

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXIII    October, 1940    No. 10

## Things Coming to Pass

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

THE MAD *pace* of world events continues with unabated speed. The latest piece of map changing in Europe has brought rejoicing in Budapest and mourning in Bucharest. About half of historic Transylvania goes to Hungary; and Rumania, which has already been bereft of Bessarabia, Bukovina, and Southern Dobrudja, loses another large and rich province. And the painful spectacle of human misery continues. For, as has happened to other overpowered minorities, so again, in all these arrangements the people do not count. They are shifted about not only from country to country, as in past revisions of the map, but from system to system, with a cruel disregard of elementary human rights that has to be experienced to be imagined. The most tragic story of the first year of the war is the story of these people, of all the people behind the armies. In a total of two months of actual fighting, the German armies blasted down seven national frontiers and established a virtual suzerainty over continental Europe. But the real story is not told in the summary of military victories and defeats. It is told in the great silence which has settled over the masses in Europe. The Continent is silent; never in modern times have so many millions of people been so quiet. In the words of the *New York Times*:

"For centuries the free peoples of Europe lived and breathed by their contact with the outer world. Today some 75,000,000 non-Germans, under German rule, are cut off by impenetrable barriers, prevented from communicating with their neighbor-peoples, forbidden to read or hear the truth, shielded from outer eyes that seek to penetrate the darkness of their prison. A curtain of secrecy, as black as the swastika itself, now lies across the once-free countries that have come to be a German Lebensraum. Neutral correspondents have not been admitted to shattered Warsaw for almost a year; what we read from Oslo and Prague, Copenhagen and Amsterdam, is filtered through the propaganda network in Berlin. Europe is, in truth, a Dark Continent, as isolated in many ways as the Africa of Livingstone."

To all with love for humanity it is heartrending to contemplate the economic and spiritual misery which has settled over the peoples under the iron rigor of German rule. What must be the real state of mind of the inhabitants of Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and France? An occasional news item from Warsaw or Prague, Oslo or Paris, suggests that some rash patriot has spoken out of turn. But for the population as a whole, the dreadful silence must reflect a mood which, like a dead weight of lassitude, covers dark cross-currents of hatred, rebellion, and despair. Stunned and disillusioned, these suffering peoples show few signs of open defiance as yet, but though revolution may not break out, it is going on, and it will require the full force of the German power to keep the conquered subjected.

## **Crowns Continue to Fall**

The recent collapse of the government of Carol of Rumania again brings to mind the many crowned rulers of recent memory who have disappeared one by one, each a commentary on our times. The *Chicago Times* under the heading "The Changing World" editorially comments:

"Not more than fifteen months ago the abdication of King Carol of Rumania and Michael's accession to the throne would have made news for a week. Yesterday it managed to be the newspaper headline for just a few editions. That isn't only because of the greater interest in Hitler's savage air attacks on Britain. It is also a fair indication of where kings have gotten to in the estimation of the world. Wars are hard on hereditary rulers in this age. Think of the list swept away by World War I or its aftermath-Nicholas, Wilhelm, Franz Joseph, Alfonso, Ferdinand, Mohammed, and Constantine. And today Victor Emmanuel is a puppet of Il Duce, Leopold a prisoner, Gustav a German vassal, Christian a lesser vassal, Zog, Selassie, Haakon, and Wilheimina refugees in exile. Boris of Bulgaria and George of Greece tremble on the brink. Peter of Jugoslavia and the new King Michael are children who will do what they are told. Within one generation kings have all but vanished from the earth. They ruled, they said, by the grace of God. They spoke more truly than they knew, it would seem. This is only one-a minor and unimportant one-of the many strange, new things to come out of this generation of struggle. No matter who is victorious in the war abroad, the world as our fathers knew it has passed away. Peace may be harder than war in this new world. It may take more strength, more courage, more self-denial and sacrifice. Not only kings have fallen from God's grace. And the way back is hard and steep."

As has often been the case in the statements of men, so also in his last sentence, the writer spoke more truly than he realized. Yes, the way back is hard and steep. Six thousand years has humanity traveled the downward path now nearing the collapse of all human institutions, but soon, under the guiding ministrations of the King of kings and they who follow Him, the long retracing steps shall begin. A thousand years will be required for that journey on the Highway of Holiness, "and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." - Isa. 35:10.

But man at present cannot as yet grasp the full import of the present "shaking of all nations." But that present distresses are the prelude to a new shaping of the world is recognized by many, and innumerable quotations could be cited confirmatory thereof. A recent writer expressed himself thus:

"In Britain, Germany, or Italy, they have no time for the future. The present occupies them fully. A bombproof cellar is not the best place for planning for the future. On second thought, maybe it is, at that. Futures have been planned in prisons. Perhaps they may be glimpsed between bombs. But in any case we have more time to think, here in America. Our vision should be clearer. There are things to think about. For instance, some people take comfortable refuge in the thought that war preparations are going to solve the unemployment problems. But not necessarily. In July British unemployment actually increased by 60,000. In the face of a desperate battle for life, the British have failed to find use for nearly 2,000,000 men. Do you think for one moment that even if Britain wins, the men and women who fought for her are going to go back to that? Do you think the men who staggered out of Dunkerque harbor did it to preserve the Scotch grouse moors or to keep the fox-hunting pleasant at Buckinghamshire-on Thrums? Do you think the men and women who are dodging bombs are doing it to hold together the vast estates of mouldy peers who spend four-fifths of their time in the south of France? Are they doing it to preserve the caste

