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Things Coming to Pass

"When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is at hand." - Luke 21:31.

OF all the momentous events of our time, probably none is so conducive to strengthening the faith of the earnest Christian as is the restoration of Israel to their native land. In some respects this is the paramount "sign" of the proximity of God's Kingdom. The press has recently published some statistics which should be of interest to all. We quote the New York Times:

Progress in Jewish Palestine

"Two decades of progress in the development of contemporary Jewish Palestine are reviewed in a statistical report issued yesterday by the United Palestine Appeal, which is seeking \$4,500,000 for the settlement in the Holy Land of refugees from European countries.

"With particular reference to the last seven years, during which the refugee problem became acute, the report indicates that since 1931, 71 per cent of Jewish emigration from lands in which the Jews faced politico-economic oppression has been absorbed by Palestine.

"About 190,000 persons are represented by this percentage, it is asserted. The peak year, 1935, during which 61,854 immigrants entered, contrasts sharply with 1919, when only 806 were received. The Jewish population of the mandated area at this time is given as 430,000-of which probably one-fourth live in or near Tel Aviv, the world's only all Jewish city, which in 1909 was an expanse of dunes. Immigration fell abruptly, to 30,000 in 1936 and 14,000 last year, largely because of Great Britain's difficulties with the Arab-Jewish question and accompanying quota restrictions.

"Other figures in the report show that the rural Jewish population is more than 100,000; in 1937 Palestine exported 10,750,000 cases of citrus fruits, three-fifths of which came from 40,000 acres of Jewish groves; there were 4,615 factories and workshops in 1935, an increase of about 3,000 since 1921; Jewish investments in plantations, other agriculture, building, industry and transportation amounted to \$165,000,000 last year.

"From 1931 to 1936 exports increased from \$8,000,000 to \$18,000,000, and imports rose from \$30,000,000 to \$70,000,000. Bank deposits last year totaled \$85,000,000 against \$35,000,000 in 1933. In this connection the report says:

"The rapid rise of the import figures is proof of the speedy development of the country. It is offset by a slow but steady rise in export figures. A large part of the imports consist of raw materials and other items required for the establishment of new undertakings. The balance of trade is further redressed if, as is proper, the flow of capital into this immigrant community is also taken into account."

"The report also gives figures on educational development and forecasts that despite the falling off of immigration in 1936 and 1937, due to 'disturbed conditions,' the tide 'will swell again, once the political status of Palestine has been clarified.'"

Comparing the above with history's record of their nineteen centuries of desolations, Jeremiah the Prophet's words come vividly to mind:

"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, t3 do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul. For thus saith the Lord: Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. And fields shall be bought in this land. Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in. the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord." -- Jer, 32:37-44.

Yes, even the persecutions due to the hunters (Jer 16:16) are resulting in the banished ones turning to Palestine. We quote again from the *New York Times* regarding the German Jews particularly:

"Since 1933, 42,500 Jews from Germany settled in Palestine, Louis Lipsky, chairman of the administrative committee of the United Palestine Appeal, reported yesterday.

"In 1936 and 1937, 2,000 trained pioneers were brought to Palestine from Germany and placed in agricultural settlements, and 1,425 others, who were not- fully trained, came to Palestine to receive or complete their agricultural or technical training.

"During the past four years 5,500 German Jews between 20 and 30 years of age were permanently absorbed in the agricultural and industrial life of Palestine. The Youth Aliya, or children's immigration department, brought 2,129 children to Palestine from 1936 to March 31 last.

"Four-fifths of the German Jews to immigrate to Palestine since 1933 were of German nationality and the remainder were mostly of Polish origin. Almost 60 per cent of the new settlers were under 30 years of age and 17 per cent were from 30 to 40 years of age.

"Describing the absorption of German Jews in Palestine, Mr. Lipsky said, 'The proportion of German Jews engaged in agriculture, about one-fourth, is higher than that of other sections of immigrants.'

"During the past five years, apart from the absorption of thousands of Germans in the existing urban and rural centers, several new settlements have been founded by settlers from Germany, mainly with their own capital, and many factories, industries and trading enterprises have been established by their initiative and their capital."

God has promised, "they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." (Isa. 65:21.) Also "it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve." - Isa. 14:3.

Hebrew University in Jerusalem

The following from the same newspaper gives some interesting facts concerning Israel's University built on

Mt. Scopus:

"Thirteen years ago in Jerusalem the Hebrew University was launched. It was financed entirely by voluntary contributions. Its funds at the outset were meager, and its strongest asset was a faith in its future.

"Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, president of the American Friends of the Hebrew University, made public a report yesterday covering the thirteen-year period, in which is cited the development of this institution. Today, he said, the Hebrew University compares favorably with the leading universities of the world.

"The institution has fully justified the effort and the financial aid put into it, Dr. Rosenbach's report declares. It is now reaching a stage where new departments are being added, and the faculty enlarged. The influx of German scholars has helped in this respect.

"Each year shows systematic growth, although funds are still limited,' Dr. Rosenbach said. 'This year, the first buildings of the Medical Center of the university are being erected with the assistance of Hadassah and of the American Jewish Physicians and Dentists Committees; departments in French and Italian are being opened; a chair in English will be set up shortly, and the first chair in the Department of Agriculture is being planned.

"Existing departments have been enlarged, as the result of natural development and to meet the needs of a rapidly growing student body. Significant, too, is the fact that in many branches of its activity the work of the Hebrew University is being followed; by scholars and students throughout the world with profound interest.'

"Palestine offers a 'particularly rich field' for many kinds of research, Dr. Rosenbach reports. He asserts that the Hebrew University has made notable contributions in the last year in the fields of subtropical medicine and of agricultural and natural resources.

"Every phase of Judaism has been studied at the university, the report continues. Some of the most learned Jewish scholars of the present day are on the faculty of the institution, it points out.

"There are now on the faculty of Hebrew University thirty five scholars who were at one time on the staffs of German universities,' Dr. Rosenbach says. 'Many are among the foremost scholars in their fields, and in taking them on, the university has provided them with an opportunity to continue their teaching and research and at the same time has thus raised its own standards.'

"Originally intended as an institution for research and graduate teaching, Hebrew University found the demand for undergraduate teaching so great that it was compelled to include this type of instruction, according to Dr. Rosenbach. Nearly 800 students, forty-eight research students and a faculty of 110 members are at the university now.

"The students come from almost every country of the world. In recent years, Germany and Poland have contributed a large share of the student body."

