

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XIX November, 1936 No. 11

Thanksgiving

"Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for He is good; for His loving-kindness endureth for ever." - Psalm 136:1.

TO THE Christian, every day is a day of thanksgiving. The Psalmist expresses this attitude "O Lord, . . . we Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture will give Thee thanks for ever." "Giving thanks always," says the Apostle, "for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ unto God, even the Father." - Psalm 79:13; Eph. 5:20.

The appointment by the head of the nation of a special Day of Thanksgiving is profitable to the Christian, however, for it prompts him to an enumeration of his many and infinite blessings. When we attempt this we are impelled to exclaim with Paul: "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable bounty" -- which is just another way of saying "The half has never been told." "Unspeakable" here means not something which cannot be spoken of, but that which has not been fully spoken or declared.

For the gift of Jesus, our Savior; for the "peace with God" which comes as a result of His sacrifice; for the further "grace wherein we stand"-the great High Calling to the Priesthood -- as a result of which "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God"; for the daily experiences, testings, trials, and for the daily supply of grace which enables us to benefit eternally by these temporal afflictions-all these are but a part of His "unspeakable bounty." Eternity, and the cumulative capacity of "all saints" will be required to realize and to tell the complete story of our Father's munificence. - 2 Cor. 9:15; Eph. 2:18.

Not the least of our present and particular blessings is that of living under a civil government that assures to every citizen complete liberty of religious assemblage, worship, and expression-in speech and in print. For such a government we may well heed the Apostle's words "I exhort, therefore, first of all, that . . . thanksgivings be made for . . . kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." - 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

The Apostle Paul made what might be described as the first general Thanksgiving proclamation, on the Areopagus, or Mars' Hill, in Athens. After gracefully complimenting the philosophers on

their regard for religion, he referred to the altar he had observed in passing through their streets, inscribed "To an unknown god," and continued:

"Whom . . . ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. . . He is the Lord of heaven and earth . . . He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. . . All nations of men . . . should seek the Lord . . . for in Him we live and move and have our being. . . . And . . . He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained. . . ." - Acts 17:23-31.

The God that Paul declared is almost as "unknown" to the modern world as He was to the ancient Athenians. The Apostle did not attempt to enlighten the Athenians in respect to God except in regard to the three broad generalities about Him: He is the Creator, He is the Preserver, He is the Restorer, of man's life. The modern world shares the skepticism of the Athenians regarding the third of these affirmations -- the doctrine of the resurrection. While the modern religionist, like the ancient, is willing to grant that God (through some partly understood scientific laws) was the Creator, and, in a vague and secondary, way, is the preserver or helper of those who "help themselves," when it comes to the future life, he seems to find it easier to believe in something intangible and visionary, than in the simplicity of the Scriptural resurrection. To believe in that he must believe in God! The idea of man coming back, through a resurrection, to solid earth and veritable flesh and blood, is as absurd even to the majority of professed Christians, as it was to the ancient Areopagites, who "mocked when they heard of the resurrection of the dead."

Today the true Christian stands, -- as alien as was Paul in Athens, in the midst of another and greater Mars' Hill -- a world preponderantly committed to reliance for safety and well-being upon force of arms, and the god of war. From every direction the winds bring the sound of clanging machinery forging the weapons of warfare, the blare of martial music and the hoarse shouts of the multitude of military hero-worshippers. Few indeed hear the Voice speaking behind them, saying: "Yet have I set **My** king upon My holy hill of Zion. Ask of Me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron!" - Psalm 2.

This prospect fired the minds and hearts of the Hebrew bards and seers of old. Like the angel Israel, of whom legends say, "his heartstrings are a lute," the heartstrings of the "sweet singers of Israel" were swept by the glorious vision, and they broke forth in rhapsodies of praise and thanksgiving.

"Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song:
Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth.
Sing unto Jehovah, bless His name;
Show forth His salvation from day to day.
Declare His glory among the nations,
His marvelous works among all the people.
* * * * *

"Say among the nations, JEHOVAH *reigneth*:
The [new] world is established that it cannot be moved.
He will judge the people with equity.
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
Let the field exult, and all that is therein;
Then shall all the trees of the wood sing for joy
Before Jehovah; for He cometh,
For He cometh to judge the earth:

He will judge the world with righteousness,
And the peoples with His truth.

"Mercy and truth are met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth springeth out of the earth!
And righteousness hath looked down from heaven.
Yea, Jehovah will give that which is good;
And our land shall yield its increase.
Righteousness shall go before Him
And shall make His footsteps a way to walk in.
"Praise ye JEHOVAH!" - Psalms 96 and 85

Signs of the Master's Presence

*"What will be the sign of Thy presence, and of the consummation of the Age?" - Matt. 24:3,
Diaglott.*

IN OUR last issue we expressed our judgment that -objections to "presence" as being the proper translation of "parousia" were not sustained, and the question the disciples asked of our Lord is, in our opinion, accurately recorded as above. We further observed that to our understanding the very fact that they asked the Lord what the sign of His presence would be, indicated a recognition on their part that it might be possible for them to reach the end of the Age, and be actually living in the days of His second presence, and not know it. As corroborating this view we noted that that very condition had obtained at His first advent. Signs, plain and eloquent enough to those who had eyes to see and ears to hear, failed altogether of recognition by the great majority of "His own" to whom He came. - John 1:11.

Again, dear brethren, we urge the utmost consideration of others who may not be able to reach our conclusions. In his own mind it is, and not in that of another, that the Apostle urges every man to be fully persuaded. (Rom. 14:5.) No matter how sure we may be that we have the truth on this or on any other subject, we know not anything yet as we ought to know it. (1 Cor. 8:2.) When we know even as we are known, we shall realize how dim even our clearest vision here has been. (1 Cor. 13:12.) Meantime let us think and let think. And as we test the teachings which come to us (1 John 4:1), let us observe carefully the effect which such teachings have had in the lives of those who introduce them to us. - 1 Pet. 1:22; Heb. 13:7.

Blindness to Signs of the Times

Was our Lord displeased with this inquiry on the part of His disciples? Nothing in the record so indicates. What He did object to, not on their part but on that of the unbelieving majority of the nation, and what He reproveth in the latter, was their failure to appreciate the signs of the times. They asked Him for a sign from heaven, something supernatural, something wonderful, but He refused, saying, "Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven, but ye cannot discern the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of Jonah." (Matt. 16:1-4, Am. R. V.) He objected to their refusal to recognize the signs that might have been discerned in connection with the fulfillment of prophecy, both along chronological and other lines. Again, we recall His words to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, following His resurrection: "O dull-witted men, with minds so slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" - the things which they had spoken concerning

Messiah's sufferings as well as the glory that was to follow. (Luke 24:25, Weymouth.) Evident it is that our Lord desires His followers to be diligent students of the word of prophecy, to which the Apostle Peter tells us we do well to take heed. (2 Pet. 1:19.) And the only way we may take proper heed thereto is to be on the alert to note its fulfillments in history and in every true sign of our own times.