system that barred the way to good careers in army, school, and church to any but 'gentlemen'? If you think this, you credit the people of the United Kingdom with less sense than they have. The World War and its taxes started the great English estates on the downskids. This one will finish them off. Ernest Bevin, minister of labor who now has autocratic power over British workers, says all this is leading to some form of socialist state after the war is won. Whether he is right or not, one can't be sure. But it seems certain no country will emerge from this war quite the same. This the United States cannot afford to ignore. War, and preparation for war, solve no economic problems. Neither is likely to solve unemployment or any other major dislocation in our economy. We cannot drown in warlike shouting the voice of the disinherited. True, defense comes first. For if our country is not defended, no plans for a better future are worth the paper they are drawn on. But we must never forget that we do not defend the old ways. What we defend is the new ways of a better future."

One can but read with sympathy these gropings for light in the darkness settling over the earth. True, as Christians we can see the "morning" coming, but there comes the "night" also. There is to be yet a final reorganization of society preparatory to its final collapse before the irresistible sway of the Son of God. Unquestionably this rearrangement is in process, and much comment could be made, but had best be reserved for the near future. One thing appears quite definitely, that if England should collapse before the power of Germany, Europe will be reorganized upon an entirely new basis, with ultimate consequences of far-reaching importance. In the words of C. Brooks Peters, writing in the *New York Times*:

"A 'new Europe' economically, politically, and socially adapted to 'the demands of modernity' under German and Italian-principally German-hegemony and stretching from Norway and Sweden to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean is the avowed immediate objective for which the armed forces of the Axis powers are now engaged in a death struggle with Great Britain. Divorced from any active participation in the workings of this new European system contemplated by the Axis leaders will be the British Isles, which will be left to themselves, and whatever is left of the British Empire, as well as the Soviet Union with Finland, which lies within the Russian sphere of interest as delineated by the Russo-German agreement, and Spain, in whose domain it may be assumed Portugal is included. Only those states are to be allowed to continue to exist in the new European community of nations which the Axis powers deem capable and worthy of administering themselves. Already definitely excluded from this category are the Poles, who now are but a helot unit within the Great German Reich. The 'New Europe' will, furthermore, be a hierarchy in which each nation will have its place, according to its 'strength and power,' with only two great powers, Germany and Italy.

"International disputes on the Continent, it would appear, are to be settled by the two major European powers with war reserved as a prerogative of those great powers or of the continents. Major disputes between smaller European nations will not be allowed, for this would disturb the functioning of the whole plan. In this 'Europe of the future,' moreover, 'outmoded independent democratic or parliamentary systems of government' will find no place. For the spokesmen and press of the senior Axis partner, Germany, have left no doubt that this is a war on ideological fronts. Opening the Vienna Trade Fair last week, Economic Minister Walther Funk suggested that the economies of Southeastern European States would have to be coordinated with that of the Reich. There is no reason to suspect that this statement cannot be applied as well to Scandinavia and the German-occupied countries of Western Europe. There is, furthermore, 'the Jewish problem.' Speaking in the Government General recently, Dr. Hans Frank, administrator of that region, categorically stated the 'Jews must disappear from all Europe.' It is against this sketchy background that the future of those European nations conquered and now occupied by German armed forces must be viewed should the Axis powers emerge from the war victorious."

Statements such as this cannot but impress the student of Scripture, carefully analyzing world events and their bearing on Scripture fulfillment. The judgment recorded in Revelation 17, the two-horned beast of Revelation 13, the battle of Revelation 19, the burning of the tares of the parable, the judgment vials of Revelation 16, the tremendous events of Ezekiel 38 and 39 and similar prophecies, look yet for their complete fulfillment in the days before us. With breathless interest we observe the course of history, with Bible in hand.

Of ever increasing importance are the activities of Italy in the Near East. Thus far Italian activity has been mainly aerial, but it is recognized that the war's nature might change at any time. Recently an Italian military mission arrived in French Syria, now helpless because of France's surrender. In Syria, a convenient base for stirring up Arabia's desert tribes against the British (and incidentally the Jews of Palestine)-and Mussolini has claimed to be the Arab champion-the Italians began an inventory, of vast military stores assembled by the French last winter for the war that never came. Prime Minister Winston Churchill warned the House of Commons that such a Middle Eastern war might be drawing near. A firm Italian foothold in Syria would endanger the British bastion in Palestine and Egypt, for already that position is threatened from Libya on the west and Abyssinia on the south. The first Fascist claims that Italy is entitled to hold a protectorate over Palestine appeared, meanwhile, in the Rome newspaper *La Tribune*. It argued that Britain, holding a mandate over Palestine from the League of Nations, is losing supremacy in the Mediterranean and that protection of the Holy Land henceforth is Italy's right as the strongest Mediterranean power. These items should prove important to every Bible Student, who will await future events with deep interest.