These evidences of divine favor returning to Israel may well make the Christian's heart rejoice and the more so as it augurs well for all the "groaning creation." "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but *life from the dead?*" - Rom. 11:12, 15.

"Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning,
Long by the Prophets of Israel foretold!
Hail to the millions from bondage returning!
Gentiles and Jews the blest vision behold.

"See, in the desert rich flowers are springing;
Streams ever copious are gliding along;
Loud from the mountain-tops echoes are ringing,
Wastes rise in verdure and mingle in song.

"See the dead risen from land and from ocean;
Praise to Jehovah ascending on high;
Fall'n are the engines of war and commotion;
Shouts of salvation are rending the sky."

- *Contributed*

Our Priceless Heritage in the Bible

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." - Joshua 1:8.

THE greatest of God's priceless gifts to men are the Living and the Written Word. Many are the statements within the pages of the written Word, bearing testimony to the inestimable value of these gifts of His love. In the ages past, as in the present time, God's making known His will and character to men has been a source of incalculable joy and inspiration. It was so when in times past God spoke by the Prophets, but vastly more so now when "in these last days" He has spoken and revealed Himself through His Son. The greatly tried and afflicted patriarch job prized above his daily food, the revelation he had of God. (Job 23:12.) The Psalmist found it "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." (Psa. 19:10.) And to him it was a source of constant joy and of progression toward man's true objective, to glorify God by attaining the ultimate purposes of His will. "Blessed," he sings, "is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night" - and with what blessed results: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psa. 1:1-3.) No wonder that he later wrote, "Thy Word. have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee " - Psa. 119:11.

From the lips of Him who spake as never man could speak, how often the words were heard, "It is written" and expressions of like portent. Blindness He attributed to a lack of knowledge of the Word of God, saying, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." To perplexed and disappointed men He came, "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," and left them saying, "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke 24:25-32.

No marvel then that Apostolic testimony to the importance of the Word itself is in similar tone. We cannot wonder at Paul urging: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"; nor are we surprised to find him making special note of the qualifications of Timothy for efficient service in the Church-"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." (Col. 3:16 2 Tim. 3:15.) And thus it 'is that from the pages of this Book of books, adapted to the needs of all who love its unfoldings, there comes so much of "comfort of the Scriptures," so much that is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16.) Recognizing it then in its priceless worth, and treasuring it as "more to be desired than gold," we can join heartily in the expressions of the poet:

*"Blessed Bible, precious Word!
Boon most sacred from the Lord:
Glory to His name be given,
For this choicest gift from heav'n.*

*"'Tis a mine, aye, deeper too,
Than can mortal ever go;
Search we may for many years,
Still some new rich gem appears."*

To think of but a few of the influences and characteristics of that "precious Word": Human schemes and achievements astound a generation or two, then pass into the realm of the obsolete, relics of primitive stages in the onward course of progress. The classics in human literature are generally limited to the confines of a certain language. Shakespeare spoke to the race that speaks his tongue, and how unintelligible his greatest works are to numberless other tongues and races. The Bible speaks as clearly, as potently, as comforting and illuminating to 'all "kindreds and nations and tongues." Its language is universally complete.

"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. But the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. 1:24, 25.) How illuminating is that Word! "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." (Psa. 19:7.) How manifestly it came from the One who in judgment is "no respecter of persons," for "the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12.) To a race sold under sin, helpless to break the chains of bondage, how assuring the word spoken by the Son: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) To sinners saved by grace, how assuring of . ultimate sanctification is the Savior's prayer "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth." (John 17:17.) To "the called according to

His purpose" how comforting the words: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:4.) Well indeed has Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." - Matt. 4:4.

The Bible Wounded in the House of its Friends

That the great Adversary of God and man should be the enemy of a Book in which the character of God and His benevolent purposes for man are set forth, is no surprise. We marvel not that "the god of this world bath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4.) But to know that in the house of its professed friends that Word has suffered greatly because of misrepresentation is both sad and surprising. No wonder some hungry, seeking soul poured out his prayer, and in that prayer caught up the cry of many bewildered seekers after God, seekers perplexed by "so many creeds, so many ways that wind and lead"

"We plead, O God! for some new ray
Of light for guidance on our way;

* * *

This restless mind, with bolder sway,
Rejects the dogmas of the day
Taught by jarring sects and schools,
To fetter reason with their rules.
We seek to know Thee as Thou art --
Our place with Thee -- and then the part
We play in this stupendous plan,
Creator Infinite, and man."

It has been said that "Every Christian is either a Bible or libel." . Perhaps this was the very same thought in the mind of the Apostle that caused him to so urge the brethren to "adorn the doctrine

of God our Savior in all things." (Tit. 2:10.) And perhaps it was the same thing which led him to admonish Timothy to be "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12.) What other reason did he have when reminding other brethren that they should remember that as "the epistle of Christ" they were being known and read of all men? Indeed it was the failure of some professing Christians to thus adorn the Gospel of Christ by their daily lives that caused him in tears to write: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." As we live and move before any who are praying for "some new ray of light for guidance on our way," are we a libel or a Bible? Are we fulfilling the glorious purposes of our calling, and being as Jesus said we should be, "the light of the world"? Are we really shining as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and known as such by those who know us, or are 'we causing others to look beyond us and say, "**We seek to know Thee as Thou art**"? Are we revealing to others within the circle of believers, and to such as are without, that we "have been with Jesus and learned of Him"?

That Paul was not alone in his tears over the Bible's misrepresentation in the house of its friends, is well attested by the laments of many others. Dean Farrar will be remembered by many as an outstanding character of some years ago, and some will remember his fearless exposure of the unscriptural teaching of eternal torment for the majority of our race. From his pen we cull the following pertinent quotations:

"It is one of our trials that the Bible, with its tender and hallowed bearing upon all that is sweet and noble in our lives -- with its words so stately and full of wonder, and full of music, like the voice of an Archangel -- should have been made in these days the wrangling-ground for sectarian differences; but if with our whole hearts we are striving to live according to its spirit, we need fear but little that we shall trip in a right pronunciation of the shibboleths of its letter. Surely it is deplorable that, because of mere questions which after all are but questions of doubtful authorship, of historical accuracy, or verbal criticism, having for the most part little or no bearing on the spiritual or moral life, party should be denouncing party, and Christian excommunicating Christian, and so many hands tearing in anger the seamless robe of Christ. It is, alas, the due punishment for our lack of charity, that while we have been so eager about such controversies, the love of many should wax cold."

