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## Looking for that Blessed Hope

*"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." - John 16:7; 14:3.*

HOW VERY evident it is that the dear disciples of Jesus were passing through a crisis experience at the time these texts were spoken. Up to about this time they had certain quite definite expectations as to what they were going to obtain as followers of Jesus; now they are mystified and becoming apprehensive as He reveals that ere long they are to be left alone in the world. Their growing perplexity and fear is clearly seen in the questions they ask, as little by little the meaning of what is being said dawns upon them. We can understand why they should be so disturbed in mind, for they had believed in Jesus as "The Christ, the Son of the Living God," and as such He must be the One to take the throne of David and bring speedy deliverance from Gentile oppression, and restore Israel to pre-eminence again. Believing this, what "castles in the air" they had built! What disputings there had been as to places of preference in that approaching Kingdom! And now Jesus speaks of going away, and going where they cannot come! Certainly if ever cherished hopes and assured expectations could be reduced to an idle dream, then their hopes seemed crumbling and fading away as they sensed the import of what they were hearing.

Perhaps only in a measure are we able to enter into their disappointment; for the developments then taking form before them were a complete reversal of their expectations. We may, however, greatly appreciate the sympathetic spirit of Jesus, as with gentle and comforting words He gives "the oil of joy for mourning." Every faithful follower of Jesus can surely look back -over a pathway marked by turnings where cherished hopes and fond dreams have suddenly slipped away, leaving them in urgent need -of the steadying hand and the consoling words of the same loving Master. Every pupil in the school of Christ eventually learns, if he be willing to trust implicitly, that disappointments are often "His appointments," and "expedient" for purposes God's love

designs. And to us who have known such disappointments, and realized the need of a clearer light to correct our perspective, and words of comfort to strengthen us through days of patient waiting until we no longer see "through a glass darkly,"-to us also He -has said, "It is expedient for you that I go away," but "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." - John 16:7; 14:1.

### **The "Sympathizing Jesus" and Responsive Love of His Disciples**

Two things, then, may well engage our attention as we meditate on this farewell discourse of Jesus. First, there is the tender sympathy of Jesus as He shatters their hopes of an immediate Messianic reign. And 'how apparent it is that He **can** really enter into the sorrows of His own -- yes, so much so that He could say truthfully to Saul, "Why persecutest thou Me?" How much it has meant to suffering saints to know this! In correcting those wrong expectations of His disciples, how kindly He pushes away into the distant future a glory and inheritance they had thought almost within their grasp. He knew, He loved, and He cared how much it would mean to them to be told that henceforth they would not see Him in their company, and that the world in which He must leave them would be as hostile to them as it had been to Him. He could not substitute a forecast of suffering, life-long trials, and eventually martyrdom perhaps, for the halo of glory in kingdom honor they had visualized as soon to be theirs, without feeling a great sympathy for them. And to waiting expectant watchers today He is no less sympathetic, when instead of the hoped for developments speeding us Home, we learn that it is still ours to wait, and watch, and serve, content whatever lot we see.

The second thing to be noted, then, is the manifest love and loyalty of these disillusioned disciples, and their readiness of spirit to learn why it was expedient that they be left behind. Surely the fact that this great disappointment did not destroy their faith, or dampen the ardor and sincerity of their love, proves that they truly loved Jesus for Himself alone. There was no empty meaning in those spontaneous words when one of them spoke for all and said, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." At times they may have seemed more concerned about the chief place in the kingdom, but do we not get a better and truer picture of their real character in these three chapters? In that crisis hour the real motives underlying their attachment to Jesus seem revealed, just as so often happens still, when in certain characters the fire of trial uncovers noble traits of outstanding -merit perhaps not so easily seen before. Thus it is with these intimate friends of Jesus. Judging them on the basis of their few recorded questions in these chapters, and their affirmations of willingness to die with Him, such as Peter's, is it not evident that the thought of His going away and leaving them, and going where they could not be with Him, was indeed their real grief of heart. Surely Peter may be taken as spokesman for them all when he pleaded, "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now?" In explanation Jesus speaks in language calculated to quiet their fears, giving assurance that though He leaves them now, yet in some sure but unstated time He will come again and receive them unto Himself. In that glorious promise He utters words which have rung down through the Age, carrying hope and courage to devoted hearts, from whom the cry has oft been heard, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

### **Patiently Waiting for His Appearing**

If the Bible records were only a biography when relating such incidents as we have before us in these chapters, doubtless-it would even then be read with interest and profit by receptive hearts, but our Bible is much more than a history. In many ways its records are a prophecy of what will

occur again and again in the lives of men and women. How often when we are reading of these dear disciples, we have little difficulty in seeing ourselves acting much as they did, and are ready to confess that we have often been as slow of heart to believe, or as impetuous as they. Have we not often failed to see in Jesus the full revelation of God, and with Philip asked, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," and Jesus has needed to remind us that our long association with Him should have revealed the Father to us in all His fatherly love and abounding grace, and as often perhaps reminded ardent, but as yet unprepared souls, that there is work to be done by them and in them, ere they can follow Him where He is. Has He not needed to say to us repeatedly, wait and "let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing." "Watch and pray." "Occupy till I come."

And why was it so expedient that He go away? For answer we turn again to the texts we are considering and there note that Jesus is not thinking primarily of Himself, nor suggesting that it is any undue eagerness on His part to leave them. Rather, He wants it understood that it is for their sake, for this is just what He has said, "It is expedient for you that I go away." How necessary and expedient it has been for them and for us is surely blessedly clear to us now. Jesus at once explains that 'if He did not go away the Holy Spirit could not come, and previously, in chapter 14, He has revealed much as to why His Spirit must come upon believers. But for the moment let us consider one important advantage accruing to His followers as a result of His going away, and because of which His saints of all the Age have had manifold occasion for rejoicing.

Let us suppose He had not gone back to the Father, there to appear in the presence of God for us. He must then be located somewhere, and perhaps 'in Jerusalem. And if He were there, every boat destined for the Holy Land would be crowded to capacity with those eager to see Him, some to sit at His feet to learn from Him the way of life and duty, others-and how many of them!-with infirmities for which they sought a cure, eager as ever for the temporary loaves and fishes. Jerusalem would be overcrowded, the poor in material wealth could never see Him, or feel the touch of His sympathetic hand, or know the power -of personal contact with Him. But in order that He might be within reach of every 'hand held out in true and simple faith, and within immediate touch of every disciple dwelling between the poles, how expedient it is that He be with God in heaven. Hence, as to Peter and the others, He speaks to each longing and loving heart, "It is expedient for you that I go away." By going away as He has, He becomes to each solitary pilgrim an intimate Companion, a very present help in times of perplexity and trouble, and to the poorest and weakest equally near as to the rich and strong. And now He is our Sanctuary where we may all assemble from every clime and dwell together, He in us and we in Him, while with love and patience we wait, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." - Titus 2:13.