And thus the groaning creation continues on its travail, each step shaping itself for the final culmination in the birth of a new order of things. It is only a year ago that the world's peace machinery thudded to complete breakdown, and war spread like an ugly blot over the face of Europe. Dynamic forces have sprung into existence, and today all men are arrayed on one of two sides: democracy or totalitarianism-democracy, that is, government machinery set up by free men and women to serve their ends as they wish them served, with all equal before laws whose power over people has definite limits; totalitarianism, that is, government machinery set up by an elite class and run by that class in such a way as to control all the energies and activities of all people for the aggrandizement of the state. The battle is on, and its result will culminate in the final arrangement of human society. Upon it shall come the judgment of God. As Dr. Speer said recently as quoted from the *New York Times*.

"As we look over the world today we see the need for God's judgment on the nations of the world. We do not question that they deserve it, we only wonder that His judgment has not yet fallen on this nation, and we may wonder at the instruments He has chosen. We do not wonder that our kinsmen across the sea feel that they are in a struggle with the anti-Christ. We cannot say that this person or that is the anti-Christ, but can any one doubt that the struggle going on in the world today is between Christ and the forces of the anti-Christ?"

Thus do our tragic times impress themselves upon men's minds. We lift our hearts in grateful praise to Him who has caused His light to shine upon our pathway and who has assured that in His time He will speak "Peace," and the troubled sea of humanity will calm down even as the "sea of glass like unto crystal," wherein if one looked, he might behold the image of God.

- W. J. Siekman

## Investing with God

*"Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth." - Jer. 32:8.*

ZEDEKIAH, THE King of Judah, the nobles, and the people were shut up within the walls of Jerusalem, which city was invested by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon. Zedekiah, whom the Lord had denounced as a "profane, wicked prince," had been playing his policies between Egypt and Babylon. He believed Egypt would prove the stronger, but in this he was wrong. Babylon was a new power, which under Nebuchadnezzar had risen to a high pinnacle of greatness. Jeremiah had given wise counsel, but his words had gone unheeded. He had urged Zedekiah to come to terms with Babylon, but his advice was rejected, and he was thrown into prison because he told the truth.

Jerusalem was in a state of siege. Supplies from outside were cut off; so was the water supply; and the people were hysterical.

Then it was that a man made his way through the lines of the enemy and visited Jeremiah in prison. It was his cousin Hamaleel. He had something to say to Jeremiah. We are not told all that he said, but it probably went something like this: "Well, so you are here, in prison? And this is the result of your prophesying. You've been foretelling disaster on the kingdom, but at the same time have been saying that things will come out all right in the end. Now, if you believe in a satisfactory outcome of affairs, I challenge you to prove your faith. If you believe that the land will come into its proper value again, take your money and buy my field that is in Anathoth. That will be a test as to whether there is any foundation to your faith or not."

Of course Hamaleel did not tell Jeremiah that the field in question had been trodden down by the enemy and that the buildings on it had been destroyed. But he threw out his challenge anyway. It was the challenge of pessimist to knowledge and to faith.

And Jeremiah accepted the challenge. He might have said, "Under present conditions I could not think of buying the field." But he said nothing of the kind. He saw that his own faith was being put to the test, so he bought the field. He paid seventeen shekels of silver for it, and had proper witnesses to the transaction, and took over the deed of the land.

Then he said to Baruch the scribe, "Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Houses and fields and vineyards shall be purchased again in this land."

It verily takes courage and faith to enable one to make investments in a time of discouragement, and depression. People do not want to make investments today. Why? Because they have lost faith. They are holding on to their money. They see no sign of improvement in conditions. It is not a time for investments to be made by the people of the world, nor any one without faith.

If we have faith in a thing, we are willing to invest in it. Jesus had faith in the world, and He was willing to invest in it. He saw that there were possibilities in man-elements that could be developed and improved. Therefore, He bought the field, because He knew that it contained treasure. The world was terribly wicked, but He saw the treasure.

If we have faith in God and in His plan of salvation, we will invest in the heavenly riches, concerning which the Master said, "Neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor do thieves break through and steal." Having placed our investment up above, we can say with the apostle, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." There is no danger that the bank of heaven will fail, and therefore, so long as we leave our treasure there, it is safe.

If ever there was a real challenge to the Christian to prove; his faith in God, it is at the present time. Materialism, with its spiritually devitalizing power, is abroad today perhaps as never before. We are told that in Russia a Bible cannot be bought for even a thousand dollars. Atheism and agnosticism have swept over many lands *of* the earth. And yet these elements cannot solve the problem of human happiness. The world's great need is for God, the God that Jesus came to reveal, saying, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." Oh what a pity that Jesus was not appreciated, and that a robber was preferred in His place. And yet, that has ever been the world's way-"right forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne." But no, thank God, not forever: only for a time. And in the fulness of times the Mighty One of the universe will vindicate Himself and will declare the invincible power of His everlasting love.

Who wants to buy the field that is in Anathoth? It will cost quite a lot. Indeed, the Master said, "Sit down and count the cost." It takes all one has to make this investment-to have his name permanently placed in the Lamb's book of life. It is just the proof of our faith and love, that God wants. And then, after a time, when this proof shall have been given, in abundant measure, and when He has tested and refined us, assuredly, beloved, "we shall come forth as gold." - *Contributed by Walter Sargeant.*

## The Army of Gideon

Judges 6.

*"The battle is not yours, but God's." - 2 Chron. 20:15.*

MANY PERSONS are asking, "Why it is that Bible Students are so disorganized and broken up as they are today? Did we not expect a big, concerted, witnessing movement at the end of the age?" Well, if we did expect that movement, it has not been realized in the past ten or twenty years. Indeed, just the opposite has taken place, and the prediction of our late Pastor has been fulfilled -- "When the end comes, in all probability most of the Lord's people will be standing alone in the liberty of Christ, and once more the cause of truth will go down in seeming defeat and overthrow, just as it did when Jesus came to the earth nineteen centuries ago.