The Bible Alone Makes Wise Unto Salvation

"The Bible teaches us its best lessons when we search its pages as wise- and humble learners; when we judge of it by the truth, which we learn from it, and not by the prejudices and prepossessions which we bring to it..... Let me entreat you not to confuse mere questions of exegetical or scientific learning with the deep, awful, and imperishable lessons which the Bible, and the Bible only, can bring home to your souls. In whatever way those questions may be decided, the infinite inner sacredness of God's Word remains inviolate forever. There may be shifting clouds about it, but through them break beams of eternal radiance; there may be mingled voices, but clear and loud among them all are- heard the utterances of eternal wisdom. Other books may make you learned or eloquent or subtle; this Book alone can make you wise unto salvation. Other books may fascinate the intellect; by this alone can you cleanse the heart. In other literature may trickle here and there some shallow streams from the 'unemptiable Fountain of wisdom' -- and even these, alas! turbid too often with human passions, fretted with human obstacles, and choked at last in morass or sand -- but in this Book, majestic and fathomless, flows the river of the water of life itself, proceeding from the throne of God, and of the Lamb."

From the "Divine Plan of the Ages" we quote in similar strain from Chapter III:

"The Bible is the torch of civilization and liberty. Its influence for good in society has been recognized by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings. The grand old Book is unintentionally but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf; and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through the traditions of their fathers. Would that such would awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their weapons! . . . Other writings upon religion and the various sciences have done good and have ennobled and blessed mankind, to some extent; but all other books combined have failed to bring the joy, peace and blessing to the groaning creation that the Bible has brought to both the rich and the poor, to the learned and the unlearned. The Bible is not a hook to be read merely: it is a book to be studied with care and thought; for God's **thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and His ways** than our **ways**. And if we would comprehend the plan and thoughts of the infinite God, we must bend all our energies to that important work. The richest treasures of truth do not always lie on the surface."

To this we all agree as being applicable to Christian people in general. Are we as willing to test ourselves by the same rule? Honesty demands that we shall so examine ourselves.

God's Book

The Bible is not only the special book of God because inspired by Him; it is His book in the sense that he has the sole right and ownership of it. And because it is God's property, and intended by Him to be the book of the common people, it has never been recognized by Him as being the peculiar possession of a clergy class. And yet; no blacker pages in human history can be found than those recording the attempts made from time to time to make the Word of God to men the exclusive right of the few. For twelve hundred years it was kept "clothed in sackcloth," the sackcloth of dead languages. When it was brought out of that state and given to the people, only God can fully estimate the cost. Could we with Him number up the years of imprisonment its possession meant to faithful students of its pages in darker clays; could we with Him measure the pains, the sufferings borne on rack and stake, by which the freedom of that Word was secured to us of a happier day, would we ever cease to give thanks to God for its preservation at so great a cost? If all the fires of martyrdom were caused to pass before

our vision-fires John was given to see in his Patmos vision of the "souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, grid for the testimony which they held," would we ever be found fighting against liberty of conscience in the study of an open Bible? Surely not! Lest we forget that the human heart is ever capable of reacting to influences which make wrong to appear right, and that wrong be thought "doing God service," let us take but one leaf from the pages on pages of the blackest record of man's inhumanity to man-his religious intolerance

"Besides the common forms of persecution and death, such as racking, burning, drowning, stabbing, starving and shooting with arrows and guns, fiendish hearts meditated how the most delicate and sensitive parts of the body, capable of the most excruciating pain, could be affected; molten lead was poured into the ears; tongues were cut out and lead poured into the mouths; wheels were arranged with knife blades attached so that the victim could be slowly chopped to pieces; claws and pincers were made red hot and used upon sensitive parts of the body; eyes were gouged out; finger nails were pulled off with red hot irons; holes, by which the victim was tied up, were bored through the heels; some were forced to jump from eminences onto long spikes fixed below,

where, quivering with pain, they slowly died. The mouths of some were filled with gunpowder, which, when fired, blew their heads to pieces; others were hammered to pieces on anvils; others, attached to bellows, had air pumped into them until they burst; others were choked to death with mangled pieces of their own bodies; others with urine, excrement, etc., etc.

"Some of these fiendish atrocities would be quite beyond belief were they not well authenticated. They serve to show to what awful depravity the human heart can descend; and how blind to right and every good instinct, men can become under the influence of **false, counterfeit religion.**"

Ah, present day Christian, say not your Bible cost only a few dollars or pence. Its cost is written in the anguish, the horror, the inhuman and Satanic awfulness inflicted on these suffering souls who purchased for you the liberty to read its pages unmolested and unafraid.

And again, "lest we forget," and because we live in a different day, and far removed from such inhuman treatment as the historian records of the past we then conclude that there is little danger either of our being called upon to thus suffer "for the Word of God," or of our being among those blinded into being the ones to inflict suffering on other faithful witnesses, let us remember that the "souls under the altar" are still being told that "they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, should be killed as they were." In God's way of looking at such things it matters not what the mode of being "killed" may be. Thus until the last members of the Church have finished their appointed time, there lies within the bounds of possibility for each one of us, a state of mind by which the afflicted or the afflictors may be our role, as pertaining to this altar picture.

Shall we not then prize the liberty we enjoy today. Shall we not rejoice in the possession of a Book which is not of man, but God's own revelation, inspired by His Spirit, and taught to the humblest of His children by that same Spirit? Shall we not remember that it is written "They shall all be taught of God," and the one great fundamental lesson He teaches is that "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life," and "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Shall we not remember that as great truths are dearly bought, so has the liberty we enjoy been purchased at tremendous cost, and that it should be very zealously guarded against all expedients calculated to discourage its right and proper enjoyment? Shall we not all make it our special concern to see that we are ourselves closely following the Living Word, and through Him being truly sanctified by the written Word? And will it not be our greatest concern to assist others to know our Jesus and the power of His Spirit in their life also? Surely so.

Then "With each individual Christian standing fast in the liberty wherewith he was made free by the Lord (Gal. 5:1; John 8:32), and each individual Christian united in loyalty to the Lord and to His Word, very quickly the original unity which the Scriptures inculcated would be discerned and all true children of God, all members of the New Creation, would find themselves drawn to each other member similarly free, and bound each to the other by the cords of love far more strongly than are men bound in earthly systems and societies. 'The love of Christ constraineth us' [holds us together, Young's Concordance]."- 'Blessed Bible, precious Word may we ever seek to find --

"Its richness, sweetness, power and depth,

Its holiness discern:

Its joyful news of saving grace

By blest experience learn.