Our Lord's Reply

To the disciples' question our Lord vouchsafed a gracious reply. His followers would not be left without a sign -- one too, which would be sufficient to make them aware of His presence when the time arrived. But first many things were to take place. Long centuries were to intervene, although that discouraging fact was not dwelt on at length. False Messiahs would arise, leading many astray. The disciples were to be on guard against being themselves deceived by them. (Matt. 24:4, 5.) "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors [threats or intrigues] of wars; see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the **end is not yet**. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of [or primary] sorrows." (Matt. 24:6-8.) Commenting on this and the following passage Brother Russell has well observed:

"Thus briefly did our Lord summarize secular history, and teach the disciples not to expect very soon His second coming and glorious Kingdom. And how aptly: surely the world's history is just this--an account of wars, intrigues, famines and pestilences--little else. Our Lord separates the history of the true Church and states it with similar brevity, thus: 'Then [during the same period, the Gospel Age] they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations [peoples] for My name's sake. And then [during that same period] many shall be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets [teachers] shall rise and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.' - Matt. 24:9-13.

"In the light of history would it be possible to portray the course of God's true Church in fewer words? Surely not. The likeness is perfect. 'Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution,' is the Apostle's declaration; and whoever has not shared it has every reason to doubt his relationship to God as a son. (Heb. 12:8.) And so with the Church as a whole, when not persecuted by the Ishmael and Esau class, it has been because there was so much of the spirit of the world or so much of 'cold love' toward the Lord and His truth that they were not worthy of persecution. But judged by this same standard, and by our Lord's prophecy, there have been some faithful unto death all the way down through this Gospel Age--a 'little flock.'" - *Scripture Studies, Vol. IV, pp. 566, 567.*

"The End is Not Yet"

We have emphasized these words of our Lord to call special attention to the fact that He is describing conditions which would obtain **during** the Gospel Age, not necessarily at its close. Another keen student of prophecy, H. Grattan Guinness, thus comments:

"Remarks on this subject are too often made, which betray a want of intelligent comprehension of the nature of the signs that are, according to Scripture, to indicate 'the time of the end.' A -careless reading of our Lord's prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives seems to be the cause of much

of this misapprehension. His prediction of wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, are quoted as if **they** and such like things were to be the signs of the end of the Age. A little accurate attention to the order of His statements would at once show that, so far from this being the case, He mentions these as the •characteristic and common events of **the entire interval prior to His** coming. Wars and calamities; persecution and apostasy, martyrdom, treachery, abounding iniquity, . . . which has, as we know, extended over eighteen hundred years—all these things were to fill the interval, not to be signs of the immediate proximity of the second advent. How **could things** of common, constant occurrence be in themselves signs of any uncommon and unique crisis? What commoner all through the ages than wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes? These, as marking the course of the Age, can never indicate its **close**, to do which something distinctive is evidently requisite."

A World-Wide Witness

Another feature which must be fulfilled, declared our Lord, ere He would return, would be the world-wide preaching of the Gospel. "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14.) "Here again," observes Brother Russell, "our Lord clearly showed the disciples that the end of the Age was much farther off than they had supposed; that the message of His Kingdom was to be good tidings, not to Israel only, but to all nations. But this did not imply that other nations would receive the Gospel which Israel had rejected. Rather, we should expect just what we find, that as the god of this world blinded Israel, so he would blind the vast majorities of other nations, and hinder them from seeing in Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God—and he has. (1 Cor. 1:24.) If only a remnant of Israel (specially instructed for centuries under the Law) was found worthy to be of the 'royal priesthood,' what more could reasonably be expected of the heathen nations, long 'without God and having no hope'?"

"It is well that we carefully note our Lord's words—that the Gospel was not to be preached to the nations to **convert the nations**, but as a **witness to the nations**, and to call, and perfect, and gather out of all nations 'the elect.' Later on 'the elect,' as the Kingdom, will bless the nations, opening their deaf ears to the Gospel, and their blinded eyes to the True Light.

"This witness has already been given; the word of the Lord, the Gospel of the Kingdom, has been published to every nation of earth. Each individual has not heard it; but that is not the statement of the prophecy. It was to be, and has been, a national proclamation."

The Two Harvests

Some time prior to the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign of Thy presence, and of the consummation of the Age?" our Lord had called the time of His first advent a time of harvest—the harvest of the Jewish Age. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest." (Matt. 9:37, 38.) Similarly He had assured them that there would be a harvest of the Gospel Age. "The harvest is the completion of the Age." (Matt. 13:39, Fenton.) The words we now read, especially when studied in connection with the parallel passage in Luke (Luke 21:20-24), have been properly understood, we think, as referring to both of these harvests, finding their complete fulfillment in the latter. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand); then let them which be in

Judea flee into the mountains; let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in winter, neither on the Sabbath day; for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." - Matt. 24:15-22.

Students of history know that the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel (Daniel 11:31; 12:11) has long "stood in the holy place." Coming into existence at practically the same point of time, two great apostasies, the Papal and the Mohammedan, "flourished during the same general period. One of them, the Papal, trampled down and overran the true, mystical sanctuary of truth, and cruelly persecuted the holy people of God during a long period; the other, the Mohammedan, trampled under foot rejected fleshly Israel during about the same period, taking possession of the literal city of Jerusalem and its sanctuary. It also persecuted the true Christians as well as constituted a scourge on apostate Christendom. It can truthfully be said that both of these powers polluted the ,holy place and set up 'the abomination that maketh desolate'-the one at Rome, the other at Jerusalem." - R. E. Streeter in "*Daniel the Beloved*," page 435.

"Does any one inquire," asks H. Gratton Guinness, "why these two powers, the Papal and the Mohammedan, should occupy so prominent a position in the predictions of Scripture as regards this Gentile dispensation? The reply is easy. No power ever exercised on earth has proved on the whole, so injurious to mankind and so antagonistic to the redeeming purposes of God, as the Papacy. Its reign has been long, its sphere has been wide, its power has been vast. It has usurped the headship of the Christian Church, and the titles and prerogatives of Deity. It has corrupted the Gospel, suppressed the Bible, and turned Christianity into a mere baptized heathenism. Idolatries and false doctrines have been inculcated and promulgated throughout Christendom by its instrumentality. For centuries it made war with the saints, and overcame them. Millions of evangelical martyrs have been slain by its authority. It has injuriously affected countless myriads of human beings, during its course of more than 1,200 years, thirty or forty generations have suffered under it, either in the way of corruption or persecution. In a word, it has vindicated its title to be considered that system of supernatural and soul-destroying error, that dire and dreadful apostasy revealed by prophecy as the principal power of evil, to arise between the first and second advents of Christ.