And that is exactly what has been taking place, though in a different manner than we expected. Many of the friends thought that a big religious persecution would be launched against us by both Catholics and Protestants; but such a thing did not take place. The forces that caused our disintegration came from inside, not from outside, and the prophecy was fulfilled, "Of your own selves men shall arise, speaking perverse things, and seeking to draw disciples after them."

In past years we have believed that Gideon's army was a type or picture of the Church of Christ, especially at the close of the present age, and we still think that this is true. The story presents features of great interest to Bible Students today. When we first meet with Gideon, we find in him a man that is laboring under quite a severe depression of spirits. His country has been invaded, the liberties of the people have been wrested away, and Gideon's faith does not seem to be shining out very brightly under these conditions. Yet he is a strong, brave man, and the Lord intends to use him in a remarkable manner. So, then, the first point that we wish to make is that we cannot tell to what extent God may use us, provided that we are willing to be used-provided that we cooperate with God, and remove all possible barriers and obstructions out of the way.

We are living in a faithless time of the world. People still have faith in money, which is the world's god. They still have faith in material effects and in the systems of earth, but they have very little faith in God. The proof of this is that when trouble comes along, it sweeps them off their feet. They just cannot stand it. If faith will not help a person to stand when the waves of trouble sweep upon him, then his faith is weak or is not properly centered, or is not the right kind of faith. He needs a faith

"That will not murmur nor complain  
Beneath the chastening rod,  
But in the hour of grief or pain  
Will lean upon its God."

There may have been a time when our own faith was not very strong. That is, our faith in God. We may have had plenty of faith in ourselves. We may have thought that we could get along nicely in our own strength, that we could climb that great hill called Difficulty, and would do so; and some day we would stand on the top and wave the flag of success and say to the world, "Well, here I am. I told you that I would do it, and I have done it. Now what have you to say? Didn't I keep my word?" However, there was something that we did not reckon on, and that was the possibility of God stepping into our lives. And yet that is exactly what happened. One day we

met God somewhere along the line of travel, and that interview was of tremendous importance, for it changed the entire complexion of life for us. It changed every hope, aim, ambition, and desire that we had previously possessed. It was the biggest thing that ever happened to us in this life, or that will happen on this side of our glorification. We had made our own plans for success, but the Lord altered them completely, and we now rejoice that this was so.

### **Gideon Meets an Angel**

Gideon, the man of our story, did not meet God in person, but he did meet a representative of God, for an angel of the Lord came and sat down under an oak tree while Gideon was out threshing wheat under concealment for fear of the Midianites. Gideon observed this fine looking young man as he sat there, and probably wondered who he was and what his mission might be. Then the angel spoke to Gideon, saying, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor."

No doubt Gideon was surprised at being thus addressed, and he said, "Oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all His miracles which our fathers have told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." And again he said unto him, "Oh, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

And the Lord' said unto him, "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

### **Signs from the Lord**

Then it was that Gideon asked the Lord for a sign of divine favor, and the Lord told him to bring out his sacrifice and place it upon a rock. And Gideon did so, and the angel touched the sacrifice with his staff, and fire came out of the rock and consumed it. Then Gideon was alarmed, for, having seen an angel of God, he feared that he would die. But the Lord said unto him, "Peace be unto thee; thou shalt not die."

That very night Gideon demolished the altar of Baal. Then he himself proposed a test by which he would know for a surety that the Lord would assist him. He said, "I'll take the coat of a sheep, a fleece, and put it outside tonight, and in the morning if there is dew on the fleece and the earth is dry around it, I'll take that as a sign." Surely enough, the sign worked just as he wanted it to and yet he thought that it could have come that way by chance. So he put the fleece out the next night and asked the Lord to make the fleece dry and the earth wet. And this also took place, and now at last Gideon was convinced and felt assurance that the Lord was with him.

And has the Lord given us any signs? Surely He has. And they are similar to the ones He gave Gideon. He has said to us, "Do you believe in the sacrifice indicated in the Scriptures?" And when we said, "Yes," then He said, "Now take your sacrifice and place it on the Rock of Ages." That is to say, base it on the sacrifice of Jesus. which alone will make it acceptable. So we did this, and then began to have some manifestation of divine acceptance. And what manifestation have we? Evidently it is in the form of an assurance. It is a great thing to have an assurance of salvation. And we can have that now. Such an assurance is not based on anything that we are doing, have done in the past, or expect to do in the future. But it is based on something that Jesus

did for us over nineteen centuries ago. He secured salvation for us, and we have accepted it. The Apostle Paul could say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Paul had committed his life to his Lord, and was persuaded that in due time he would receive it again.

And then God's people have the fleece sign; for the dew of the favor of the divine promises is on the fleece class, or sheep class, during the Gospel Age, and the earth is all dry around it. But in the Millennial morning it will be on the earth, for the sheep class will be gone to glory and will not need it. So, in this sign we find dispensational truth—the two-fold nature of the divine Kingdom. For that is the truth that chiefly makes the line of demarcation between truth people and non-truth people. If we were to put this question to persons in the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, and other churches, "What is the nature or character of the divine Kingdom?" they would all say, "It is spiritual, or heavenly." Some of the Adventists might say, "It is earthly." But how many would say, "It is both heavenly and earthly"? They could not say that because they do not know that. It has never been told to them by the preachers. But most Bible Students believe it, and it ought to do a great deal toward drawing Bible Students together in the spirit of peace, harmony, and love.