"Thus may Thy Word be dearer still,

And studied more each day:

And as it richly dwells within,

Thyself in it display."

- Contributed.

Tests that Make Manifest

"Rome, while a deceiver in most matters, has been very open and frank in this claim [to be the sole interpreter of the Scriptures]. No one of the Lord's people need to be deceived by her in this. It should be kept in mind, however, that it is quite possible for one to judge and condemn the followers of Rome in this particular, and yet partake, unconsciously perhaps, of the very evils he is condemning, and to which he is in bondage. She is called 'the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,' and it is said that by her 'sorceries were all nations deceived,' and that she caused all that dwelt upon the earth to 'worship him [the Papal beast], whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb.' It is possible for the Lord's people to be deceived for a time and to receive and, adopt some of Rome's unscriptural principles and practices and to follow them, and yet reject the full fruitage and development of them, as exhibited in the highest degree in Rome; indeed, the features of Romanism in this particular are very often found in the guise of Protestantism. 'There is heard sometimes the voice of the woman who calls herself a prophetess, whether the woman's name be Jezebel or not.' In modified forms these teachings, these 'claims of Rome, may be endorsed unconsciously by the Lord's people. Wherever the teaching of a church, of a religious organization, or of men (except it be the twelve Apostles) is in any measure maintained as authoritative (although it be over a body of Christians who claim to have no creed but the Bible, and to be guided by it), even here the voice of the woman is heard, even though the woman's name be certainly not Jezebel.

"The infallible Word, the Scriptures, and these alone, are to constitute the test that must settle every matter for the 'free-indeed' Christian. Any 'imposed creed actually takes away any appeal to Scripture, becoming itself the only permissible appeal. If there be error in the creed, it will have to be maintained as carefully as the truth in it. If there be defect in the creed, the Scripture cannot be allowed even to supplement it. It [[the Scriptures] is, in short, completely displaced from its rightful supremacy over men. The conscience is not allowed to be before God, and the most godly are just those who will be forced most into opposition against the human rule, thus substituted for the divine.' . . .

"If we look back over history, from the great Reformation onward, we will discover that every revival of a study of God's Word, every earnest effort at evangelizing, every effort put forth to draw and unite true Christians in the bonds of 'brotherly love,' has, when persevered in, had the effect of breaking down the barriers of sectarianism and of liberating the people -of God; but, alas, history and experience show that the imitation class, the tare element, is always found wherever there are true wheat, and out of such bold moves for 'Christian liberty and freedom, there almost invariably develops a new sect, which becomes dominated by the same partisan spirit of bondage, resulting again in the taking away of personal liberties in Christ. These movements have originated generally outside of denominationalism. The most important movement of this kind since the great Reformation, has occurred in this present, the Laodicean period, but, like all the other movements of the past, it has ended in sectarianism; and, having accomplished its purpose, the usual testings and siftings have come. These tests are designed of the Lord, at least in one particular, to make manifest those who possess the Philadelphian spirit of brotherly love and loyalty to Christ and His Word." - R. E. STREETER, *Rev. Vol. 1, pp. 166, 167, 215,216.*

"Jesus Died and Paid It All"

THE ransom of our race by our Savior is a matter of deep interest to the Lord's people, and one which apparently is very difficult to understand clearly. We view the subject from different standpoints. All see the same thing, but all do not see the details.

God might have told us that He had arranged a way by which justice and the dignity of His Court of the universe could be upheld and man nevertheless be released from the sentence of death imposed upon him six thousand years ago. There was no need of His telling us anything about the ransom. It would have been sufficient for us that God should have told us that He had attended to the matter properly. But instead, God reasons with us in the Scriptures, and there explains the process of His government by which He could be just and yet be the justifier, of sinners. This process which God had all to do with and man had nothing to do with is Scripturally styled the Ransom -- the giving of the perfect life of, Jesus to be the full, complete offset for the forfeited life of Adam, the father of our race.

From this viewpoint, if one went no further into the matter, one might say, "Jesus has died and the world has been ransomed" -- just as the Scriptures speak of Jesus, even while He was in the flesh, as being the Messiah, the King of glory. Even when He was a babe the angels sang, "Unto you is born this day in the city, of David, a Savior, who is Christ [Messiah] the Lord." Their statements included not only the babe and what had already been accomplished in His birth, but all the great work which He would do in the future. As a matter of fact, the babe was merely called a Savior because He would in the future save His people from their sins. The babe was merely called the Anointed Messiah -- because it was foreseen of God that He would make a consecration at Jordan, be begotten and anointed of the Holy Spirit, finish His work of sacrifice and be exalted to Heavenly glory, not only, during this Age, for the Church which is His Body; but also for the willing and obedient of the world of mankind during the Millennium. Thus we see that the babe was not the Savior except in the prophetic sense that He was to be the Savior. He was not King except in the sense that He was born and came into the world to that end. He was not the Deliverer then, nor has He even yet delivered all His Church; whereas, after the deliverance of the Church, comes the deliverance of the world from the reign of sin and death.

Similarly the word ransom may be, and often is, used by us all in a prophetic sense-as including the entire work of Redemption down to the very end of the Millennial Age; as we read, "I will ransom [deliver by a ransom] them from the grave." - Hosea 13:14.

Legal Phase of Ransoming Work

But as we come close to these various questions and analyze them, we see new beauties, new divisions of matters, which at first seem to be indivisible. We see, for instance, that the first step toward ransoming the world was taken when the Logos left the glory which He had with the Father and humbled Himself to become the Man Jesus. The first feature in the ransoming work was our Master's consecration of Himself at Jordan, followed by His life of devotion even unto death. The completion of His sacrifice was the completion of the ransom price, but it was not the completion of the ransom work. Indeed, the ransom-work could not even begin until the ransom price had been provided -- not paid.

We sometimes have spoken of Jesus as having paid the ransom when He died, but such expression was not accurate. The price of obedience to the Father's will was death, and our Lord's death constitutes the price. In one sense Jesus paid it when He surrendered His life; but in another

and more accurate sense, He did not **pay** it, but merely placed it in the hands of the Father as the price to be appropriated, or made applicable later.