### **A Glorious Church without Spot or Wrinkle**

If the disciples experienced some difficulty at the moment in understanding why it was expedient that they be left behind, it is very evident that in after days all became clear to them. They very soon discovered that before the Kingdom honors could be theirs, two important things must be accomplished. They saw that the Church must be gathered out from Jew and Gentile, and to accomplish this the message of salvation must be carried to the remote corners of the Gentile world by those ordained of God to be His Elect. Then in carrying out this commission, the real purpose of the Age would thus be- made possible, namely the perfecting through suffering of a Church, proved faithful in the furnace of affliction, and sanctified "through the washing of water by the Word," and then, as a chaste virgin, Jesus "might present it to Himself a glorious Church,

not having spot, or wrinkle, -or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." - Eph. 5:26, 27.

Let us consider, then, the primary reason given by Jesus for His, going back to God, "If I go not away, the Comforter shall not come unto you." (John 16:7.) Carefully noting the several references to the purposes for which the Spirit would be sent, as these are outlined in these three chapters, we realize that it would have been greatly to the disadvantage of all the disciples of Jesus had He not gone away. Plainly, Jesus **with them** could not do for them what the Holy Spirit **in them** will bring to pass. Herein is one of the most profound truths these chapters contain, and a teaching with such far-reaching importance that it ought to constantly occupy our attention. He has made it clear that familiarity with His own wonderful words of life will mean nothing, unless the Holy Spirit abides within to make those words spirit and life to the hearer. It is imperative, therefore, that He go to the Father, present the merit of His sacrifice in the Most Holy, and then pour out the promised Spirit upon His Church, for a spiritual Church must necessarily be Spirit begotten, and Spirit taught, and "receive power" from on high. Had it been a matter chiefly concerned with preaching the coming Kingdom, and incidentally accumulating considerable knowledge along many related lines, such attainments are easily within the reach of the alert natural mind. Efficiency in "rightly dividing the word of truth" dispensationally, is equally possible to the purely natural intellect, so much so that a special bane of the Church have been those who have had only the knowledge that puffeth up, without the love which buildeth up. The real work of the Spirit, therefore, is to indwell the believer, to take the words of Jesus, yes, "All Scripture given by inspiration of God," and make that living Word effective in working out all that inspired promises have sealed as "yea and amen" to those who believe. Surely, then, just in proportion as we see the real purpose for which the Comforter has been sent into the world in this dispensation, in that degree we may really understand why it was expedient that Jesus depart in order that the Spirit might come as an indwelling power.

This is a solemn fact in Christian life, and therefore explains the responsibility knowledge always brings. If the natural man is included in this law of responsibility for knowledge attained, or within his reach, then certainly in a much greater measure this law is constantly operative in the lives of those who have entered upon discipleship. Does it not mean that it were better never to have known the deep truths of spiritual life, and never to have entered upon the path leading to complete sanctification, unless there is ever present the desire to rise far above the purely intellectual apprehension, and the desire to have the Spirit actually incorporating the "deep things of God" into our character? Very truthfully it has been said, "Few things harden more certainly than to delight in the presentation -of the mysteries of the kingdom, without becoming a child of the kingdom." The Apostle tells us why, "Knowledge puffeth up, love buildeth up."

And what will be the most assuring evidence that the Comforter has been thus actively working in our hearts? Again we turn to a comprehensive survey of these chapters for the answer. According to the statements and promises of Jesus the evidence is manifold. There will be an untroubled heart, gladness that He went away, a knowledge of Father and Son, such as means eternal life, greater works than His own, power in prayer, a peace unknown and impossible to the worldly, a living union with the Vine resulting in much fruit. There will be a sublime friendship with Jesus, with a share in persecutions such as He endured; instruction regarding the verity of sin, the inflexible law of righteousness, and inevitable judgment; guidance into all truth, even to the joy of having Jesus make known to us all that the Father makes known to Him. Happy indeed is the one who has these experimental proofs of how expedient it is that the Holy Spirit have an entire Age in which to prepare the waiting, longing Bride for union with her beloved Bridegroom.

## **After Ye have Suffered Awhile**

In after days Peter learned the answer to his entreaty, "Lord, why cannot I go with Thee now?" and in his Epistles has told us so. He did not love his Lord less when he wrote his first letter; rather, he had a deeper degree of devotion than when he prematurely asked to be taken along with Jesus. His heart had been instructed in "the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ." And so to suffering contemporaries, and to a long line of similar sufferers, he writes words which have doubtless lifted from many a heart the ache and pain, and the mystery of afflictions, which otherwise would have caused them to as prematurely cry out, "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now?" What treasures he was laying up in heaven for himself when he gave to a militant Church these heart cheering and illuminating words, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, . . . to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." And again he writes, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." - 1 Peter 1:2, 4-8; 4:12, 13.

Perhaps our translation of "Comforter" as given in the Authorized Version is not the most accurate name' by which the Lord designated the Spirit, but we must agree that it comports well with such words as these Peter wrote under its influence. Through such words Jesus has comforted His Church all along the dreary years, and we turn to them today and find them overflowing with consolations for us also. No service committed to any of us can be a greater ministry than that of being a true Barnabas-"comforter of the brethren." In this connection we quote from an article which we are confident many of us have turned to again and again for just such comfort, namely, "Treasures Laid up in Heaven": "And what a treasure we shall find in the gratitude and love of those to whom we have ministered here in times of special need, and to whom we have carried the living water and broken the Bread of Life! Who can measure the joy unspeakable that shall be the heritage of the faithful when we shall find all these precious treasuries beyond the veil! When we view these treasures with unclouded eyes, and realize that they are ours forever, shall we not feel infinitely repaid for any sufferings and hardships we have borne in our brief earthly pilgrimage?" - Watch Tower, March 1, 1916.

Surely, then, when Peter could be used by the Spirit to pen such words as the texts quoted above, he was laying up for himself a wealth of priceless treasure in the love and gratitude of a long line of afflicted, persecuted, and martyred saints. How greatly they needed just such encouragements. Dear beloved Peter! we are glad indeed that a loving Lord left you behind; for suffering and devoted fellow-disciples have surely needed these illuminating and faith-inspiring assurances of yours to enable them to hold fast till He come.