"Could sacred prophecy have passed by unnoticed this gigantic and universally influential power, which ruled the whole of Christendom with despotic sway, and with inconceivably evil results, for more than a thousand years? No; to lead. the people of God to shun all connection with it, ample and repeated descriptions of it are given, and unparalleled denunciations are made against it. And as to the power of Islam, when it is remembered that, not only did it exterminate Christianity in northern Africa, leaving but a feeble and ignorant remnant of the Coptic Church in Egypt, but that the professing Christians of the Greek Church fell by millions before the invasion of its savage and devouring hordes, its myriad horsemen from Central Asia, and that millions more of subject Christian races have groaned under its cruel oppression and destructive exactions; when we remember that it has put out the light of the Gospel in the lands where it had its birth, and that moreover it has devastated Palestine and trodden down Jerusalem, carried war and bloodshed to the gates of Vienna and the northern slopes of the Pyrenees, threatening the very existence of Christendom; when we remember that to this day [1886] it dominates 150,000,000 of mankind, involving them in the darkness of fatal error and antichristian unbelief -- can we wonder that the spirit of prophecy should indicate beforehand its rise and its career, and should announce its final doom?"

Flee to the Mountain of the Lord

The parallel between the end of the Jewish harvest and the end of the Gospel harvest has been instructively drawn by Brother Russell:

"Fleshly Israel's rejection of the true sacrifice for sins, and their retention of the typical sacrifices which were no longer acceptable to God, but abominations, was an important incident in connection with their national and ecclesiastical fall. So here, the rejection of the doctrine of the ransom and the acceptance of either Masses or good works or penances instead, is abomination in God's sight and is an important incident in connection with the fall of Christendom, civil and ecclesiastical."

After pointing out that the cornerstone of the ",abomination of desolation" is the blasphemous doctrine of the Mass, and that the darkness of this error was so great that during the centuries it has prevailed, few if any, even amongst the Reformers, could see it, Brother Russell continues:

"In this view of the matter there is great significance in our Lord's words-'When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation having stood in the holy place, as foretold by Daniel the Prophet (reader consider): then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains.' Here we must remember the parallelism between the two harvests, the two times of trouble and the two flights; and must consider that Judea would represent Christendom of today.

"The Greek word rendered 'mountains' may with equal or greater propriety be rendered in the singular-mountain; and it is so rendered in a majority of instances in the Common Version. Indeed, to flee out of Judea (literal) to either a mountain or many mountains seems peculiar since Judea was in fact 'a hill country,' and Jerusalem is described as set in the top of the mountains. But to apply our Lord's words to the present time, and to His people in Christendom, who now, in the light of present truth, see the Abomination stand where it ought not-in the holy place-in the stead of the true sacrifice, is a very simple matter. They should at once flee from the influence of the abomination and from the system falsely styling itself Christ's (mountain) Kingdom, to the true mountain or Kingdom, which at this time Christ has returned to set up in glory and power.

"But to leave Christendom, repudiating her temples, her forms of godliness, her social enchantments, her flatteries and honors, and to brave her denunciations and anathemas and her various powers of boycott, and to flee to the Lord and the true Kingdom, repudiated, ignored and denied by the worldly-wise and worldly-good, is surely quite a flight, quite a journey; and few but the 'saints' will even think of starting on it. The perils of the way are portrayed by our Lord in a manner that would seem overdrawn and contrary to His usual custom if applicable only to the physical sufferings of the believers who fled from Judea in the close of the Jewish harvest; but His words are manifestly appropriate to the spiritual flight and trials of this harvest time. In a word, this command to flee, and the description of its trials, can be properly understood only in connection with the command of Revelation (Rev. 18:4), 'Come out of her, My people, so that you may have no fellowship with her sins, and that you may not receive of her plagues.'

(To be Continued)

BE STILL AND LET HIM MOULD THEE

Thy lessons art thou learning, O tried and weary soul?
His way art thou discerning, who works to make thee whole?
In the haven of submission, art thou satisfied and still?
Art thou clinging to the Father 'neath the shadow of His will?
Now while His arms enfold thee, think well He knoweth best,
Be still and let Him mould thee for His heritage of rest.

"The vessel must be shapen for the joys of Paradise,
The soul must have its training for the service of the skies,
And if the great Refiner in furnaces of pain
Would do His work more *fully*, count all His dealings, gain.
For He Himself hath told thee, of tribulation here,
Be still, and He will mould thee for the changeless glory there.

"From heritage of sorrow are deepest joys distilled
And the cup outstretched for healing, is oft at Marah filled;
God leads to joys through weeping; to quietness through strife,
Through yielding into conquest, through death to endless life.
Be still, He hath enrolled thee for the Kingdom and the crown.
Be silent, He will mould thee, who calleth thee His own.

"Such silence *is* communion, such stillness is a shrine,
The fellowship of suffering, an ordinance divine,
And the secret of abiding most fully is declared
To those who with the Master, Gethsemane have shared.
Then trust Him to uphold thee, midst sorrow and the gloom,
Be still, and He will mould thee for the Home beyond the tomb.

"For resurrection stillness, there is resurrection power, The prayer and praise of trusting may glorify each hour, And common days are holy, and years are Easter-tide, For those who with the Risen One, in risen life abide. Then let His love enfold thee; keep silent at His Word, Be still and He *will* mould thee, *O, rest thou in the Lord.*"

Love to the Uttermost

[Contributed]

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. We love Him, because He first loved us." - 1 John 4: 9, 10, 19.

It is no marvel that we should love God, in view of our lost and undone condition, and the gift of His own beloved Son to deliver us from that state of condemnation; but surely it is one of the greatest of mysteries that God should so love us. Well indeed has the Apostle said, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." As we come to know the wideness of God's mercy, we can well understand why it is that the god of this world has darkened the minds of men "lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4.) Neither are we surprised to learn from the prophetic Word that "all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord" when the knowledge of His love is no longer kept from them by the blinding influences of Satan. The perfect love of God is designed to call forth perfect love toward Him in man's heart; and in the revelations of God's love there are endless wonders. We marvel that He so loved the entire race that He gave Jesus to pass through the humiliation of His lowly birth, the agonies of Gethsemane, the cruel mocking, and the shame and suffering of Calvary. Yet these are but the beginning of the manifestations of His love. In these great facts we have the foundation laid for revelations of the love of God which will require eternal ages to unfold.

The attributes of God's character seem fully comprehended in these four—wisdom, justice, love, and power. All of these attributes we know co-ordinate in all that God does in His dealings with His creatures. And yet when we come to a concise term descriptive of Him, we have the words, "God is love. And how appropriate is this term; for all of His creative work bears testimony to the fact that love called all creation into being. Place the beginning of His creative work where we will in the depths of eternity past, He who is "from everlasting to everlasting" was alone for unmeasurable time, and yet needed naught to complete His perfect fulness. Thus His creative activities become the sure evidence of His love.

What then should be our response to this love of God? The Apostle links the reciprocation of love between God and ourselves most beautifully in his statement, "We love Him, because He first loved us." As we examine this interchange of 'love, may we realize a renewed sense of His love to us, and find our love for Him quickened into an increased volume and depth.