The ransom price has been in the hands of divine Justice -- in the Father's hands -- ever since Jesus died, but only as a deposit, because the time had not come for it to be **paid over** officially. If the divine Plan had been for Jesus to take possession of the world and to set up His Kingdom at Pentecost, then it would have been proper for Him to have paid over to the Father the ransom price fully and completely -- appropriating it as the offset to Father Adam's sin and sentence on behalf of all his race. But had that price been formally paid over, the proper and logical thing would have been for the Father to put the whole world immediately into the hands of Jesus, and for the Millennial reign to begin.

Ransom Price Deposited with Divine Justice

There was, however, another feature to the divine Plan: God did not wish to turn over the Kingdom to Jesus until the great Seventh Day, the Millennium. He did wish that during the intervening more than eighteen centuries a Church class should be called out from amongst the world, to be the Bride and Joint-heir of His Son in the Kingdom. Hence the ransom price for the sins of the whole world was merely left unappropriated, while Jesus dealt with the Church.

And since the Father's Plan for the Church was that they should sacrifice or surrender their earthly interests and receive, instead, heavenly interests and the divine nature, therefore it was not necessary to give the Church restitution -- the thing which the ransom price will secure for the world of mankind. Hence, instead of giving the Church a direct share in the ransom price, which would mean restitution, the Lord's provision for them is different; namely, an **imputation of merit** covering their blemishes, so that they might present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

All, therefore, that Jesus has done with the ransom price is to **impute** a share of that price as covering the shortcomings of those who desire to become His disciples and joint-heirs. He has not appropriated it to them actually, as in restitution, but by imputation -- justifying them from all sin, and thus permitting them to be accepted of the Father as members of the house of sons, by the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

And how beautiful is the thought that, when shortly our Lord will pay over the ransom price for the, sins of the whole world, and have the world immediately turned over to Him for restitution work, the Church will be with Him in glory sharing His honor and His Throne, as now they share in His sufferings and His ignominy!

Practical Phase of Ransoming Work

When the ransom price shall then have been given to justice in exchange for the world of mankind, and when the purchased world of mankind shall have been turned over to the Purchaser,, the legal phase of the ransoming work of Jesus and the satisfaction of Justice in the release of mankind from the penalty of death will be complete. Then, however, another part of the ransoming will begin and will operate; namely, the giving of the benefits of the ransom to Adam and his family. This phase of the ransom-work will continue for the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, bringing restitution to man and his earthly home -- to all the willing and obedient of Adam's race -- the unwilling being destroyed in the Second Death.

Then the Ransomer will have completed His work of ransoming the human family in its two phases: First, its legal phase, the satisfaction of divine justice by the giving of a life for a life; second, its practical phase, the restoring or recovering or delivering of the redeemed from the bondage of sin and death to the liberty of the sons of God. - Romans 8:21. - *Watch Tower, 1916.*

The Father of the Faithful

"Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian whose name was Hagar." - Gen. 16:1.

ALWAYS there are Egyptians at hand to relieve the Christian of the necessity of relying on God's promise. To the flesh the worldly method always seems a quicker, a surer, an easier way of getting the blessing. And who is there that cannot sympathize with Abram as the dark shadow of unbelief casts again its length across his spirit, enticing him for a time from the path of simple, undoubting confidence in his God. The usual impatience of half belief is in Sarah's: "Behold the Lord hath restrained me from bearing." Instead of succumbing to the doubting, Abram should have waited patiently for the Lord to fulfil His own promise in His own way, treating Sarah's doubting as it deserved; but nothing is more unnatural to nature than waiting. The promise must take full control of one's mind, or nature will be busily engaged securing in its own time and way the end it impatiently seeks. Any resource, any expedient to the flesh is better than waiting. A thing far beyond mere believing, is quiet waiting for our God. An illustration of seeking our own way of fulfilment is hardly necessary; the experience is too familiar to most Christians. But should an illustration be needed, promise a child some treasure that has been long hoped for; require a period of waiting; and you will probably soon see it busy building some useless contrivance faintly resembling the treasure you have promised. No wonder we smile so indulgently -- we see ourselves mirrored in the child. It is our own fault in duplication; and we would treat it gently.

The Present Worth of God's Promise

The fifteenth chapter of Genesis shows the Abram of faith. A night and a day of vigil with his God was not too great a test of that faith; but the assurance of the vision given there was apparently intended to prepare Abram for many months, yea even years of waiting until the promise which the vision had renewed and ratified should begin its fulfilment. Chapter 16 reveals that there is need of further growth in patient waiting before he can be a proper example for those who are exhorted to be "followers of them who through **faith** and **patience** inherit the promises."

"There is such a thing, in the commercial world, as 'the present worth' of a bill or promissory note; for if men are called upon to wait for their money, they must be paid for waiting. Now, in faith's world there is such a thing as the **present** worth of God's promise; and the scale by which that worth is regulated, is the heart's experimental

knowledge of God; for according to my estimate of God, will be my estimate of His promise; and, moreover, the subdued and patient spirit finds its rich and full reward in waiting upon Him for the accomplishment of all that He has promised."

Ideal State Reached After Long Periods of Waiting

"We none of us know all that is involved when we tear ourselves from the familiar scenes of our Harans to follow God into the lands of separation which lie beyond the river. The separated life cannot be an easy one.. We may dimly guess this as we step out into the untried and unknown; but God graciously veils from our eyes that which would needlessly startle and daunt us; unfolding to us His requirements, only as we are able to bear them." The difficulties of living in the world while maintaining a state of such separation from it that we cannot be said to be of it, are quite apparent, and would seem to be almost insurmountable; but to live in the flesh, to continue to make use of all its powers, and remain entirely separate from it, is indeed a task to be accomplished only by those who are "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power."

Not instantly, but by means of many stages of advancement attended with long periods of waiting, is this ideal state reached, when we can humbly say with the Apostle without -reservations, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20.) To boast of this death of self is to -proclaim, in that very assertion, our impotence, our blindness to our true condition. Nothing can more surely presage our downfall than a smug indifference to this state of living **after** the flesh, if not actually, fully up to its desires. It is a form of strategy that every general recognizes as among the most successful-to convince the one he would attack, that his forces have been far removed into another quarter. Even better is the ruse of the flesh when it convinces the new creature inhabiting it that it is permanently dead. The unsuspecting new creature is convinced that henceforth he has nothing to fear, and consequently the infinitesimal evidences of life that a watching and praying new creature would have discovered, pass unnoticed.