A reading of the account of inconceivable suffering on the part of the Lord's faithful people in the darker past will remove whatever tendency we may have to enlarge upon the few "light afflictions" we have to bear today. Such an account is found in "Scripture Studies," Vol II, Chapter IX, especially pages 328 to 361; and for a more complete record we refer the reader to "D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation." The blood runs cold as these pages produce a mental picture of unbelievable human depravity, yes, runs so cold that it seems difficult to suppress the

cry, "Why, O why was it ever the lot of heaven's chosen ones to suffer so shamefully, and for so many weary centuries?" And the saints of God were there, our own brethren in Christ with whom we shall spend eternity, and who, like ourselves yearned for the final fulfillment of "that blessed hope." From the same chapter in Vol. II, page 298 we quote: "'The Lord knoweth them that are His' in every age and under every condition. As wheat they were permitted to grow in the midst of a field overrun with tares; as gold they were in the furnace, being tried and purified and 'made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.' " Ah! how many of these there must have been who called to mind again and again our Lord's promise to return, and Peter's strengthening words assuring them that such experiences were not strange in the lives of sharers with Christ in the cup of suffering. So they "counted not their lives dear unto them," and "overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony."

### **Behold I come Quickly**

As in Apostolic days, so again in Reformation times and subsequent thereto there was much of uncertainty as to the exact hour of deliverance. Faithful watchers were, however, all along reading into passing events what seemed to them conclusive evidence that the long hoped for time had come; but the end was not yet. Many prophecies were yet to be fulfilled, but in the wisdom and 'mercy of God these eager watchers were not permitted to understand; for had they understood they might have been deprived of that soul-inspiring and character-refining expectant watching, which, once removed from any heart, leads inevitably to lukewarmness and spotted robes.

Some ninety years ago other devout students of the Word were waiting with expectant hearts for the speedy consummation of the Age, but this time with an assurance that at last it had been given to saints to know "the day and the hour," and the manner in which all would terminate. But disappointment came instead, and once again a loving Master said, "Thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards." Doubtless with many of these it was proved true, that "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," but surely there were those- who were "tried and made white," and who remembered Peter's premature desire, and his subsequent discovery of the importance of a tried faith and a demonstration of a love that would not let disappointment in any way take Jesus out of the heart, though He tarry long.

But what about us today? Do we really appreciate the wonderful things we are privileged to enjoy in the way of light on the prophetic Word? Peter, we remember, had this to say, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." (2 Pet. 1:19.) According to that "sure word of prophecy" what may we now know as in the past? We know that the Church today is far beyond those dark days when the Papacy ran its allotted time in wearing out the saints, and that system is today seen tottering to its last stand. Gentile times, foretold as to length and characteristics, have likewise passed the point of time appointed them in which God granted a right to rule. Their 2520 years are over and gone. The signs which Jesus assured us would indicate that the kingdom was "even at the door," have been in evidence, some of them, for close to half a century. The world, as foretold, is full of perplexity and confusion, men's hearts failing them for fear. Gentile governments are grappling with might and main to restore peace and

prosperity to their peoples, and producing at best a delusive and very temporary recovery, while Palestine, under the blessing of God continues to enjoy unparalleled recovery and prosperity, with immigration restrictions modified to open the door to exiled Jews literally "hunted" out of Germany and other unfriendly nations. Then in still another field alert watchers may see and hear other reassuring indications that the Home-gathering of all the saints is near at hand. 1900 years ago, so we are told, "all men were in expectation," and the conviction grew upon that generation that impending events of great importance were truly at hand. Similarly today, the air is charged with a spirit of apprehension and expectancy, interpreted correctly by enlightened saints, but greatly misunderstood by people in general. In the religious world today there seem to be certain movements under way very suggestive of this "all men in expectation" condition. There is what seems like an awakening on the part of many Christians to the fact that the Second Advent is unquestionably near, and to some of these who have long enjoyed the knowledge of these impending changes, it now seems that neglected lamps are being trimmed, and empty vessels being replenished with oil, while neglected harps long unstrung and discordant, are being gradually brought into tune again as they freely admit that the present Age was not for world conversion, but to find "the called out company." May it not be, since so much of prophecy has indeed passed into history, that what we hear today is a "great multitude" being prepared to understand shortly what has really been going on, and then to compose that unnumbered choir who shall, with trimmed lamps and well tuned harps, sing as foretold, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife hath made herself ready"? On what holy ground we stand today! "Seeing that we look for such things, what manner of persons ought we to be?"

### **Heavenly Pilgrims Nearing Home**

What shall we say to these things? Much indeed might be said, but after all, it is the relative importance of various things with which we might be occupied, by which such a question should be answered. Much might be attempted in the way of speculation on "the day and hour" when this or that prophecy will reach fulfillment, but it is well to remember that though it is promised, "the wise shall understand," it is likewise written that "secret things belong to God," and we walk by faith and not by sight, nor by accurate knowledge of unfulfilled prophecy. If we will let past history and experience teach us needed lessons, we will not be over-anxious to pry into that which is manifestly not given us to know **assuredly**. Better far to let "that blessed hope" stand clothed with all its mysterious, soul-inspiring, moment-by-moment watchfulness, for surely He is at the door. This walk by faith as we have seen has been wonderfully helpful to saints in the past, and certainly, however much we may now know which was hidden from them, it is manifest that God will not tell us anything which would do away with that much more consistent "faith and not by sight" walk. No one knows when the last saint will go home. No one certainly knows just what circumstances will surround the final glorification of the Church. No one knows what tomorrow will bring to him.

What then shall we say to these things? What more, indeed, can be said than these words of Scripture, "They that were ready went in, and the door was shut." Momentous words! When that door is shut, on which side will we be? Surely, on the inside if Christ has been formed in us, but as surely on the outside, if His image and likeness are not indelibly stamped upon us.

David in Psalm 46 has said, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Here we have a promise evidently intended for the Church today. The context well describes the conditions of the present time, and hence the preciousness of the promise that "right early," God's special help will be experienced by those who are His own. "In

the dawning of her morning" is another version preferred by some. Does this not bring to mind a statement made in reference to the resurrection of Jesus, the Head of the Body? "Very early in the morning" His tomb was found empty. "The shadows had not all fled, the citizens of Jerusalem had not awakened. It was still night-the hour of sleep and darkness, when He arose. Nor did His rising break the slumbers of the city. So shall it be 'very early in the morning while it is yet dark,' and when nought but the morning-star is shining, that Christ's Body, the Church, shall arise. Like Him, His saints shall awake when the children of the night and darkness are still sleeping their sleep of death. In their arising they disturb no one. The world hears not the voice that summons them." And that morning hour has come-"the dawning of her morning"! Therefore, knowing what these things portend, may we not "Lift up our heads and rejoice, because our full deliverance draweth nigh."