### **God Reduces the Army**

Well, Gideon got his army. It numbered thirty-two thousand men. The army of the Midianites was probably four or five times as great. Then God looked down at Gideon's army and said, "Gideon, your army is too large. Some of those soldiers have fear in their hearts; I cannot use them. Send them home." So twenty-two thousand went back, leaving a little band of only ten thousand men.

Again the Lord spoke and said, "Gideon, your army is still too large. When they come to a drinking-place, watch your soldiers drink. Some will lie down to drink, and some will take the water up in their hands. Divide them into two classes." So Gideon did this and found that the ones who lifted up the water in their hands were only three hundred men. Then the Lord said to him, "This is My army with which I will win the victory." And Gideon wondered what could be done with three hundred men, and was told, "The battle is not yours, but the Lord's."

Now what did this cutting down of the army mean? We remember that some twenty-five years ago we had quite a large army. A good many thousands were in the truth in those days. Just how many, we do not know. But conventions of six thousand persons were not uncommon. Then it came to pass that hundreds of newspapers printed the sermons. Then there was the Photo Drama of Creation, which swept over this country and Canada. The truth was marching on, conquering and to conquer. Daily it was gaining momentum. And we said, "If this progress continues to take place, in thirty years time we shall have the most wonderful army in the world to give the last witness to the truth." But evidently the Lord thought differently, for He said, "That army is too large. Some of the soldiers have fear in their hearts." And this was true. And we remember just when the element of fear entered into the minds of the friends, so that many became afraid to open their mouths in a meeting to express an independent thought lest they be cast out of the class, and possibly be consigned to the Second Death. So the thousands of these persons stood back, and the rest went ahead.

## Another Test

Then the Lord applied a second test. He said, "Now watch them drink-see just how they take in the water of the truth. Some will lie down to drink, and some will take up the water in their hands." Perhaps some of us have never lain down to drink out of a stream. But most boys have done so. The reason for this is that boys are not particular. If a boy swallows a few bugs, water beetles, or tadpoles, he does not mind. But older people are likely to be more particular. So it is in taking in the water of the truth; some friends connect themselves with an organization, and have such confidence in it that they swallow everything that comes along; for when one lies down to drink, he cannot see the water at all. Others, however, are more particular. They want the water where they can **see** it. They measure every drop by God's- Word. And these have already cast all fear out of their hearts; so the Lord says, "This is My army."

Very good, but just **where** is it? Today we have probably some fifteen or twenty groups of Bible Students. Now then, which of these groups is Gideon's army? If the Lord will but tell us which group is His, we will all join that group. But the Lord through His Word says, "Not one of these groups is My army."

But that sounds amazing, and we feel like saying, "Why, Lord, didn't You organize some of these groups?" And the Lord says, "Not one of them."

"Then who organized them?"

"They organized themselves."

"And was it wrong for them to do this?"

"No. There is nothing wrong about organizing, provided that one does not imbibe the spirit of a human organization, for such a spirit is likely to be a sectarian spirit."

"Well, then **where** is Gideon's army?"

"Not in one group, but in all of the groups." "What? Do You mean to say that the army is all of the groups?"

"No. What I mean is that you will find individual members of the army, consecrated Christians, in all of the groups."

"Oh, I see. Then my love will have to be large enough to take in all of these Christians in the various groups?"

"Exactly so; and that is one of the most important things in the Christian life."

## **Pitchers and Trumpets**

Well, Gideon, you have your army, but your men have no swords. But Gideon was told that he would not need swords. The victory was to be gained by pitchers and trumpets. The soldiers were to carry a pitcher containing a light in one hand and a trumpet in the other. They were to break the pitcher and let the light shine out and cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And they followed these instructions to the letter. Gideon divided them into three bands, they did as they were told, and in the night-time they fell upon the enemy, and the Midianites were terrified because they thought they were being attacked by a great army, so a complete victory was gained by the Israelites.

Breaking the pitcher and letting the light shine forth would seem to typify the breaking of our earthen vessels (our "bodies) in the Lord's service. But that raises a question, which is, just what is that service today? And some have asked, "Do you think we should try to revive the service of the Pastor's time?"

Well, there is one thing sure, and that is that we cannot possibly revive the service of the Pastor's time. And if it be asked, "Why not?" the answer is, Because we have not the means. When the Lord wished to operate the service of those days, He first of all chose a highly qualified man -- one possessing great talents as a writer and a speaker. He was also a man of intense consecration. We believe that all Bible Students will acknowledge that this man was qualified to be a leader. But where is his successor? He has none. Then another thing we had for years in those days was a united army. And a third thing was money. Verily money was poured out like water. And what did the Lord do? He permitted the army to become broken up, and He allowed times of depression to come, and thus took away the money. Today nearly all the Lord's people are poor. Well then, how could the work of the former days possibly be revived? But do we mean by this that there should be no witnessing to the truth? Such is not our meaning. Of course, every one who loves the Lord will seize every possible opportunity to tell about the "good tidings of great joy." But we cannot do this in the big manner of former years but shall have to do it in a humbler way.