"Love," we are told "is the fulfilling of the Law." Thus it is that Jesus epitomized the whole law in His statement, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment." (Mark 12:30.) On these words hang all the law and the prophets. To fully comprehend them is to understand the most vital facts in divine revelation. Such words are not of human origin, for they are contrary to the habits of men. The mind of man has become accustomed to clothing the objects of worship or veneration in the garb of commanding might, and bowing himself before regal splendor. Thus it comes to pass that the general conception of God takes on the aspect of making Him in the image and likeness of man, which is a complete reversal of the character and purpose of God, whose original and unchanged plan is that man be created in His likeness. And so it is that when the high

and elevated of earth address their fellows, they ask first for loyal obedience to their rulership: The master says, "you are my servant, render me your faithful service." On every hand the strong and exalted among men place pre-eminence on the willing homage of the serving masses, or those over whom they hold sway.

God Revealed Through Language of Love

But it is not so with God. His appeal to us is different. True, He does ask for our obedience, and He is justly entitled to our most faithful service and sincere worship and homage, but His approach to us is primarily through the revelation and language of His love. As the supreme Ruler and Sustainer of the universe, and the One from whom all good must come, surely He could consistently approach us with the commands of law, and govern His vast domains primarily by such law. What then does He ask of us His intelligent creatures? The answer is "Thou shalt **love** the Lord thy God with all thy heart." This more than anything else reveals the heart of God to us. He who is Love speaks thus, for only love will hold true heart affection so dear as to place it in the very forefront of all commandments, and make its possession and exercise the fulfilling of the whole law. Since God is love, it therefore follows that He will look for and rejoice in the responsive love of His children. John teaches us that it is God's love that wins our love, for "we love Him, because He first loved us." Most assuredly it must be loving Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, that brings satisfaction to His own heart of love. In our creation He made us capable of such response. Just as He made the eye for seeing and the ear for hearing, so He made our whole nature wonderfully adapted to this one glorious end suggested in our text. The entrance of sin has indeed wrought havoc with these responsive powers as *they* were given to Adam, and six thousand years of impairment has made self the poor, low object and aim of life with the great majority of the race. But for those who have been redeemed, and thus set free from condemnation, all the favor of God now enjoyed is intended to lead them back to a God-centered love, in which He who loves to the uttermost will be loved supremely.

We recall the circumstances under which Jesus gave this abbreviated statement of the law. A scribe inquired of Him: "Which is the first commandment of all?" And in answer to this question these profound words here spoken. There is no reason for our being at a loss to understand our Lord's answer, since it is no complex requirement. In the nature of things, since God is love, and has revealed His love to us in many wonderful ways, it consistently follows that our love should flow out to Him in the fullest measure possible to us, and flow out also to all whom He loves. We may indeed be perplexed about a great many mysteries connected with God's operations and providences, because at best we can now know only in part, but our love can go out to Him in the full volume He asks for. A child may not understand a great many things its father may do, but it can love that father with a full measure of joy and thankfulness. We can properly ask ourselves if we can really hope to ever serve God perfectly in the daily life, but we never need to ask if we can love Him with all our heart. This we can do, and this is the simple and imperative meaning of the words of Jesus we are now considering. Such love is therefore the basis of all advancement in fellowship with God, as it is also the only condition whereby growth in grace and knowledge may be expected. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is love made perfect." - 1 John 4:16, 17.

The Infinite Depths of Divine Love

Let us then think of God's love for us. In revealing the greatness of His loving kindness, our heavenly Father has one very special purpose in view. As we have seen, the clearer we understand His revelation, the clearer we can discern that His purpose is to draw us more and more into the intimate depths of His infinite love. He wants us to get such a vision of Himself as will cause us to exclaim with one of old, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." (Psa. 73:25.) He will reciprocate by saying to us, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." - Jer. 31:3.

What a heritage is this love of God! How greatly we should value it! How high should be our gratitude for acceptance and favor in the sight of God, and our one great purpose should be to live in the light of His countenance. No wonder the Apostle urges us to "keep ourselves in the love of God." It means that our sins are atoned for, the penalty removed, that our iniquities are covered and no longer imputed to us, and that we have a standing in righteousness. Yet these benefits are but the preparation for the greater and the only satisfying blessing we can receive, the blessedness of beholding His face in righteousness and peace. The love of God thus resting upon us is a treasure indeed, and the strongest expressions of which human language is capable are used by the Spirit to describe the value of the favor of God toward those who believe in Jesus. God rejoiceth over such with joy and singing, and His delight is in them. They are dear children, and He keeps them as the apple of His eye. The pitifulness of a father, and the ever-watchful care of a mother, are the illustrations of His tenderness. The love He has to His beloved Son, a love heightened by His obedience unto death, is the love wherewith He loves His own. And we are to remember that if Jesus died for us while we were yet sinners, and we were saved by His death, much more being saved, we shall now freely receive all things through Christ Jesus. The Father who gave His Son for us, and the Son who loved us and gave His life that we might live, shall they not now treasure with an ever-watchful care and a never failing devotion the objects of such sacrificing love?

"The Father Himself loveth you," is the assurance Jesus gives us. And His own love is expressed in the sublime statement, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you." (John 16:27; 15:9.) A knowledge of such love calls forth true emotions and elevating influences into the enlightened and grateful heart. As we have noted before it means love enkindled increasingly by the inflow of His love, and this makes more and more real the assurance of an established sonship. This gives confidence that we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. It brings a holy aim and direction into the life, causing it to be centered in the consuming desire to glorify God in body and spirit which are His. It produces a growing spirit of sweet and contented harmony with all of the divine appointments and permissions, because the love of God, and love for Him, is enthroned in the heart. Abiding under His wings in the faith that this love begets, it will become increasingly easier to say, "Have Thine own way Lord," as He molds and fashions us according to His own loving will.

Moreover, this knowledge and experience of God's love will heighten the joyful anticipations of eventually seeing Him face to face. This becomes a most important factor in the daily life, for are ye not told that "every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (1 John 3:3.) It is the love of the Bridegroom of her heart that inspires the Church to purity of heart and perfection of character. The sweetest words to her ear are the words of Him, whose eyes are "as a flame of fire," "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee." (Song of Solomon 4:7.)