Consecration is not willingness to be **reckoned** dead, but it is the actual putting to death of the desires of the flesh. The consecration honestly made, and God having accepted it, He undertakes the twofold work of revealing the hideousness of the insidious self-life, and of nailing it to the cross -- a bitter and painful death. The first reaction is one of extreme horror as one realizes the baseness of the old self; and the cry for forgiveness and mercy is often on his lips. While this condition lasts, the walk is one of comparative safety and of swift progress, for the Lord is nigh unto those of a "broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." But "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," thus keeping us continually reminded of the hopelessness of our condition except as His grace shall be with us. Daily then there should be the prayer that we may not be permitted to forget either our need or His grace.

The Slow and Painful Process to Completeness

There is in the incident in the life of Abram which we are examining, a startling demonstration of the tenacity with which the self-life of Abram still survived. By this time we might have suspected that it would have been extinguished, and an unyielding faith have 'been established. But "character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant; at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent watering with the showers of His grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience; and then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness.

And, little by little as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty, and grace, until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected -- through suffering."

Abram was so sure that God would give him the land, that he would not even take from the king of Sodom so much as a shoe-latchet. Though eagerly anticipating the time when he would receive the promise, no sign of disappointment was shown when instead he was given the assurance, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." How strange that one who has this much of faith was not prompt to reject any suggestion that he seek by the ways of the flesh to secure for himself the promised seed! Apparently the reasoning of expediency fitted well with his own thoughts. But let us not, showing a similar impatience, demand immediate perfection in Abram. As God works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure, so He was working in Abram. We are now having set before us in the record of Genesis, not the perfected Abram, but the process, slow and painful, by which he was brought to God -- satisfying completeness. Until that is reached, mistrust mars each step; and some excuse fully satisfactory to the flesh is always ready at hand to justify, substituting self-effort for the patient waiting of faith. Witness the satisfaction of Saul as he brought his bleating sheep and lowing cattle to the altar. How confident he was of the acceptance of his sacrifice, yea, even proud "I forced myself, and offered a burnt offering." Note the Saul of the New Testament, walking the way of the flesh but verily thinking he was doing God service.

It would seem that Sarah had not had Abram's advantage of numerous contacts with Jehovah, and there is therefore still more reason to excuse the reasonings of her flesh, especially as God had never said the child was to 'be hers. Why not adopt the laxer morals of their neighbors? All these women counted as their own all children born to their 'husbands in their home. And then she recalled how she had been taken into the house of Pharaoh, and how "he dealt well with Abram for her sake-so that he came to have flocks and herds and he-asses, and men-servants and maid-servants." (Gen. 12:16 - Rotherham.) Had not God sanctioned this way of their neighbors? From a reading of the account one might conclude that the thought was no more than offered to Sarah's mind than she accepted it. It is more probable however that there was first a heroic struggle before her lord could be resigned to another. Such a proposal bluntly made to her would have been promptly rejected; but, as with our testings, it no doubt came to her subtly. She had become accustomed to Hagar in the home, and perhaps now no longer thought of her as having been brought out of Egypt, but as one of her own kindred. How like to many of our experiences! How many of our temptations could have been avoided if the spirit of consecration had always guided our use of the things with which the world has surrounded us!

Importance of Weighing Suggestions Before Divine Counsel

Such a well-laid plot surely suggests Satan as the instigator. It was most important to his purposes that this scheme should appeal first to the mind of Sarah. The suggestion coming to Abram from any other source would surely have had prompt rejection. But now he might even convince himself that the whole matter was evidently "from the Lord." The way of the flesh is easy when one in following it can say, "God be glorified." But it is self that lives again whenever reason usurps revelation's rightful place.

Temptation which appeals to our nature or to "unbelief" is always hard to resist. But the temptation is still more severe when it comes through some one whom we love and in whom we have confidence-one who like Sarah shares our hopes and shows a self-sacrificing attitude-a

willingness to sacrifice earthly prospects that a blessing God 'has promised might be obtained. How exceedingly careful we should be in taking suggestions

of any, that they be weighed before divine counsel, lest we be following the tendencies of our self-life. "If the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare." - Deut. 13:6-8.

Promptly, and as usual, the outcome showed the fallacy of human reasoning. The fleshly mind can deal very convincingly with the past or the present, but how miserably it fails when planning the future! If Abraham had said, Nature has failed us, but God never can-how different the atmosphere of that home would have been, how much more of the Holy Spirit their future would have evidenced! Instead of the flowers of purity, peace, and serenity, there immediately sprang up a crop .of nettles-hatred, contempt, intolerance-Sarah even blaming her own faults on Abram. How despicable it all must have looked to her in later years. With what amazement she must have recalled her upbraiding of her faithful husband: "My wrong be upon thee: the Lord judge between me and thee." "How true this is to human nature! We take one false step, unsanctioned by God and when we begin to discover our mistake, we give way to outbursts of wounded pride. But instead of chiding ourselves, we turn upon others, whom we may have instigated to take the wrong course. and we bitterly reproach them for wrongs of which they at most were only instruments, whilst we were the final cause."

Far-Reaching Results of Evil

Far beyond the third and fourth generation have gone the evil results of Sarah's planning. There is in process of fulfilment in Palestine today the prophecy to Hagar regarding her son and his descendants: "He shall be as a wild ass among men; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against 'him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren," always at hand to harass them until the lesson of full obedience to God is learned.

"And when Hagar [the untutored slave girl] saw that she had conceived, -her mistress was despised in her eyes. And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee. But Abram [for the sake of peace in the home] said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when [not slow to act with his consent] Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face," seeking out the caravan routes to her native land.

Simply, but with what pathos, the narrative continues. The Hagar who only a short time before had such high hopes for herself and her son, the heir of all Abram's wealth, now waiting in despair in a wilderness with only a trickle of water to comfort her dreary hours as she scanned the horizon for the cloud of dust that would tell her of an approaching caravan that would guide her back to Egypt. But God had other use for that wild man of the desert.