In conclusion we quote again from "Treasures Laid up in Heaven," as in the closing lines of that article we find words of such wholesome counsel, and language so beautifully expressive of a soul in love with the Bridegroom of our hearts:

"Then, dear brethren and sisters in Christ, let -us keep our eyes steadfastly set upon the heavenly, eternal things. Let us more and more lay up treasures where 'moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal.' (Matt. 6:20.) If our hearts are upon the heavenly treasures, then the disappointments and afflictions of the present life cannot overwhelm us. Whatsoever things are worthy the aspiration of the spiritual sons of God are our real treasures, and they are the only things that are worth while. What care we for the illusive bubbles of this poor life, so soon to burst and disappear? Then, as sings the poet:

"Let us touch lightly the things of this earth,  
Esteeming them only of trifling worth,"

not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, .if we faint not by the way, but with our pilgrim's staff in hand shall press along the heavenly road until we reach the goal of our hopes.

"As the sun sinks at the close of each day, and the shadows gather around us, how sweet to sing, 'I'm one -day nearer home!' We have nearly reached the mountain-top, and every day multiplies the evidences that the journey is nearing its end. Just how long it will be we cannot know; probably it is best that we do not **know**. But we believe that it will not be very long." And shall we not say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly"?



## **I Am the Resurrection**

*"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."-John 11:25-26.*

OF ALL the proclamations that have ever gone forth amongst men, there is none that equals in importance and significance, the teaching that there is to be a reviving, an awakening, a resurrection of those who have fallen into the state of death. It is unquestionably the great and pivotal truth of divine revelation and distinguishes the Bible from all other literature and from all other religions of the world. More than this, so stupendous and so sublime is the proposition of the resurrection of the dead that only an insignificant number of mankind seem capable of exercising that degree of faith that would enable them to really receive and act upon the teaching as established truth. And the various teachings and philosophies amongst men disclose the fact that so difficult of acceptance is the teaching of the resurrection that the human mind ingeniously seeks out other methods and philosophies of setting up the -hope of life beyond the grave than that of a resurrection of the dead.

However, those who will wholeheartedly, earnestly, and prayerfully heed the messages of divine revelation, must sooner or later come under the conviction expressed by the Apostle when he declares that if there be no resurrection of the dead, then there is no hope of a future life for any. (1 Cor. 15:13, 14.) Surely the hope of life by a resurrection of the dead constitutes the very kernel of the entire Gospel theme. Jesus, when amongst men declared that He was the resurrection and the life -- in other words, that God had vested in Him the power of the resurrection, giving Him as He said in His last message to St. John, "The keys of hades and of death," which signified the power and the authority to open the prison-house of death and to set free all the captives.

## **They Sleep until the Morning**

Obviously, only those who recognize the reality of death-that death signifies the absence of life, may rightfully value and appreciate the doctrine of the resurrection. When once it is clearly recognized that those who go into death are entirely shorn of the power of living, and that "the dead know not anything, and that there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave (sheol, hades), then it is that the hope of the resurrection is seen to occupy a place of supreme importance in the divine program.

In his Epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul explains the resurrection more lucidly than does any other portion of the Bible. There he sets forth clearly that Christ was dead and that He is risen from the dead. In this, of course, his words agree with our Lord's, own statement, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1:18.) Truly how plain, how forceful are these words when given their proper weight, their true signification! Thus life and death are here referred to as opposites - He is not dead now, but is alive; when He was dead, He was not alive.

Again we are greatly assisted in clearly comprehending this subject if we keep in mind the general usage of the Scriptures with reference to the state of the dead; that the word sleep is very frequently used. In the Old Testament both the righteous and the unrighteous, kings and prophets and common people are said to have "slept with their fathers." In the New Testament the Apostle speaks of those that sleep in Jesus, for whom we are to sorrow not as others who have no hope,

because we believe in the resurrection of the dead. In the case of Stephen it is said that he fell asleep, and the Apostle in speaking of the closing of the Gospel Age declared that some of the Church would not thus sleep, saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Kings 2:10; Acts 7:60; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:51.) Dr. Lightfoot calls attention to the fact that the Jewish theological writings, the Talmud, contain the expression, "When he slept," hundreds of times, as signifying the time of death; and our word cemetery means "sleeping place." Dr. Trench, the noted scholar, says of this word sleep, "Thereby the reality of death is not denied, but only the fact implicitly assumed that death will be followed by a resurrection, as sleep is followed by an awakening."

### **Faith's Strong Foundation**

Forcefully and surely does the great Apostle set forth the logic of the doctrine of the resurrection "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

In brief, Jesus was the honored Son of God, "the only begotten of the Father," "the beginning of the creation of God." Through Him there was given, while He was in glory with the Father, 'the inestimable privilege of becoming man's redeemer; He gladly accepted this privilege of service, "for the joy that was set before Him"; He left the condition of glory in which He was rich, was made flesh, very poor indeed, as compared with His glorious spiritual state, endured the cross, despising the shame, and ultimately received the glorious exaltation to the divine nature, and in His resurrection became, or was made, heir of all things. In order to comply with God's revealed program, it was necessary that He should take the human nature, because it was a man that had sinned, and as St. Paul's logic set forth, "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." In keeping with the divine law given to Israel, only the sacrifice of a perfect life would redeem the original sinner, Adam, and his children, who shared his penalty. This is the sum total of the necessity for our Lord's human existence and for His death as the Apostle further explains. - Hebrews 2:14.

### **Resurrection Must be Established by Many Infallible Proofs**

Seeing how vital is the resurrection hope in connection with man's prospects and anticipations of life beyond the grave--yea, that there can be no hope of eternal life without the resurrection of the dead, based upon our Lord's death and resurrection, we behold how necessary it was that this great resurrection hope should be well established for all believers. The necessity for this lay in the fact also that in the divine plan this Gospel Age was marked out to be a faith age, for the selection of a specially chosen and favored class, able, like father Abraham' to walk by faith and not by sight. But faith in order to be faith and not mere credulity must have some reasonable foundation on which to build the superstructure. And it was to provide this foundation for faith that our Lord remained with His followers for forty days after His resurrection, before ascending to the Father-as the evangelist declares, "He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." - Acts 1:3.

To preach a gospel setting forth a glorious resurrection hope through Christ without any proof of His resurrection, would be vain preaching, foolish preaching, deceiving the people. To believe such a gospel under such circumstances would be to brand ourselves as foolish and fanatical; and

to have any hope that our dead friends could ever be benefited by a dead Christ, would be absurd. As another has very ably remarked:

"A dead Christ might have been a teacher and a wonder worker, and remembered and loved as such. But only a risen and living Christ could be the Savior, the life, and the life-giver-and as such preach to all men. And of this most blessed truth we have the fullest and most unquestionable evidence. We can, therefore, implicitly yield ourselves to the impression of these narratives and still more to the realization of that most sacred and blessed fact. This is the foundation of the Church, the inscription on the banner of her armies, the strength and comfort of every Christian heart, and the grand hope of humanity: 'The Lord is risen indeed.'"