What then shall it be to see Him as He is! "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," the Apostle tells us, "neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." But we know that "in the ages to come" there will be an unending glory for those through whom God will "show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (1 Cor. 2:9; Eph. 2:7.) Forever with the Lord! What will it be! "As the ages which are the 'beats of the pendulum of eternity come and go, more and more of God's power will flow out to us, and more and more of God's glory be manifested in us. It must be so. For God's gift is infinite, and our capacity of reception will be indefinitely capable of increase. Therefore eternity will be needful in order that the redeemed may absorb all of God which He can give or they can take. The process has no limits, for there is no bound to be set to the possible revelations of God, and none to the exuberant abundance of the beauty and glory which He will give to His redeemed children. Therefore we shall live forever; and forever show forth His praise, and blaze out like the sun with the irradiation of His glory. . . . Till we comprehend all His nature in our thoughts, and reflect all His beauty in our character; till we have attained all the bliss we can think, and received all the good we can ask; till hope has nothing before her to reach towards, we 'shall never die, but live eternally, to declare the works of the Lord.' "

If, then, this love of God is shed abroad in our hearts now, in response to these multiplied manifestations of His 'love for us, in our redemption through the gift of His own dear Son, and in His loving kindnesses to us from day to day as we endeavor to walk in the footsteps of that beloved One, and in the promise of an eternity full of joys beyond our present ability to grasp, surely ours will now be that degree of love which will be a fulfilling of His law. How could we do otherwise than love Him with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength? Loving Him thus because He first loved us, it will be no empty meaningless thing to say, O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day." (Psa. 119:97.) So may we "let His grace work in us, and so yield ourselves to Him, that His fulness may fill all our emptiness. That so on earth we shall be delivered from hopes which mock, and wishes that are never fulfilled. And so in heaven, after ages and ages of growing glory, we shall have to say, as each new wave of the shoreless, sunlit sea 'bears us onward, 'it doth not yet appear what we shall be.'"

God is Able to Keep His Own

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Thus Jesus speaks to us regarding the certainty of how our treasures will occupy our own heart affections. Is this not equally true of God and His treasures? May we not reverently say that where God's treasure is there will His heart be also? Surely we are encouraged by His own inspired Word to say this of Him. He tells us often that we are loved by Him as His special and peculiar treasure, as given in the marginal reading of Malachi 3:17. His heart is with His people; He delights over them with joy and singing, and He rests in His love toward them.

And because He loves us so, we are kept by Him "through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed." We are kept in the treasure chest of His power here on earth, and in His book of remembrance in heaven. They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." He who bought us with His own precious blood, has laid up His treasures where neither moth nor rust can corrupt; and where thieves cannot break through and steal. His treasure is His redeemed people. King Hezekiah, we are told, made for himself treasuries for precious stones and pleasant jewels, that thus they might be kept from harm or loss. But God in His care for His treasured jewels has made the Lord Jesus Himself the Treasury wherein no harm

can reach them. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe."

History records the faithfulness of a servant of Henry IV, who had 'been entrusted with the dangerous task of carrying a costly diamond to the Swiss government, and who met a band of highwaymen. But though they murdered him, they could find no trace of the diamond he carried on his person. After a search party had found his body, they discovered that rather than allow the jewel to fall into the hands of robbers he had swallowed it, thus making his own body the casket in which he had kept it secure, and literally laid down his own life for its safety. Is this not what has been done in God's love for His own. Jesus laid down His life to purchase us, and now He ever liveth to shield us, and "our life is hid with Christ in God." Therefore we may be "persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Rom. 8:28, 29.

How then can there be any failure on our part to be so moved by the love of God for us as to love Him with all the powers we possess? How can there be any other purpose in life for those thus loved than to respond to such love divine, and in life and character show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light of His love, all other love excelling? Of that love we have learned much, but how little even yet have we comprehended of a love so wonderful, and of which "the half has never yet been told"? Well indeed has the poet said, "The love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind." Blessed are they to whom that limitless love has become so great a treasure and so effectual an influence in producing a Godlike love within the heart, that this love really operates in the life to the fulfilling of the law.

The Good Shepherd

[Contributed]

*"I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine." - John 10:14.
(Continued from last issue)*

AND THE sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers." Yes, the true sheep follow their Shepherd. They do not stop to debate whether the way is too rough and stony, whether the brambles by the wayside are too thorny, whether there will be sufficient pasturage and water in the country where He leads them, and whether there are wild beasts lying in wait to devour. They have complete confidence in their guide. They are not weighed down by anxious cares for the things of this life, for they know whom they have believed, and are fully persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed unto Him, until the day of reckoning. O my brethren, what a lesson of faith is here! of absolute trust and confidence in Him to whom we have committed our way! "And the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice."

"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep. As I said unto you, My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him."

Those who are not of His fold, His flock, cannot know the Master's voice, cannot recognize the sweetness of His tones. Willingly shutting their eyes to the message of His works of healing and blessing, how could those Jews who asked if He were the Messiah, receive His word, even when He declared Himself openly? How necessary it is, then, that we who have been granted the privilege of being of His flock, keep our ears attuned to His message of love, and that we learn to detect in the tones of all who present themselves as undershepherds, the lack or the presence of His spirit of love! And how necessary that we prove all things offered for our acceptance, and hold fast only to that which is in full harmony with the divine Word!

The Lord is My Shepherd

When we have given our hearts fully to the Heavenly Father and are daily striving to follow the voice of our Shepherd, then we may apply to ourselves that most beautiful pastoral song, the Twenty-third Psalm. The whole chapter is a simple shepherd's psalm, and it runs through the entire round of the shepherd's life. As we study it, we see in its every sentence a description of the loving care of Jesus for His dear flock. We shall make use of some beautiful thoughts on this Psalm which have been brought out in a booklet by Mr. Wm. A. Knight, called "The Song of Our Syrian Guest," published by the Pilgrim Press, Boston, Mass. We particularly wish you to see that at the 5th verse the scene does not shift from the shepherd's life to that of a banquet table, thus spoiling the unity and harmony of the song; but it remains a shepherd song to the end.

"The Lord is My shepherd: I shall not want." There is the opening strain of its music; in that chord is sounded the key-note, which is never lost till the plaintive melody dies away at the song's end. All that follows is that thought put in varying light. All the varied needs of the sheep, and the many-sided care of the shepherd are pictured in the short sentences of the Psalm.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Just as the shepherd leads his sheep to where they may feed upon the tender grass, so the Good Shepherd provides the food necessary for our nourishment and development as New Creatures, and wondrous peace and rest such as the world knoweth not of. Through the impartation to us of His Holy Spirit we are able to discern in our daily experiences His care and guidance, His leading and instruction; and thus does our faith, our trust, our confidence, in Him grow stronger: He provides also the pure waters of truth, His Holy Word, rich in promises and evidences of His love, for our constant refreshing.

Crowning Token of the Shepherd's Care

The scene changes: "He leadeth me beside the still waters." If we think here only of quietly flowing streams, we get only one more picture of rest; but then we miss one of the finest scenes in shepherd life, and one of the choicest blessings of the soul that is led of God. All through the day's roaming the shepherd keeps one thing in mind: He must lead his flock to a drinking-place. The refreshment of good, water marks the coveted hour of all the day; the spot where it is found amid the rough, waterless hills and plains is the crowning token of the shepherd's unflinching thoughtfulness. When at last the sheep are led "beside the still waters," how good it is after the dust and heat of the sheep-walks!