## **"Because We Love the Brethren"**

And then there is something we can always do. And what is that? It is a work of encouraging the Lord's people. Today, indeed, many of them need encouragement. Probably most Christians ask themselves this question, "What would I have done for the Lord Jesus had I lived in Palestine when He was on earth?" Suppose that He were to ask us that question today. We might say, "Well, Lord, You had no home of Your own, so I would have invited You to my home." And we think He would feel pleased at such an answer as that, for there were very few who invited Him to their homes when He was on earth.

Then He might say, "Would you have done anything else for Me?" And we might reply, "If I had been near You when You were carrying that cross to Calvary, I would have picked it up and carried it some of the way." And perhaps He would say, "What a beautiful thought on your part. You see, only one man assisted Me with that cross, and he had to be compelled to do so. But you think that you would have done it of your own accord. That is wonderful indeed. And is there anything else that you think you would have done?"

We might say, "I should have said kind, encouraging things to You. And when You were on that cross, I would have edged as near to it as possible and would have whispered into Your ear words of tenderness and love even to the last moment of Your life."

And He might reply, "I can see that you think you would have done many fine things for Me; but you are not quite sure about it, are you?"

"Well, no, Lord, I'm not quite sure. I only hope that I would have done these things."

"Then how would you like to be sure?"

"Oh, would that be possible? I should like that very much."

"All right then, you can know for a certainty, and you do not have to guess. If you would have done these things for Me had you lived on earth when I was here, **then you are doing these things today.**"

"But how, Lord? You are up in glory. Then how can I do anything for You?"

"Personally you cannot do one single thing for Me, but representatively you can. Down on that earth are some persons that I love so dearly that some day I intend to make them My bride. Whatever you do for them, I will count it as done for Me. So, if you would have invited Me to your home, then you must invite some of them to your home, and I will know that you would have done that for Me. If you would have assisted Me in bearing My cross, just you assist that brother to bear his cross, or that sister to bear hers, and it will be proof that you would have done that for Me. And if you would have whispered words of tenderness and of love into My ears, then you whisper those words into the ears of some of My people. And remember, that even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in My name shall in no wise lose its reward. You want to know what your work is? Well, your work lies wherever My people are. They all need something that it is in your power to give."

Then Gideon's men were to blow the trumpet. And what is this in antitype? Evidently, it is the seventh trumpet, the jubilee trumpet, the liberty trumpet. But how can we blow this trumpet when the world has no ears for it? Well, we can blow it for those who have ears for it. And who are they? Truly they are truth people. But do not truth people know all about liberty? Unfortunately, no, they do not. And if they are to give liberty to the world in the Millennial Age, they should know a good deal about it. But the only liberty that some people know about is sectarian liberty. And what kind is that? It is liberty to believe the things that their own group is putting out as truth. But we must have a higher conception of liberty than that if we would be pleasing to the Lord. At one time we did not think that we would be called upon to blow the trumpet of liberty to truth people, but today we are doing so; and moreover, some persons do not like the sound of the trumpet.

Then we cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." And we believe that sword to be the Bible. The Apostle called it "the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God." And that means that we put the Bible first. In all matters we put the Word of God before the word of man no matter who the man is. We are told to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." And we can prove things only by the Bible. Millions have given their lives for this precious Word, and the Christian should cherish it above all earthly possessions.

So, here then is the army that is to win the victory over Satan and the fallen spirits. It is small in numbers, but it is God's army. Its members have one spirit, and that is the Lord's Holy Spirit. At a time when the world is having its great wars, the last members of the body of Christ are having their mighty struggle against the forces of evil, for they all desire to be overcomers. Some day, ere long, victory will perch upon their banners, and having won their final triumph, they will be used by God to confer the blessings of the divine **Kingdom** upon the human family, giving "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness to all the sons and daughters of Adam's race. And oh, what a crown of glory that will be for them!

- *Contributed.*

## The Critic

A little seed lay in the ground,  
And soon began to sprout;  
"Now which of all the flowers around,"  
It mused, "shall I come out?"

"This lily's face is fair and proud,  
But just a trifle cold;  
The rose, I think, is rather loud,  
And then, its fashion's old.

"The violet is very well,  
But not a flower I'd choose;  
Nor yet the Canterbury bell  
I never cared for blues."

And so it criticized each flower,  
This supercilious seed,  
Until it woke one summer hour  
And found itself a weed.

## Clear Vision Brings Strength

### A Meditation on Our Lord's Remarkable Prediction:

*"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." - John 12:32.*

THE PRESENT tragedy of Europe continues to engage the attention of every thinking mind. We read of houses and towns destroyed, of families adrift and separated, of hunger stalking over wide areas, of fear and heartbreak dominating young and old, high and low. Driven back upon the most elemental of human needs, mankind, when it asks any question at all, is again voicing the old question: "Does God care?"

Superficially, it would seem that God does not care. Yet it is in such conditions as these and in such a time as the present that man's greatest need is for simple faith in God. The worst of all calamities would be a relapse into thinking that God does not care what happens to this sin stricken, sorrowing, crushed, terror-ridden world.

In order for us to "carry-on" in the good, Christian way, it is important that we possess two qualifications:

- (1) A clear vision of (and firm faith in God to accomplish) the ultimate triumph of good over evil.
- (2) A courageous disposition.