That Which is Sown Must be Reaped

An expression to be often repeated throughout the inspired Word for the first time appears here in the narrative "The angel of the Lord" found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness. There was a work for Hagar and her son yet to do. It was in God's plan to rid Abram's home of her, but Abram and Sarah must learn first that God's time, and His alone, is the right time. "The bond woman cannot be gotten rid of by hard treatment. When we make mistakes, and find ourselves called upon to encounter the results thereof, we cannot counteract those results by carrying ourselves with a high hand. We frequently try this method, but we are sure to make matters worse thereby. If we have done wrong, we should humble ourselves and confess the wrong, and wait on God for deliverance. But there was nothing like this manifested in Sarah's case. Quite the reverse, There is no sense of having done wrong; and, so far from waiting on God for deliverance, she seeks to deliver herself in her own way. However, it will always be found that every effort which we make to rectify our errors, previous to the full confession thereof, only tends to render our path more difficult. Thus Hagar had to return, and give birth to her son, which son proved to be not the child of promise at all, but a very great trial to Abraham and his house." For Hagar God's will was, "Return, and submit." For Abram and Sarah it was, "Wait on Me, saith the Lord."

There is much of value in all this for the Christian: "We may learn that when, through the unbelief of our hearts, we make mistakes, it is not all in a moment, nor yet by our own devices, we can remedy them. Things must take their course. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.' This is an unalterable principle, meeting us again and again on the page of inspiration, and also on the page of our personal history. Grace forgives the sin and restores the soul, but that which is sown must be reaped. Abraham and Sarah had to endure the presence of the bondwoman and her son for a number of years, and then get rid of them in God's way. There is a peculiar blessedness in leaving ourselves in God's hands. Had Abraham and Sarah done so, on the present occasion, they would never have been troubled with the presence of the bondwoman and her son; but, having made themselves debtors to nature, they had to endure the consequences. But, alas! we are often like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, when it would be our exceeding comfort to behave and quiet ourselves as a child that is weaned of his mother. No two figures can be more opposite than a stubborn bullock and a weaned child. The former represents a person senselessly struggling, under the yoke of circumstances, and rendering his yoke all the more galling by his efforts to get rid of it; the latter represents one meekly bowing his head to everything, and rendering his portion all the sweeter by entire subjection of spirit . . .

"We are authorized to look at Hagar and her son as figures of the covenant of works, and all who are thereby brought into bondage. (See Gal. 4:22-25.) 'The flesh' is, in this important passage, contrasted with 'Promise'; and thus we not only get the divine idea as to what the term 'flesh' implies, but also as to Abraham's effort to obtain the seed by means of Hagar, instead of resting in God's 'promise.' The two covenants are allegorized by Hagar and Sarah, and are diametrically opposite the one to the other. The one gendering to bondage, inasmuch as it raised the question as to man's competency 'to do' and 'not to do,' and made life entirely dependent upon that competency. 'The man that doeth these things shall live in them.' This was the Hagar covenant. But the Sarah covenant reveals God as the God of promise, which promise is entirely independent of man, and founded upon God's willingness and ability to fulfil it. . . It needs no effort of nature to reach the accomplishment of a divine promise. Here was precisely where Abraham and Sarah failed. They made an effort of nature to reach a certain end, which end was absolutely secured by

a promise of God. This is the grand mistake of unbelief. By its restless activity, it raises a hazy *mist* around the soul, which hinders the 'beams of the divine glory from reaching it. 'He could there do no mighty works, because of their unbelief.' One great characteristic virtue of faith is, that it ever leaves, the platform clear for God to show Himself; and truly, when He shows Himself, man, must take the place of a happy worshiper."

Gentleness

THY gentleness hath made me great." said David, or, "With' Thy meekness Thou hast multiplied *me*. (Psa. 18:25.) "Thy gentleness" --n again it is all of God. It was something entirely apart from himself which had made the king great. " Thou hast also given me the shield of salvation: and Thy right hand. hath holden me up." We cannot wonder over, the Psalmist's greatness, for the Almighty was his *Counselor* and promoting his cause.

Jehovah never failed in manifestations of love and gentleness in His dealings with His typical people-wandering and rebellious Israel-forever disobeying and repenting; forever falling short of the ideals set before them by the Prophets whom God raised up to lead and teach them; and always living far beneath the privileges which they might have enjoyed under the gracious provisions of so great a theocracy.

Times without number God had rescued them from most desperate situations, given them glorious victories over their enemies and brought them safely into places, of rest and quietness -- "beside still waters." Like as a Father the Lord *luau* pitied Israel and because Israel feared Him and was striving in her exceedingly human way- to obey Him, God was gentle, compassionate, merciful. Long whiles He bore with her 'backslidings, not appearing to mark every failure, but encouraging the feeble attempts which she made to please Him. Every chastisement was, given because lie loved His people with divine and fatherly love. He felt every stroke of the rod His hand applied, and in pity He removed their afflictions as *soon* as they had learned in some measure the lessons lie sought to inculcate.

When we understand something of the gentleness of God toward Israel, it should not be difficult for His children of the New Creation, begotten of the Spirit, to appreciate in a measure the gentleness and compassion of the Father toward us. "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust." He knows every device or imagination which we frame' or form in our hearts. He knows every trait of our depraved human nature as *well*. And does He not pity our frailty. Had He not dealt with us according to His great mercy instead of His justice, we should utter) have perished long ago. But we need not fear of receiving anything at His hands but the utmost kindness and compassion while *we* strive in sincerity to obey His precepts and commandments.

"Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life., therefore my lips shall praise Thee, sang the poet of Israel (Psa. 63:3); and today the children of the king need not go; mourning all their days because of their shortcomings and failures. They have abundant occasion for rejoicing because of 'the manifold goodness of the Lord who is unwilling that any should perish. Notwithstanding the evils and imperfections which He sees in His children. and. which He cannot excuse or lightly pass over, He deals with them in *wisdom* and gentleness, inviting them to come to the mercy seat with their sin and assuring them of abundant pardon,. The same loving One who traveled in weariness up and down the Galilean hills *is* still calling in words of unutterable sweetness, "Come." He still feeds His flock "*like* a shepherd and gathers the lambs with His arm and carries

them in His bosom." We know His love and gentleness will cover the infinite stretches of eternity and our needs will be forever met.

But the Christian must come face to face with these divinely inspired words: "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk, even as He walked." **"So shall ye be My disciples."** (1 John 2:6; John 15:8.) The fruit of God's own gentleness must be borne in our lives until it makes us great, even as it refined and exalted the character of David the king. It must grow and develop in its own place and way else the divinely ordered cluster will not be complete. The arrangement must not be disturbed. The symmetry must not be destroyed or lacking, else the Husbandman will grieve because of our heedlessness.