This is what the shepherd would mean by those words, "He leadeth me beside the still waters." While there are rivers and brooks in Palestine, the rivers are far from each other, and many of the brooks are called "wadies," because they are only ravines that run dry when the rainy season ends.

Job says, "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, as the channel of brooks that pass away." In the region where David was a shepherd, living streams are scarce indeed; for Judea borders on the south country called Negeb, which means "dry." Even in other parts where the lasting streams are, often the shepherd finds them in gullies between broken hills, where the banks are too dangerous for the sheep and the flow too rough. Sheep are timid and fear a current of water, as they well may, for they are easily carried down stream because of their wool. How can the poor sheep ever get a drink? Ah, the shepherd **sees to** that! Dear brethren, have you and I not learned how much is in that simple statement? How should we get the refreshment we need in this rough world if the Shepherd did not see to it? But He does, praise His name!

"Beside Waters of Quietness"

There are wells and fountains here and there **in** the regions where the flocks roam, and in some parts there are cisterns, though the sheep like the living waters best. The shepherd knows where these drinking-places are all through the country where streams are few, and he brings his sheep to some well or fountain. He makes a certain sound, and all his sheep lie down and are quiet. Then he fills the drinking-troughs. The bubbling of the fountain, or the current, if it be a stream, is no longer there to trouble the sheep. They can drink now undisturbed. This is the delicate

meaning of that word "still." As the Hebrew words express it, "He leadeth me beside waters of quietness." Then the waiting sheep hear a call or whistle. They never misunderstand; they know their shepherd's voice and never respond to the wrong shepherd if several flocks have come up together. And they come up by groups, and by groups he leads them until they stand "beside the still waters" and drink, with the shepherd standing near. So beautiful is the scene that St. John used it in picturing the redeemed earth: "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life." - Rev. 7:17, Weymouth.

Up in the mountains of Lebanon often there are no regular drinking-places, but as the shepherd leads his sheep over the rough slopes he finds many a spring and sees its rivulet noisily running down a crevice. His sheep need water. They cannot drink from the leaping little stream. So he finds a suitable turn or nook in its course; he walls it up with a little dam and so holds the water until it forms a quiet pool. Then, there on the open hills, he leads his sheep, "beside the still waters," which the shepherd's own hand has stilled. What more fitting picture could we find of the Shepherd's care of those who trust Him, than that scene up there on the mountain side. Mr. W. A. Knight writes as follows:

"I saw a shepherd do this near Zebedani in the Anti-Lebanons. He thus turned water from a swift stream into a grassy hollow, and the sheep stood in the shallow pool drinking with content." He further stays: "Mr. John Whiting, whose home has been in Jerusalem from boyhood, rode with me one day to Ain Fara, two hours of rough riding northeast from the city, to show me what he deems the only spot in Judea which supplies the natural setting for the imagery of this Psalm. It is a copious and perennial spring whose stream runs deep down in the greenness at the bottom of a rocky gorge, the sides of which are steep, perilous, filled with caves, and still the resort of flocks. 'Here,' said he, 'David must have come.' His reasoning, based on the fewness of perennial streams in all the country round about, was convincing. Bethlehem lies but a few miles to the south, with no all-year waters near it save a well or two. To repeat this Psalm in the Ain Fara ravine, with these facts in mind, with goats and sheep seen at the openings of caves or nibbling high on the precipices, with a wolf or fox spied as it ran along the wild heights, with a shepherd discerned among the rocks by the sound of his singing or calling his flock or blowing on his reed-pipe -- this was to feel that I stood at last where the Twenty-third Psalm first woke its music in a human breast."

"He restoreth my soul." In the Hebrew, soul means the life, or one's self. There are perilous places for the sheep on all sides, and they seem never to learn to avoid them. The shepherd must be ever on the watch. And there are private fields and sometimes gardens and vineyards here and there in the shepherd country; and if a sheep stray into them and be caught there, it is forfeited to the owner of the land. So, "He restoreth my soul," means that the shepherd brings me back and rescues me from fatal and forbidden places. "Restores me when wandering," as Montgomery has expressed it in his hymn, the first stanza of which runs

"The Lord is my shepherd, no want shall I know;
I feed in green pastures, safe-folded I rest;
He leadeth my soul where the still waters flow,
Restores me when wandering, redeems when oppressed."

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." It is difficult to choose the right path for the sheep. One leads to a precipice, another to a place where there is no pasturage, and so the shepherd is always going ahead, **leading** them in the right paths, proud of his good name as a shepherd-"for his name's sake" avoiding the dangerous precipices and the pitfalls. How

truly does the Good Shepherd guide **His** sheep in the midst of dangers-"in the world, but not of the world"!

Hearken to the Prophet Isaiah (Isa. 40:11): "He shall feed lambs flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." What tender love the shepherd has for the weak ones! "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" (2 Cor. 11:29.) "But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13.) Nothing evinces more tenderness and care on the part of the shepherd than this gently leading those with young, and carrying the young in his bosom.

"Father-like, He proves, yet spares us,
Well our feeble frame He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
How His plan His wisdom shows."

"He leadeth me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake" -- to justify His good name as a shepherd.

There is a remarkable change in the language of the Psalm which takes place at this point. It is in the use of the personal pronoun. Up to this point the writer has used the third person:

"The Lord is my shepherd. . . . **He** maketh me to lie down. . . . **He** leadeth me beside still **waters**. . . . **He** restoreth my soul. . . He leadeth me."

Then suddenly the singer changes from the third person and uses the second, or more personal form of address:

"Thou art with me. . . . Thy rod and thy staff . . . Thou preparest . . . Thou anointest."

What is there that lies between which causes this change? It is the Valley of the Shadow of Death!

When we first began to walk the narrow way of consecration, all that is in the first part of the Psalm was ours: rest, peace, forgiveness, guidance. But after we had an opportunity to develop to some extent a Christian character, our Shepherd led us down into the Valley of the Shadow of Death for the testing of that character-the death of self. And there perhaps He took away from us that which was dearest to us in life, or He 'brought us into an experience where we realized that in order to remain loyal to Him we must lay upon the altar of sacrifice that which to us was beautiful ;and good and most desirable, and thus He taught us to know what it really meant to put to death our self will, to crucify our earthly desires in order that we might "be filled with all the fulness of God." Then it was that we came to know our Shepherd in that deeper and more personal way which the sweet singer expresses in the second part of his song. It is a beautiful thought to those to whom it is the expression of personal experience.

"All the Way My Savior Leads Me"

In these first three verses there is food, refreshment, rest, guidance. Yes, there, all is in pleasant places; it is a simple melody. But at the words, "Yea, though," a second movement opens, deeper, fuller. Not a melody, but a harmony, swells through the last three verses. Here once more is guidance, but now it is through a dark valley where perils are, and protection is its consummation; here is food, but now it is in the wilds where enemies prowl and lurk with savage eyes; here is refreshment, but now it is with alleviating oil and ministering cup amid hard places; and here, too, is rest, but now it finds completeness in the shepherd's shelter after the long day's roaming. Nothing that is in the first part of the Psalm is lacking, even when the pleasant places are left behind, and hardships and perils abound.