### **Sharers in His Resurrection**

Following on to see still more deeply and to comprehend more fully all the phases of the resurrection doctrine, we observe as the truth unfolds, the call of disciples of Christ in this dispensation to share with their dear Redeemer in His resurrection-a resurrection to life divine and immortal; and to participate with Him in that "glory that excelleth." Much obscurity surrounded this phase of the resurrection teaching up to the time of Christ's ascension. As we turn the great clock of the ages backward and take our position with those disciples who had witnessed the tragic scenes associated with our Lord's last hours, as we behold them disheartened and crushed in spirit, we can still understand that they realized great events were transpiring, though how great and momentous was their character they but slightly comprehended. They realized truly that their hope respecting an earthly Kingdom and their Master as an earthly Lord, had failed. Doubtless, however, they had a vague, indefinite hope that all that He had said to them would in some manner have a fulfillment; but how, or when, or where was beyond their conception as they knew nothing as yet about spiritual things, not having had the anointing of the Holy Spirit to sonship and to the knowledge of things to come, for Jesus had not yet shed forth upon them that Spirit from above.

As promised by the Master, Pentecost became the occasion of a marvelous revelation and they saw as we see today that the illumination and ministry of the Spirit presented clearly to view the hope of sharing with Christ in His resurrection, the chief and special resurrection, entirely apart from the general resurrection of humanity.

### **Risen to Walk in Newness of Life**

This phase of the resurrection is the all absorbing one with footstep followers of Christ, inasmuch as they now through the begetting of the Spirit, are said to experience in an important sense the resurrection processes already begun.

"If ye then be risen with Christ," says the inspired Apostle, making definite reference to the identification that the Church has with Christ in His risen life. Truly her association commences with Him during the present time of her pilgrimage in the narrow way. The risen life is unquestionably the life of sanctification and has reference to the Spirit's quickening in the individual Christian, resulting in the subduing of the body of sin and of making alive in Christ. Another has illuminated this point to our edification

"We are to 'put off the old man with his deeds.' But how? By 'putting on the new man who is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.' 'For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death' (Rom. 8:2), writes Paul. It is a pointed statement of the case which one makes in describing the transition from the old to the new in his own experience, from the former life of perpetual defeat to the present life of victory through Christ. 'Once it was a constant breaking off, now it is a daily bringing in,' he says. That is, the former striving was directed to being rid of the inveterate habits and evil tendencies of the old nature -- its selfishness, its pride, its lust, and its vanity. Now the effort is to bring in the Spirit, to drink in His divine presence, to breathe, as a holy atmosphere, His supernatural life. The indwelling of the Spirit can alone effect the exclusion of sin. This will appear if we consider what has been called 'the expulsive power-of a new affection.' 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world,' says the Scripture. But all experience proves that loving not is only possible through loving, the worldly affection being overcome by the heavenly."

Still another has emphasized this same spiritual truth: "What an amazing power is this! Now we taste -of the powers of the world to come and we are strengthened with all might according to His glorious power unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness. Faith girds up with a divine power, for all things are possible to him that believeth, and each believer can exclaim without boasting, I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. Is not this a marvelous change which the spiritual resurrection has wrought upon us? Is it not a glorious thing that God's strength should be perfect in our weakness?"

"Aforetime we were, natural men and discerned not the things of the Spirit of God. We minded earthly things and were moved by carnal lustings after the things which are seen; but now through grace divine a spirit has been created in us which feeds on spiritual bread, lives for spiritual objects and rejoices in spiritual truth. This change from the natural to the spiritual is such as only God Himself could have wrought, and we have experienced it. To God be the glory. So that by virtue of our rising in Christ we have received life and become the subjects of a wondrous change-'Old - things have passed away, behold all things have become new.' . . . If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. Let your actions be agreeable to your new life."

As we consider the glorious triumph of life over death represented in the two-fold resurrection which centers in Christ-the Church of the Firstborn of this dispensation, and of all the willing and obedient of humanity during the reign of Christ, how ardently our hearts join, even now during the nighttime of our earthly pilgrimage, in that grand hallelujah chorus: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."  
- Rev. 5:13.

## **Fear Not**

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

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

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

## **Sojourning with Brethren of Other Lands**

**BY BROTHER I. F. HOSKINS**

RETURNING to the British Isles from the continent late in October, a few quiet days in London were most acceptable. During these days it was our happy privilege to be sheltered in the home of our dear Brother and Sister Cedric Smith. Again thanks to kind hearts filled with the spirit of hospitality, and loving hands ever ready to minister to the necessities of fellow members of the Christ.

Having just recently mingled with brethren of various tongues in several of the continental countries, where we could speak to the friends only through an interpreter, our thoughts still lingered with those dear souls who are deprived of many of the advantages of the English-speaking peoples. Again the days of the early Church were recalled when the power of the Lord operated gloriously, bestowing upon the Church the gift of tongues by which limitations and barriers of diversity of languages were overcome. Though this miraculous power is no longer imparted today, nevertheless the same loving providence is caring for all the necessities of the Church along these lines, so that brethren of various nationalities may have the advantage of spiritual interchange, and of freely communing together with regard to the great things of their spiritual inheritance. A fellowship, prayer and testimony meeting in the home of Brother and Sister Smith Saturday night reminded the brethren afresh of the power and privilege of prayer and of the spiritual refreshment that always accompanies the prayer of faith.

## **The Home Gathering at Laddingford**

Our first general meeting on commencing another tour in England, was at Laddingford, on Sunday, October 28th, some twenty-five miles from „London. In harmony with the general procedure, making use of the Sundays for general Home Gatherings, the assembly at Laddingford was of this character. And though there are but four friends in the vicinity of Laddingford, the attendance on this occasion ran up to 104; and a happy gathering it was. A considerable number who have little opportunity for general fellowship, came from different points, but the majority of, the gathering at Laddingford, were visiting friends from London.

The value of "spiritual vision" and the utmost importance of "beholding Him" constituted the central themes of the discussions of this day; and the unanimous, warm response to the spiritual truths that were reviewed bore testimony to the fact that the minds of the brethren were more and more being exercised in the direction of the transformed life and to the need for practical, spiritual results in the daily life. Unquestionably the fellowship of this day at Laddingford proved a real stimulus to the brethren to give all diligence in following the Master.

The following week, gatherings of dear ones in the Lord were visited at Chatham, Gravesend, Eastbourne, and Worthing; in each of which we had joy afresh in meeting new faces who assured us that they had experienced much uplift in the Spirit, as the Word of the Lord was dwelt upon. Sunday, November 4th, presented another favorable opportunity for a, goodly number to join in a Home Gathering at Portsmouth, on the south coast. of England. Once more we were brought in close sympathetic touch with faithful souls who had evidently caught a glimpse of their glorified Master and of the invisible crown of life, which in turn had inspired them to lay all at His feet. As an impressive feature of the day's fellowship a testimony meeting at the close furnished opportunity for the friends to tell not only of their struggles and victories past, but also of their present peace and joy in daily fellowship with Christ and with those who have His spirit.