How beautiful is this fruit! How delicate! How fragrant!, Strange indeed that any who have been united to the Vine and named the name of Christ should have so neglected that heart culture which is necessary to bring forth the fruit of gentleness! No other fruit of the Spirit should be more in evidence -- the gentle touch, the quiet tone, the placid brow the tender ministrations of loving hands and hearts.

Recall once more the tenderness of King David as he fled before his wicked son Absalom who, with an army of insurrectionists was following his father, intent upon his destruction. David had numbered the people who had passed over, Jordan with him and divided them into three companies, each company under a captain. With unspeakable sadness the king said "I will surely go forth with you myself -- also" That broken father heart could not endure the thought of his men engaging in battle against his beloved son. He knew their hearts and that the young man's life would certainly be cut off there in the country of dense wood. He felt that he must direct the engagement personally, doubtless his plan being to capture Absalom alive, or allow him to escape, rather than to permit his life to be taken.

But the people with David would not allow him to go.. "And the king stood by the gate side" of Mahanaim and commanded, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard." - 2 Sam. 18:1-6.

Oh, the pathos, the heartache, the humiliation, the tenderness of the father's words -- "Deal gently for my sake with the young man"! How like our heavenly Father! In gentleness and mercy He has borne with His rebellious servants and His children. How often they have defied His government, ignored His precepts, wasted His munificence and wounded His loves And yet -- listen! "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

Dear, tired hearts of today, can you not be gentle with the erring ones who have fallen upon evil times? Let your heart be humbled before God in prayer for them and plead that "He deal gently with them," and draw them back to Himself for the sake of the One who died for them. Cover them with the blood and leave them in His care. Be firm, be long-suffering, be gentle, be patient. Others, perhaps, may say that you are but being tactful; but in the Book it is called "loving-kindness."

"Now I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, wrote Paul. "Let your gentleness be known unto all men." (2 Cor. 10:1; Phil. 4:5; Diaglott.) Why was this; so necessary? "The Lord is near," he said. Truly it is a time for gathering, the ripe fruit. Everywhere, eve, let gentleness abound;

"These, are a few things I have prayed for Lord --

A few, small things Thy grace alone can give
Strength to leave unsaid the bitter word;
Power to say the kind one and forgive
All that is said or done by thoughtless men
Blinded a little while by envy, hate.
Courage to go on and try again.

When hopes have failed. The patience,
Lord, to wait. Wisdom to see clearly and to cling
To simple truths, ' though fame and glory dim.
The faith to make a dream a living thing.
The worthiness of heart to follow Him.
A gentleness of soul; a spirit meek;
The noble life. These are the things I seek."

- *Selected*

QUIET SERVICE

"I cannot speak to crowds --
I can to one,
And tell him what for me
The Lord hath done.

"I like to think that He
Whose love I tell
Spoke to one needy heart,
By Jacob's well.

"Andrew his brother sought
For Christ to win.
He preached.
Three thousand souls
Were gathered in.

"When Philip's feet were led
To one strange tryst
He showed one seeking soul
The seeking Christ.

"If 'mid the ones and twos
My work shall be,
Gladly will I fulfil
This ministry!

"Some many talents have
I have but one:
Yet I with them may share
The King's 'Well done!' "

With Brethren Overseas

Birmingham England, April 30, 1938.

Dear Brethren:

Arriving in England after a very delightful voyage, the first good passage of our vessel for the year, I was met by four of the brethren cooperating in the service at the office of the Bible Students Committee, and conducted to the headquarters of the London office. Though much refreshed by the ocean trip, the three days fellowship and relaxation granted me here by the kind thought of the brethren in the plans made for me, were much appreciated, as have been subsequent seasons afforded me as a consequence of short trips starting from London.

The first trip planned circled south from London; and it very soon became apparent that I was to find conditions among the brethren much the same as in the Classes I have had the privilege of visiting on the other side the Atlantic. As at home, practically all the discussions of the Scripture's have indicated an agreement with and a growing appreciation of the Scriptural interpretations that have been precious to us through the years, but no desire to make an agreement on anything but the fundamental doctrines essential. The exceptions to the above have been as in the States and Canada, comparatively rare; and wherever agreed upon by any number have always been the same questions as marked the disagreements during the days of Brother Russell, whatever cause for alarm there is, if there is any, being therefore only as has always existed. A very commendable studiousness on the part of the friends must be acknowledged, confessing however that while usually amply rewarded, such efforts are not attended with less danger here than elsewhere.

The second short trip into territory north of London, gave me the opportunity of meeting in committee, the brethren that compose the Bible Students' Committee -- a privilege very much appreciated. A brief discussion of their general problem incident to their endeavor to give the assistance most needed at this time to the friends they seek to serve, indicated again that I was not to find conditions here different from those in the Classes of their brethren overseas. Both testings and rewards of faithfulness seem to be identical with ours.

The experiences with the brethren of the Classes just visited in Wales, have been similar to all others, and if the spiritual profit to the brethren has equalled my own; the trip must prove one of great benefit. Only slightly less enjoyed than the spiritual fellowship was the singing of our Welsh Classes; the same however being true for practically all my journey.

Financially the friends seem to be in about the same condition as the average in the States with the exception of a few in Wales. As these are individual cases, they could not be said to be worse than similar instances among our own sufferers from the depression, and the Lord has made provision for all through the government.

The Eastertide Convention in London, sponsored by the Forest Gate Class, and the only one so far attended, was the largest they have had in years, and judging by the many expressions heard, was as much of a spiritual treat to the other brethren in attendance as it was to myself. The various doctrinal opinions held in this Class on the questions most discussed at this time seem to have been permitted to take none of the sweetness from their fellowship. Several other Classes similarly favored have been visited, indicating a conformity to the Scriptural injunction to "unity of the Spirit"; though at the same time it must be confessed there are still some who have altered

the Scriptural list of fundamentals and are insisting on theirs instead of on the Lord's being the standard. The situation is surely not less favorable in this respect than in America, but I would rather think even more so.

While the privileges of fellowship have been too precious to give much time to sight-seeing, all who are reading this would have enjoyed with me the thrill of seeing the painting in Wycliff's Church at Lutterworth depicting the resurrection, and noting there beside each grave a figure kneeling in prayer-an exact portrayal of Brother Russell's suggestion regarding the method of the resurrection of the world. The picture was painted supposedly about the 15th century. Evidently the working of Christian minds has not changed much with time.

Although I could not imagine my enjoying anything more than the fellowship with the dear friends here, I shall be looking forward to our reunion with the brethren at home.

Your brother by His grace,
Paul E. Thomson.