In regard to the second qualification we endeavored to express a few thoughts in an article published in the August "Herald" under the caption "Quit You Like Men." In the September issue we offered some remarks on the first qualification under the caption "Clear Vision Brings Strength," basing our meditation on the vision given to Isaiah as recorded in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. In the present meditation we propose to consider this theme further, drawing our lesson this time from a passage in the twelfth chapter of St. John's gospel in which our Lord Jesus is led to speak of a judgment of this world, and then to give utterance to a most remarkable prediction. As we study this passage and note the assurance it contains that right shall ultimately triumph, we cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that it was this "clear vision" which "brought strength" to our Lord in His final crisis hour; a vision which will suffice to sustain His footstep followers now.

Our text, then, will consist of verses 31 and 32 of the twelfth chapter of John: "Now is a judgment of this world [or, more literally, now is a crisis of this world]: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." In the verses just preceding these it may be seen that our Lord's ministry was closing, that His crisis hour had come, and that instead of praying, "Father, save Me from this hour," the burden of our Lord's prayer at the supreme crisis of His history was, "Father, glorify Thy name," although He knew that meant for Him the way of the cross. To His prayer a voice from heaven replied: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." Now it was immediately after hearing that voice that Jesus spoke the words of our text. It follows, therefore, that the meaning of our text, when rightly understood, will form a correct interpretation of the meaning of the voice from heaven. What, then, is the connection between the Father's words: "I have already glorified My name" and the words of Jesus: "Now is there a judgment of this world"? and further, what is the connection between the Father's words: "I will glorify My name again" and the words of Jesus: "The prince of this world shall be cast out, and I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself"?

To answer these questions it is but necessary to ask and answer one further question, namely, "**How** had the Father already glorified His name?" And the answer to that question we know. For had not the Father accomplished this through His Son's own faithful walk and ministry? None ever had been used before to bring such honor, such glory, to the Father's name as had He. By every expression of righteous indignation against sin wherever found, by every loving word, by every gracious act, He had manifested not only His own character but that of His Father. And because of this, men were under a test, a judgment, which they had not previously experienced, at least in so marked a degree. A crisis had been reached in their affairs. The manner in which they reacted to the Light of the World who had been in their midst would disclose their own characters unerringly, and so, when the voice from heaven declares, "I have already glorified My name," our Lord Jesus understands the reference is to His own faithful walk and declares in His turn, "Now there is a crisis of this world."

This glorification of the Father's name through the Son's obedience, however, magnificent though it was, was small when compared to the far greater honor His Son would bring to His name when raised to almighty power. As yet He had magnified His Father's name only within the confines of one small nation, that of Israel, and that name, notwithstanding all His matchless ministry, was still very imperfectly understood, even by the best of these. Indeed, only a few days before His death, Philip, one of the Twelve, makes the astonishing, (and what, to our Lord, must have been a most disheartening) request: "Show us the Father." As if He had not done so in a most wonderful way throughout the whole of His ministry! But the Father, looking forward to the time when all should know Him, from the least to the greatest, when the knowledge of Himself would not be confined to one small nation but would embrace the Gentiles too, when the knowledge of Himself would fill the earth as the waters cover the mighty deep—the Father, we say, looking forward to the still greater honor which the Son would bring to His name during the Gospel and Millennial Ages, declares further: "And I will glorify it again," while the Son, fully understanding His Father, makes reply: "The prince of this world **shall** [indeed] 'be cast out.'"

We thus reach the main intention, the ruling significance, of our text. In the events then transpiring around Him and in the prophetic emotions they excited within Him, Christ found a signal, or sign, of three spiritual transactions of the widest scope, of the gravest moment; a sign, first, of the judgment of this world; second, of the expulsion of its former but usurping lord; and third, of the accession of its true and lawful Prince. Let us try to see what He saw and as He saw it.

### **"Now There is a Crisis"**

First, then, as to the judgment of this world. We have already observed that the literal meaning here is "crisis," a crisis through which the world was then, and for that matter still is, passing. And from what has already been said, it must surely be apparent that when our Lord speaks of the glorification of His Father's name by His own wondrous life and sacrificial death on the cross -- when He speaks of **this** as a crisis (or judgment) of the world, He cannot mean less than this: that the attitude which men take to Him and to the death in which He most of all reveals the fatherly, redeeming love of God, determines what their character is and must **ultimately** determine what their condition shall be. If they recognize His goodness, if they respond to the love which He reveals, they prove themselves capable, under proper guidance and with adequate help, of inheriting eternal life, while if they do not, they pronounce themselves unworthy of eternal life and, for the present at least, incapable of it.

For consider, Christ is, by all competent men and women, confessed to be at least the wisest of teachers, the best of men. By us who believe more than this, who believe Him to be the Only begot ten of God, one in purpose and spirit with the Father, His death is, admittedly, not only the supreme proof of His own love for men but also the supreme revelation of God's fatherly and saving love for us all. When, therefore, He is placed before us in a true light, the attitude we assume toward Him must be a decisive and supreme test of our character. If we have **any** love for goodness, we cannot but love **Him**. If we are at all disposed to acknowledge God to be our Creator, if we are at all disposed to carry ourselves as His children, the Cross, in which we see His redeeming love to be stronger than death and able to take away our sins, cannot but move us to the very heart and quicken in our hearts responses of love and obedience. Here is God, beseeching us, through the death of His Son, to be reconciled to Himself. And if we can behold this august yet pathetic spectacle unmoved, what more can He do for us? by what can we be convinced? persuaded? redeemed? To be indifferent to the best-the best in thought and conduct, the best in wisdom and love, the best in God as well as in man-is not that to stand self-condemned? Is it not to resist the best that is in ourselves? the highest promptings of our own judgment and conscience and heart? Is it not to adjudge ourselves incapable of virtue, of love, of all that constitutes the proper life of man?