## **Mutual Strengthening of Inner Man**

Continuing our travels on the south coast of England, visits to Bournemouth, Parkstone, Yeovil, Torquay, and at Exeter on Sunday-all were seasons of sweet communion with those who gave much evidence of their acquaintance with the Lord. What impressed us most was that though the numbers were small, the meetings generally ranging between ten and fifteen, this fact left no disquieting effect, for these dear brethren realized that they were truly fulfilling the description of the primitive Church, when faithful believers often- in small groups sought each other's company for the mutual strengthening of the inner man. We must commend most highly the loving zeal of the dear ones at Exeter in putting forth much effort toward the arranging of a public meeting which we had the privilege of addressing. There were probably 250 to 300 present. Some of them apparently listened with much interest to a discussion of the state of the dead and the hope of life hereafter. Though we realize the circumstances of our time do not fiend large encouragement in the way of results from efforts to reach the public, we are still conscious that it is ours to continue to bear testimony to all as we have opportunity, and the results we leave with the Master.

Our itinerary now leading northward, the towns of Kingswood, Cheltenham, and Swindon were next in order; and in each of these there were dear ones happy to gather around the Word of the Lord and to review the Christian's glorious hope as well as the various phases of the will of God.

Again not far from London we are spending Sunday, November 18th, in the town of Luton. An inspiring little company of about sixty friends make up the assembly of this day. In discussing the office of the Spirit in maintaining our relationship to Christ, the words of St. Paul were recalled, "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers." It was observed that something beyond- mere instructors, something more than the theory of the truth is needed in the Church; and that the real vital ministry which affects the Church's inner life, is by those who are instrumental in imparting a spiritual influence and "Who by their own close and vital relationship to Christ inspire in others the qualities of faith and love as well as of devotion to Him whom they trust to meet face to face. It is hoped that the sweet influences of this day's fellowship may ever abide, strengthening hearts and hands unto the end of the way.

### **At the Home of John Bunyan**

Visits to Bedford, Downham Market, and King's Lynn took up most of the following week. It will be recalled that Bedford was the home of John Bunyan, celebrated author of "Pilgrim's Progress," and "Grace Abounding." It was with more than usual interest that we strolled about this town, for there still remain the landmarks of the days of Bunyan, three centuries ago. There stands the house in which he lived, and the old church with its tower built entirely apart, where Bunyan served as sexton. Nearby is the old hall where he for a time conducted -preaching, services. Little did this great man, of God know as he struggled through many hardships, trials, and persecutions, that his life and ministry were to yield such rich fruitage in spiritual benefit to thousands of God's children.

In the town of Lowestoft, on the extreme eastern coast of England, we spent a very-happy day-Sunday, November 25th. And once more the impressive feature was the evident sincerity and simplicity of the brethren here, together with their deep devotion and earnestness in seeking a fuller acquaintance with Christ and a larger conception of the spiritual life. May the blessing of God abound more and more, illuminating the pathway of these dear ones in Christ.

### **Continuation of Spiritual Seasons of Joy**

And now returning to London once more during the last week of November, we are having very profitable and blessed seasons of fellowship at Ipswich, Braintree, and Brentwood. And -on Sunday, December 2nd, at Leigh-on-Sea there is another united gathering from surrounding districts, and along with these are several of the dear brethren from London. It is good to be here also, for there is the spirit and fellowship in Christ, and our blessed hope in association in the coming Kingdom of God engages the hearts and aspirations of all. Truly we cannot ignore the fact of present distresses and tribulations, but the viewpoint of the Apostle comes more and more to be the attitude of all the consecrated. These light afflictions of the present are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed.

And as our journeying continues into December, the meetings this week are at Grays, Forest Hill, London, and at Ockley. They are a continuation of the spiritual seasons of joy and fellowship we have had all along the way. Another general tour requiring about five weeks more is arranged, commencing in Wales and is to include several points, covering the entire British Isles again. We spent a happy Saturday evening at Swansea, and Sunday, December 9th, is given to Cardiff. It is a day of sweet fellowship and one which we shall long remember. The warm welcome received, and the loving responsive hearts made us feel that we were truly one in Christ; and the spirit of

the Master in the countenances of all, caused us to realize afresh, how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Then as we spent the few hours together considering the obligations of the Christian life and the conditions of joint-heirship with Him in His Kingdom, we felt that the Lord hearkened and heard and gave us the rich benediction of His holy presence.

### **Sacred Reflections as Pilgrimage Ends**

It was while in Cardiff, this Sunday, December 9th, that a cable message from America reporting the serious illness of Sister Hoskins, definitely indicated that our sojourn in the British Isles was at an end; and this visit at Cardiff, was our concluding engagement. Though we are now in the sixth month of our pilgrimage amongst these brethren of other lands, and had anticipated some five weeks more in response to requests from various parts of Great Britain, we are glad to bow to our Father's unerring providences, for He doeth all things well.

On the evening of December 11th, there gathered in the home of Sister Courtenay, in London, where we were to spend our last night in the British Isles, a little company of the brethren. The thought that we are soon to be parted- from many of the Lord's dear people to whom we had been so affectionately drawn, brings sadness of heart, and there are reflections sacred, but common to all of us. Five months have been spent sojourning with God's people in these lands. There had been many happy hours of spiritual communion; we had been with brethren of all walks of life, and in our travels had observed them in the midst of changing scenes and under the pressure of most difficult circumstances and experiences. In some cases it was the story of the individual life, of how the flight from sin and condemnation had been made, and entrance into the state of justification 'realized; and of subsequent progression into the knowledge and depth of the spiritual life. We had met and been in conference with brethren in various states of confusion of mind, brooding on a variety of questions and issues and feeling deeply sensible to their needs in the spiritual life. Thus often the hearts of dear ones had been unburdened of their sorrows, for truly each heart knoweth its own bitterness. Some had freely confessed their discouragements and besetments in life; others had told of their doubts and fears as well as their hopes and heart-yearnings to be at last acceptable to their blessed Redeemer. And many had said "Brother, pray for me." During these weeks and months of sojourn therefore, we had talked together, prayed together, and wept together with many of the Lord's dear saints, who were struggling after the higher life. The name of Him who is the source of all comfort-the Consoling Christ, had oftentimes been mentioned in our conferences, and His glorious inspiring example of loyalty to the will of God, recalled for our mutual encouragement in life's pathway. It was therefore with strange and conflicting emotions that we were in these last hours recalling various of the incidents and experiences of our sojourn with God's people of these various climes.

