we are driven to seek the source of his victory outside himself. It was through Him that loved. He not only overcame, but he was more than an overcomer; he overcame with ease; he brought off the spoils of victory -- and this because he was in daily communication with One who had loved, did love, and would love him, world Without end; and who was ever pouring reinforcements into his soul, as men will pour fresh oxygen air to their comrade who is groping for pearls in the depth of the sea.

"The only matter about which the Apostle, therefore, felt any anxiety was whether anything could occur to cut him off from the living, loving Lord. 'Can anything separate me from the love of Christ?' -- that was the only question worth consideration.

"Taking the extreme conditions of Being, he carefully investigates them, knowing that they include all between. First he interrogates the extremes of existence, 'death and life'; next, the extremes of created intelligences, 'angels and principalities and powers'; next, the extremes of time, 'things present and things to come'; next, the extremes of space, 'height and depth'; lastly, the extremes of the created universe, 'any other creature.'

"Each of these extremes has thus passed in review, and he has eagerly peered into its depths. He is like a man proving every link of the chain on which he is going to swing over the abyss. Carefully and fervently he has tested all, and is satisfied that none of them can cut him off from the love of God; and since that is so, he is sure that nothing can ever intercept those supplies of life and strength of God that shall avail to make him more than a conqueror."

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren

It has been a long time since we have written you, waiting to send you at least something to pay postage on the literature sent out to friends. Your offer is "free," nevertheless we feel it, is but just and proper to share in this expense, so we are sending one dollar at present, hoping later to be able to do more We are sending a few names for samples of Heralds.

We have been getting some very peculiar letters from some of our formerly very dear sisters, . . . requesting that we do not send them any more Heralds, that they do not savor of Christ's spirit, and that unless I "change and come back into the Present Truth, we must part." I wrote them that the parting would be of their own choosing, that when I consecrated, it was to the Lord, and to no organization, no society, no sect, no head but Christ -- it was a consecration until death. I could not take any other path than what the Lord had marked out for me, even at the cost of the loss of every, earthly tie, if so be He required it. I also told them that if they failed to see the kind and Christlike spirit in all the "Herald" writings, I feared they had lost their ability to appreciate the spirit of truth from the spirit of error, etc.

They say also, "Your friends come to our entrance and ask us to come to their meetings as though we were of the world, and persecute us." They forget how they (we) used to go to the nominal Church and do the same thing and *they* thought we were persecuting *them*, when we were trying to do them good.

We were saddened to hear of dear Brother McKechnie's death, for we had learned to love him the very short season we were with him, and we rejoice to believe he is with the faithful overcomers on the other side-no more pain, suffering, or weariness of the flesh-partaker of immortality, a joint-heir with Christ. O, what a blessed inheritance! We long for that blessed day and to be worthy by His grace of the same. Pray for us. We need your prayers; the trials are severe. We pray for you and your service of love in these perilous times. Our desire is to attend the Columbus Convention, July 27 and 28, Providence permitting. God bless you all and keep you in His care.

Faithfully,

Mr. & Mrs. H. W. D. -- Ohio.

Dear Brethren in Christ

Am enclosing \$_____Please renew our subscription for another year, . . .

We want to convey our appreciation of your faithful service to the Lord and His brethren Personally, we both have been quickened to newness of spiritual life, and God's Word has become illuminated, and the words of Jesus are in our hearts and minds as "spirit and life." So the "Herald," taken together with the several conventions I was privileged to attend and the discourses at Columbus and Toledo last summer, has been a blessing greater than any other that has come to us for many years. It makes us think of Brother Russell's saying -- "Back to the old paths, to the old theology that the Lord and the Apostles taught." We as a people had drifted and been too much occupied with various speculating theories, forgetting that "charity [love] begins at home." Our hearts were not growing in love and understanding The trials came, the sifting time was on us, and we were bewildered, confused. Our knowledge failed us. We were not leaning on the Head of the Body for guidance and instruction, and the fellow-member that we were looking to for direction having left us, we felt that we were in need of some other fellow-servant to take his place. Oh, what a sad picture

We rejoice in your ministry of "holding the Head" of the Body before the vision of the brethren as the, true Teacher and Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. The brethren needed to be told these things. The Lord has blessed the message to our upbuilding in love and faith and joy, and so we who were storm-tossed and weary have found peace, and the Truth has made us free. Whom the Son makes free is free indeed.

We appreciated what was printed about dear Brother McKechnie, because we had been anxious about him since we learned of his serious illness last winter. We had prayed daily that the Heavenly Father would sustain and comfort him through the dark shadows, and that he would be strengthened to endure and have the "peace of Christ" in his heart. The report was very comforting to us. We enjoyed his visit here a year ago and were impressed with his humble, beautiful Christian character, and his loyalty to God's Word rather than man's word. His mind was broad enough to dwell upon the height and depth and breadth and length of the love of God, and still narrow enough to have no head but Christ. . . . May the Lord's richest blessings be yours is our prayer.

Yours in Him,

Mrs. D. A. W. -- Ohio.

Dear Brethren

My heart is just full of thanksgiving to God, that I feel I must send a line along to you. It is just a year now since I started to take the "Herald." I find it a great help always one or more of the articles fit my case and give me help and strength to still go forward.

It was in the spring of 1928 that I was led by God through ill health to a dear, dear friend, who showed me the way to my God and Truth. I was, prior to that, a ship without a rudder. I dived into nearly everything -- Theosophy, Higher Thought, Christian Science -- but was just hungry for the real thing. I am now through the grace of God on a Rock, and just know I am guided day by day, moment by moment, every step of the way.

I have renewed my subscription at the Letchworth office for the "Herald."

I know that "all things work together for good to them that love the Lord." May God's richest blessing be on this good work.

Your sister by His grace,

B. C. -- Eng.