This is the full story of what the good shepherd is to his sheep. He rises to the situation, measures up to all emergencies of need. Herein, is the height of his goodness. It goes **beyond** all that he **could** be to them in the pleasant, easy days. And when at last the Psalm sings, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life," that word all is the high, full-toned note sounding out the meaning of the whole Psalm: "All the days" -days when pastures were green and waters still; days when we went through dark places in shadow and peril; days when we were far out in the world, in life's imperative quest, enduring hardship and beset by enemies-"all the days of my life." This Psalm is the divine, "Lo! I am with you always" "through all the days," sounding back from the heart of the Son of Man.

Aid and Protection through the Rod and Staff

Verse 4: "Yea," not only will the Good Shepherd do for His sheep all that is described in the first three verses of the Psalm, but when dangers surround them He is ever there to guard and protect. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Some paths the Shepherd must take are right paths, yet lead through places that have deadly perils. "For Thou art with me." How could more be put in few words? What matter how great the perils and hardships if the Shepherd is with us? Very necessary is the presence of the shepherd to the welfare of the sheep. Mr. Knight tells of having seen more than once, the following:

"Sometimes, in spite of all the care of the shepherd and his dogs, a wolf will get into the very midst of the flock. The sheep are wild with fright. They run and leap and make it impossible to get at the foe in their midst. But the shepherd is with them; he knows what to do even at such a time. He leaps to a rock or hillock that he may be seen and heard, and lifts his voice in a long call. On hearing this, the sheep remember the shepherd; they heed his voice; and, strange to tell, the poor timid creatures, which were helpless with terror before, instantly rush with all their strength into a solid mass. The pressure is irresistible; the wolf is overcome; frequently he is crushed to death." Yes, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." - Rom. 8:37.

"Thy rod and Thy staff" - this also is true to life; the double expression covers the whole round of protecting care. The shepherds carry a crook for guiding the sheep and a weapon suitable for defending them-the staff and the rod; one for aiding them in places of need along peaceful ways, the other for defense in perils of robbers and wild beasts. The rod is not for correcting the sheep; the sheep know and heed his voice, and do not need to be beaten. We could not imagine the

Eastern shepherd beating his sheep. While there is a chastening by the Lord for erring children, the Psalmist did not refer to it under this symbol. This saying, "thy rod and thy staff," describes as only a shepherd could how much those words, "Thou art with me," mean—the one symbolizing protection, the other, aid.

And what shall we say of the next words, "They comfort me"? We should see the sheep cuddle near the shepherd to understand this! The shepherd's call, and the answering patter of feet as the sheep hurry to him are fit sounds to be chosen out of the noisy world to show what comfort God gives to those that heed His voice; and those sounds have been heard in Palestine this day as they were the day this shepherd Psalm was written. Mr. Knight says:

"One mid-afternoon in the Anti-Lebanons I saw two shepherds, one having a long staff crooked at the end, and the other a knotted club—the rod. Near me, as this is written, is a heavy-ended stout stick, which I brought home from the hands of a shepherd whom I met one evening on the hillside along the west shore of Lake Galilee. When I pointed to animal h: air clotted on the knot, he explained by sign language how he had used it on some wild creature, meanwhile quieting with his caress the staccato bleating of two stray lambs now snug in his bosom. Beside me also is a stick bent at the end, the staff, the use of which was shown me by the young shepherd before mentioned. He motioned as if hooking a leg and drawing the sheep."

Yes, our shepherd takes care that our enemies shall not harm us. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about— them that fear Him and delivereth them." (Psa. 34:7.) "Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt. Let them be as chaff before the wind and let the angel of the Lord chase them." - Psa. 35:4, 5.

Picture of the Shepherd Continued

Verse 5 is where some have dropped the shepherd figure and put in a banquet, and so lost the fine climax of completeness in the shepherd's care. "Thou preparest a table 'before me in the presence of mine enemies." Here are shown the shepherd's highest skill and heroism. The word here used for table simply means something "spread out." One of the Psalms uses the expression, "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?" (Psa. 78:19.) That is just what He did when He spread out the manna for His people in the wilderness. In olden times the table was often just what you see today among the Arabs, only a piece of skin, or mat, or cloth, spread on the ground. We can see from this what the Psalmist meant when he said: "Let their table become a snare and a trap . . . unto them." (Psa. 69:22, 23; Rom. 11:9.) He was thinking of the way they have their meals in the open country, and wished that his enemies might be caught off guard while eating, and become entangled in the things that were spread before them. This is the kind of table that would be thought of in the shepherd Psalm.

Skill and Heroic Work of the Shepherd

This kind of table is exactly what the shepherd prepares for his sheep: Along with finding water, he must prepare a good and safe feeding-place. He "prepares a table before them" in truth, and it is none the less a table because it is a spreading slope of grassy ground. All the shepherd's skill and often heroic work are called forth in this duty, for it is done many a day in the presence of the sheep's enemies. There are many poisonous plants in the grass, some of which the sheep will eat,

one kind of poisonous grass in particular; and the shepherd must find and avoid them. Then there are snake holes in some regions, and if the shepherd does not drive the snakes away they will bite the noses of the sheep. And around the feeding ground which the shepherd thus prepares, in holes and caves in the hillsides, there may be jackals, wolves, hyenas, and panthers; and the bravery and skill of the shepherd are required to close up these dens with stones or slay the wild beasts. Of none of their achievements do shepherds boast more proudly than in this part of their care of their flocks. We remember how David, on one occasion in the care of his father's sheep, slew a bear, and upon another occasion, a lion. Now we can see the shepherd's meaning in that line, "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." And we can see in it God's care of us in the midst of the world, beset about by enemies.

His Tenderness Over All

"Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." The Psalm has sung of the whole round of the day's wanderings, all the needs of the sheep, all the care of the shepherd. Now it closes with the last scene of the day. In the doorway of the sheepfold the shepherd stands and the "rodding of the sheep" takes place. The shepherd turns his body to let the sheep pass: he is the door, as Jesus said of Himself. With his staff he holds back the sheep while he looks them over, one by one, as they go into the fold. He has the horn filled with olive oil and he has cedar tar, and he anoints a knee bruised on the rocks or a side scratched by thorns. Oil is a great medicine in the East. When Jesus gave the parable of the good Samaritan, He spoke of "pouring in wine and oil" into the wounds of the injured man -- wine for cleansing, and oil for healing. Then there comes one sheep that is not bruised, but is simply worn and exhausted; and the shepherd bathes its face and head with the refreshing olive oil, and he takes the large two handled cup and dips it brimming full from the water he has brought for that purpose, and lets the weary sheep drink. The Shepherd's care is not for the wounded only: it is also for those who are just worn and weary. "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

The day is done, and the sheep are safe within the fold, at rest under the starry sky. Then comes the thought of deepest repose and comfort: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life," as they have through all the wandering of the day just ended. As the song dies away the soul that Jesus has watched and tended breathes this thought of peace before the roaming of the day is forgotten in sleep: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." The song is hushed, and the sheep are at rest, safe in the Good Shepherd's fold. Ah, yes; truly Jesus is the Good Shepherd of the sheep.