With this little assembly of the Lord's dear family on this final evening, our thoughts logically turned to those themes vital to all God's dear children and closely related to all those precious things that constitute our spiritual heritage-the present call to saintship, to, the attainment of the Christ character and to its adornment with the graces of the Spirit. Closely associated with the solemn considerations are the disciplines, trials, and distresses incident to fellowship in the sufferings of Christ in order that we may be permitted at last to enter the realm of the holy and the blessed, to whom is given the wondrous promise that they shall share in the resurrection of the just.



## **The Brethren Who Assisted**

Deep thankfulness and gratitude of heart was expressed to the brethren for all the loving consideration that had made possible the various privileges of the ministry in their midst, and for the manner in which the spirit of cooperation was in evidence in assisting and making the entire experience as free from care to ourself as possible. In this connection it seems eminently appropriate that we should acknowledge our debt of gratitude to Brothers S. A. Couling of Rugby, and O. E. Kearney, of Belfast, Ireland, who were primarily responsible in providing the return voyage to Great Britain.. Then to Brothers Couling and A. O. Hudson, of London is due our heartiest gratitude for their valuable services in arranging the tours and itineraries in a most proficient manner, so that we were enabled during these recent travels to visit more Classes and to reach a larger number of the brethren than upon any previous occasion. May the Lord richly reward each of these dear brothers with a sense of the closeness of His loving presence and bestow upon them the sweet benediction of His loving smile.

## **The Spirit of the Christ in Fellow Members**

Wednesday morning December 12th, at Waterloo Station, London it was our sweet privilege once more to have a few farewell words of greeting with about twenty-five of the friends who had gathered at the station to bid us Godspeed. Truly this expression of loving thoughtfulness, together with various manifestations of loving appreciation, touched our heart deeply and made us realize afresh that the oneness and sacred union in Christ truly unites the hearts of all the family of God. Two of these dear ones accompanied us to Southampton, which during these last moments added much to our joy and delight.

After a very rough and stormy passage of seven: days across the great deep, on the S. S. Olympic, we were brought in safety once more to the American shores. It was truly an occasion of praise and thanksgiving to the Giver of all good that we had the privilege of reviewing before a company-of loved ones at home the many happy and profitable: experiences with so many of the dear family of the Lord in distant lands. Verily as we observe the spirit and love of our Master in those who are fellow-disciples and of the same Body, and note the precious fruitage of kindness, patience, and love, we are reminded of the fact that it was this happy condition that constituted the burden of the Savior's prayer on the last night of His sojourn on earth: "I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me." Thus the unity and communion of the mystical Christ is such that the members each have the welfare of the others at heart, regardless of clime, race, color or tongue. For they have been taught by the grace of God to look for and to see the Christ, the spirit of the Christ, the Holy Spirit in one another; by reason of this they have been admonished to sympathize deeply and to love one another fervently. Indeed, who is there that has come in touch with God that does not recognize how much this- tender, compassionate, sympathetic love continues to be needed by alt disciples of the Redeemer! And it shall ever be so until all have been led out of this vale of mist and darkness,

"Until the Morning breaks,  
And the shadows flee away."

## **The Rest Secured Through Faith**

*"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." - Heb. 11:1, R. V.*

A FULL ASSURANCE of faith is like some other things in a believer's experience, it becomes a well defined and apprehended fact to the one who possesses it, but a very unreal and speculative thing to such as fail to seek it as a possible attainment. Like the white stone given to the overcomer and known only to him, *so* is it with those who secure through eagerness of search and receptivity of heart, a full assurance of faith. It is not something that can be communicated from one believer to another, but each for himself must meet the conditions under which God is willing to impart His special gifts. "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you," seems written in large letters over the entrance into all the real attainments of Christian life. They who hunger and thirst after righteousness are the only ones who can be filled therewith. Only those who search for truth as for hidden treasure are promised the reward of finding it in reality. God promises to hear the prayers of His people, but He has given us to know that *His* great benefits are not distributed to any except those sufficiently desiring such blessings as to pray "always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." Thus, while every believer has faith, not every one has fulness of faith. The Thessalonian brethren had faith, yet Paul is eager to visit them and he writes, to the end that he "might perfect that which is lacking in their faith." Expressed in another way, it could be said that every believer must necessarily possess a saving faith in the sacrifice of Christ, but every believer does not attain unto a perfected faith, and much misapprehension generally exists regarding the nature of faith in these two aspects.

Saving faith in the sense we are distinguishing it, can be defined as an appropriation of the promised salvation held out to those who accept it by recognizing the efficacy of the blood of Christ, and in connection with which the Word says, "Believe and thou shalt be saved." Fulness of faith, however, represents an advanced stage in experience in the sense that faith, like every other grace or attainment requires time for its perfecting. Saving faith grasps the fundamental facts of how God's law can remain unalterably just and good, and yet He can be the Justifier of those who believe in Jesus; but the sacrifice of Christ will certainly receive under the increasing illumination of the Holy Spirit, newer and fuller interpretations as faith becomes perfected. To all, therefore, the atonement stands for forgiveness and justification, but increasing luster will surround the Cross-to those who are ready to believe in the effectual operations of a full assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen.

### **The Effects of a True Faith**

Among the treasured words of Jesus we are familiar with these: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) This of course is the rest of faith, the kind of rest Israel of old failed to enjoy because of unbelief. And for spiritual Israel, the lesson of natural Israel's failure has been drawn to our attention in words of solemn warning: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come' short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) But does the Bible not give particular emphasis to the fact that the life of the Christian in this present evil world will be one of incessant warfare, and that through much tribulation we shall enter the kingdom? Yes indeed, and experience has given abundant corroboration to those Scriptural statements. The true believer has, nevertheless, likewise proved

that there is a rest and peace for him—a rest and peace which *is* fully compatible with all the strenuous conditions created by the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. Visions of such a rest secured through faith have all along been the strengthening inspiration of God's children, and many there have been who have prayed

"Lord, lead me to a faith like this,  
Through trial though it be;  
For O! the rest of faith is bliss,  
The bliss of rest in Thee."

Since, as we have noted, the Apostle in pointing *us* back to natural Israel's failure, draws our attention to the causes leading up to their being shut out from God's rest, we may well devote a little while to a consideration of these lessons. And in this connection perhaps we cannot do better than to quote at length from the comments of the one whose writings have meant so much to the Lord's people in these last days. Dealing with the time when the minority report of Joshua and Caleb was spurned and the ten faithless spies were heeded, he says:

"Applying the lesson to spiritual Israelites we find many correspondencies: First, we have leaders of the people, corresponding to the spies, on whose report much will surely depend as to the courage of the people in going forward with the divine arrangement. Some of these ministers so magnify the difficulties of the way that the people are discouraged and go not on, while others giving a truthful report encourage their brethren with assurances that the Lord's grace is sufficient for all who are His. Perhaps indeed it would not be amiss to suppose that the twelve spies represent the whole number of the Lord's people who in the present life enter into covenant relationship to the Lord and experience a measure of His rest. All agree that the rest of faith is a glorious one, that its fruitage is grand, and samples are presented to the people. A small minority, however, give a proper report of the possibility of Christian living—the possibility of being overcomers of the world, of fighting a good fight in the name and strength of the Lord, the possibility of entering into all the glorious things which God hath provided for them that love Him. The majority, the great company, hold back, fail to appropriate the promises, fail to trust the Lord, and their influence is proportionately an evil one upon others with whom they have influence. Thus at the present time few by faith enter into the blessings and privileges that belong to the spiritual Israelites, and these few are the only ones who will enter into the heavenly Canaan to take actual possession by and by; the others fail of the blessing and joy of faith in the present time, and will fail of the highest blessing in the future, whatever portion they may obtain under the Lord's grace.

"Mr. Spurgeon told a story of a man who was invited to come into his orchard to eat some of his fruit. He declined because he said he had picked up some apples from the roadside that fell from those trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied that those trees were there on purpose, so that the boys would not be attracted into the orchard to steal, but assured him that in the orchard proper to which he invited him were delicious apples. As those apple trees on the outside gave not a proper sample or representation of the orchard, so many Christians give to the world a very unsatisfactory sample of the blessings of the Lord and the fruits of the Spirit, and in some respects bear false witness and hinder the outflow of the blessings of the Lord toward mankind in general during this Age. Thank God that the time is coming when under the leadership of the Joshua and Caleb class the whole people—all who will accept the Lord and have confidence in Him—may be brought into the antitypical Canaan and assisted to take possession of all the rich favors which God has promised to them that love and obey Him.

"Unbelief never gets beyond the difficulties, the cities, the walls, the giants. It is always preferring them, dwelling on them, pitting them against its own resources. Faith, on the other hand, though it never minimizes the difficulties, looks them steadily in the face, turns from them and looks into the face of God, and counts on Him. This is what the people failed to do, and for this they lost Canaan.' F. B. Meyer.

"Oh, how many a glorious record  
Had the guardian angel kept!  
Had I done instead of doubted,  
Had I warred instead of wept!"

### **"I can do all Things through Christ Who Strengtheneth Me"**

"There are two important lessons for spiritual Israelites to learn: (1) Their own inefficiency their own inability to meet the trials, the difficulties, the hindrances in their way. As the Apostle says, We cannot do the things that we would. (2) But our extremity is God's opportunity, and His encouraging words are, 'My grace is sufficient for thee; My strength is made perfect in thy weakness.' The Lord could have armed and equipped the hosts of Israel in some miraculous manner, making them invulnerable to the attacks of their enemies, and giving them courage for their ordeal; but this was not His plan. He wished to develop in them the necessary faith, trust, obedience, for, Without faith it is impossible to please God.' Thus in natural Israel was illustrated the divine proceeding in Spiritual Israel. God could miraculously give us powers of mind and of body which would make us superior to every outward circumstance; but instead of so doing He merely justifies us by faith, and tells us to reckon ourselves as complete, perfect, because of the imputation of our Redeemer's merit. From the standpoint of faith all the battles of spiritual Israel are won or lost. 'According to thy faith be it unto you.' Those, therefore, who can and will exercise full faith, full confidence in all of the divine promises may go from victory to victory, from blessing to blessing, from joy to joy, from one attainment to another, and have a glorious victory in the end over the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, through the imputed merit and continued assistance of Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.

"To this class the giants of opposition and despair lose their power, even as did Goliath before the sling stone of David. The pebble from the brook-the message from the divine Word-vanquishes the enemy's power to those who have the sling of faith. To these the fortresses of sin are not so strong as to be invulnerable, unassailable; entrenched depravity is recognized as being subject to divine power, and when attacked in the name and strength of the Lord and encompassed repeatedly with prayer, finally its strong walls fall down as did those of Jericho. So may depraved appetites and sinful desires be thoroughly conquered so far as our hearts are concerned, though the traces thereof may continue to some extent in our mortal flesh-reminders not only of the weaknesses of the fallen nature, but also of the triumph of the new mind under the leadership of Jesus.

"As these victories of faith progress, the fruits of the victory become ours. The grapes of Eschol, the figs, and all the plenty of the land flowing with milk and honey but feebly picture the riches of grace and fruitage of the Spirit which accrue to those who in the name of the Lord gain the victories of faith over the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. Of these fruits and graces the Apostle speaks, naming meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. And the assurance of the Word is that if we do these things, if we maintain this good fight of faith as new creatures, we not only shall enjoy the spiritual refreshment, but eventually 'an entrance

shall be administered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' - 2 Pet. 1:11." - Watch Tower, 1907, pp. 251, 252.

### **"Peace in the Lord" -**

"The Lord does not bless His people with peace in an outward sense. The Master's special associates, the Apostles, were buffeted, and so all His followers have been. The Adversary does everything in his power to make their lives anything but peaceful and happy. This is true of all who walk in Jesus' footsteps. We have fightings without and fightings within, rather than peace without and peace within. We have fightings with our own flesh; and it is a part of our victory that we 'fight a good fight,' a conquering fight. We are to put forth our best efforts in fighting against the world and the Adversary, against all the things that Satan would put into our minds and hearts, and we are to get the better of these things. The Lord blesses His people with strength to surmount these difficulties.

"We are not to be at peace with the flesh, but always at warfare with it. Yet there is a peace in the Lord that is born of faith in Him- and in His promises. He has promised us grace sufficient; He has promised that we shall not be overcome through having trials and' difficulties that are too great for us. We are assured that we shall have the victory if we trust in His strength. This gives us a rest and peace in all; our experiences.

"Through all the tumult and the strife  
I hear the music ringing!  
It finds an echo in my soul;  
How can I keep from singing?"

"We are resting in the Lord's-promises-we are resting in His strength and in His ability to make good His promises; for we, know that He who has called us is able to fulfill all His good Word. This peace, or rest, is the special blessing of the Holy Spirit. Only in proportion as we receive the Holy Spirit, the holy mind of. God, the holy disposition, can we have this peace fulfilled in us. It is a matter of simple ratio. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, in the knowledge of the truth, we shall have this to . comfort and strengthen us; and we shall thus have more of the peace of God every day, and be able to abide in His love."-Watch Tower,' 1914, p. 103.

"Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?  
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne!

"Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?  
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers !

"Peace, perfect peace? 'mid suffering's keenest throes?  
The sympathy of Jesus brings repose.

"It is enough! Earth's struggles soon shall cease,  
And Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace!"