The Christian Soldier's Field of Honor

A Symposium

"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." - 2 Tim. 2:3.

THE SERVICE of Christ resembles 'no other so much as that of a soldier. There are few life-callings among men that demand such absolute self-surrender from the recruit as that of the soldier. . . .

In the decision to be a soldier one subordinates all other considerations-those of self-will, family supremacy, and the varied opportunities of the freeman. It is to go under a vow of complete, unquestioning obedience to the orders of superiors. It is to abandon home for the camp, to forego the right of first serving the interests of father and mother, wife and children, business or friends. It means the entire suppression of every selfish interest for the advancement of the supreme cause one has contracted voluntarily to serve, to follow, and for which, if need be, to die. . . .

No man should deceive himself in a matter so plain and serious as the service of Christ. If he doesn't mean to abandon himself to the commands and demands of his Master, he ought to be honest enough not to offer a hypocritical profession and a treacherous or abortive promise of service. The causes of Christ on earth need men who are strong in will, courageous of heart and hardened to self-sacrifice, sufferings and the perils of conflict and death. None other can do the work that is needed to pull down, the strongholds of sin, rout the enemies of righteousness and set forward in hostile territories the standards of the Kingdom of Christ.

It is glorious to serve Christ in honesty and in fulness of fidelity. There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side, in knowing that one's service is toward victory, and that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into -the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the harness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds or death! - THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION, *W. T. Reprints, p. 3162; Manna, March 28.*

Of nothing may we be more sure than this; that, if we cannot sanctify our present lot, we could sanctify no other. Our heaven and our Almighty Father are there or nowhere. The obstructions of that lot are given for us -to heave away by the concur-rent touch of a holy spirit, and labor of strenuous will; its gloom, for us to tint with some celestial light; its mysteries are for our worship; its sorrows, for our trust; its perils, for our **courage; its** temptations for our faith. Soldiers of the cross, it is not for us, but for our Leader and our Lord, to choose the field; it is ours, taking the station which He assigns, to make it the field of truth and honor, though it be the field of death. *J. Martineau.*

Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow soldiers there, in God's, Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving; sacred band. of the Immortals, celestial body-guard of the empire of mankind. To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; Heaven is kind -- as a noble mother; as that Spartan mother, saying while she gave her son his shield, "With it, my son, or upon it." Thou too shalt return home in honor; to thy far-distant Home in honor; doubt it not-if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and deepest death-kingdoms art not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen. Complain not. - T. Carlyle.

The enemy whom the Christian combats is his own heart; for he is required to turn his arms against himself. It is sad to find, in one's own constitution, an opposition to virtues so lovely as those of submission, charity, sweetness, and patience. Groan under this evil, but do not despair. Undertake the conquest of yourself. Carry fire and sword into the most sensitive part of your soul; enter the lists with your darling sin; "mortify your members which are upon earth"; rise above flesh and blood, nature and self love. To say all in one word, determine to "*rule your spirit.*" To this point direct all your attention, all your strength, and all your courage. Say to yourself, This is the post which my General intends I should force; this is the enemy I am to fight with. And be you fully convinced that one of the principal views which God hath in preserving your life, is, that you should become master of *yourself*. Be not dismayed at the greatness of the task, because "*Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world.*" The danger and pain of battle vanish when the eye gets sight of conquest. How inconceivably beautiful is victory then! God grant we may obtain it! - S. Saurin.

As soldiers under our great Captain we have enlisted in no uncertain struggle, except our own faintheartedness or unfaithfulness make it so. We have His constant presence with us, and His inspiring voice may always be heard above the clash and din of battle: "Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom! Be of good cheer, I have overcome! Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Greater is He that is for you than all they that be against you."

Let us then, dearly beloved, have for our watchword the word "Devotion," and let each of us write upon his heart the glorious promise: "The Lord will give strength unto His people." . Let us be faithfully "His people," and let us earnestly and faithfully use the strength promised. To such the Lord says: "My grace is sufficient for thee"-*"Ye shall never fall, for so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."* - C. T. Russell.

"He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break;
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient for each coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away."

Words of Encouragement

Beloved in the Lord:

The following is a brief report of the Italian Convention that was held here in Hartford, Sunday, Sept. 13. I am sending you this report because I feel that this convention was one of the best, both in spirit and attendance, that we have had in the last few years.

Early in the morning brethren began to arrive from all points of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York as far as Buffalo, and it was a joyous gathering under the loving hand of our glorious Lord. The friends of the Union Baptist Church of this city, had graciously given us permission to the full use of their edifice and pool, and there we gathered, confident of the Lord's presence and blessing.

The convention began with a few words of welcome by the Chairman, followed by a song and praise service, which was to us a morning tonic. One of the brethren then gave a discourse on the true meaning of baptism and consecration that was both inspiring and convincing. This was followed by an immersion service in which nine brethren, three brothers and six sisters, symbolized their pledge of consecration to the Lord unto death. Words fail me to describe our feelings at the moment.

Many were both singing and weeping at the same time, but those were tears of joy; the spirit of the Lord seemed to have filled every heart and mind in those few minutes, that our joy and gladness knew no bounds. In my mind I was living my baptism all over again, and there and then I renewed my consecration to my Master and Lord, until the end.

And to think, dear brethren, that only two years ago all of these nine new brethren were in the world and bound by the chains of darkness of the nominal church system! How much more such a thought should inspire us to work mightily in the gathering of the last kernels of wheat.

The afternoon session was held in the Keney Park Grove; there a Song service, a Testimony and: Praise service, a General Discussion service, and a very touching discourse by another brother on the subject of Love, followed one another rapidly: too rapidly for us, and before we knew it, we- were getting ready to return to our homes.

Yes indeed, it was a wonderful convention. The Lord blessed us abundantly- on that occasion. The fellowship with the brethren was refreshing and-inspiring, and when the hour came for us to part, it was a sad occasion indeed, - brightened only by our promise and hope to meet again in the next convention, and if not there, in the following one, or surely in that glorious General Convention in Heaven.

It was decided to hold our next Italian convention, the Lord permitting, in Springfield, Mass., Sunday, December 13, 1936. Brother C. Goyet, 453 Taylor Street, was given charge of the arrangements. May the Lord. help us to make this coming convention still .better than the last one.

The next Young People's Convention will held in Thompsonville, Conn., Sunday, November 29. Miss Evangeline Casiello, 27 Park Avenue, Thompsonville, has charge of arrangements.

With Christian love to you all, I remain,
Yours in the blessed hope.
G. B.-Conn.