This is no mere matter of doctrinal theory on which there may be plenty of room for difference of viewpoint, but it is a truth which enters into and determines the whole current and bent of our practical, everyday life in the most decisive way. If we acknowledge that in Christ we find the highest revelation of the name, or character, of God; or even if we do less than this, if we do but acknowledge that in Christ we find the highest human wisdom, the best **human** goodness, and a love so disinterested, so wide and deep, so unfathomable and unchangeable that it might well be **called** divine-if we acknowledge this, and yet, when this decisive test is applied to our characters, we make no response to it; if His wisdom does not command our admiration, and shape our conduct; if His goodness does not elicit our love; if His purity does not call forth our homage, we are judged and condemned-not judged and condemned by Him, be it noted, but self-judged and self-condemned. A crisis has come to us -- a judgment -- and we, alas, have been tried and found wanting.

When the gracious message of the Gospel first reached us, a crisis occurred in our affairs. We were placed on trial, as it were, to see if we would embrace the message, and the One of whom it speaks. Since then there may have been times when, notwithstanding the sincerity of our consecration vow, we have been lax in its performance. In this declining spiritual condition the Lord may have met us in the way, possibly through some providential circumstances in our lives which had no particular significance in the eyes of others but which we were able to recognize as the voice of God speaking to us from heaven. We had once again reached a judgment, a crisis, in our experience.

Every coming of the spirit of Christ to our conscience, through His Word and spirit, is a judgment, a crisis, one of many. Happy shall we be if, recognizing Christ to be the wisest and best, and therefore the true judge and Ruler of men, realizing in His death on the tree the supreme proof of the fact that God is our Father and that He loves us well enough to make any sacrifice in order to redeem us out of the hand of our iniquities -- happy shall we be, say we, if, recognizing this, we commit ourselves to Him, now and always in faith and love and obedience. Thus doing, our hours of judgment, our crisis hours, will prove to be hours of salvation for us.

## The judgment to be Unto Victory or Salvation

As a matter of fact, this is the course which our Lord confidently expects us to take. Not only so, but He expects, before the close of the Millennial Age, that many more will do so. For, let it be carefully noted, the crisis spoken of in our text is not at all what those who think of "judgment" only in its severer aspect would have anticipated. Christ does not say: "Now there is a judgment of this world, now shall the world be **condemned**." On the contrary, He virtually says: "Now there is a judgment of this world, now shall the world be **saved**." For the judgment is to issue in the expulsion of the usurping prince of this world and the enthronement of its true Prince. The one is to be "cast out"; the Other is to be "lifted up" -- lifted up, not that He might banish all men to a hell of torment nor that He might banish all men to oblivion even, but that He might draw all men unto Himself.

These sacred words, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself," are so familiar to us that in all probability they no longer leave a sharp and vivid impression on our minds, although however often we read or listen to them, we can hardly fail to be conscious of a certain greatness in them and a certain grace. Taken in their general connection, they are evidently a supreme illustration of that law of "life by death" which our Lord had been enforcing; they remind us that He Himself was about to obey, as He always had obeyed, the law which He had just affirmed to be an inevitable condition of discipleship; to save **His** life by losing it, to die that **He** might bring forth much fruit, to pass, by way of the cross, to the external home of the spirit, to humble Himself that **He** might be exalted. And taken thus, even, the words are full of power, full of pathetic appeal, for who ever lost his life so generously as He or saved it so nobly, inasmuch as He saved, not Himself alone, but the world? Or from whose death has there ever sprung a harvest so fruitful, so vast, and so enduring?

## A Fourfold Prediction

But it is when we come to consider the words in themselves and in their more immediate context that we catch some glimpse of the full orb of their meaning, for then we see that they contain, not a single prophecy concerning His death on the cross, but a fourfold prediction.

## The Manner of His Death

The words predict; first of all, the death of the cross, as St. John himself observes, "This He said, signifying by what manner of death He should die." (John 12:33.) However, instead of parading, they veil and extenuate the horrors of that death, speaking of it as a mere lifting up from the earth, and so making the cross itself an instrument of elevation rather than an implement of torture and shame.

Now we do not always recognize the prophetic power displayed by our Lord Jesus in foretelling by what manner of death He should die. He had long known that the Jews would put Him to death. It needed no prophet to forecast **that**, perhaps, when once their bitter enmity had been aroused, for which of the servants of God had they not rejected and slain? But **crucifixion** was not commonly inflicted, even by the Romans, except on traitors or slaves, while among the Jews an apostate, an offender against the sanctity of the temple or the authority of the law, was stoned.

There was, therefore, an indubitable element of prediction in our Lord's habitual foreboding that He should be crucified, that He should be "lifted up" to bear our sins in His own body on the tree.

### **His Resurrection and Ascension**

Nor was it only His crucifixion these words foretold. Behind and beyond that shameful elevation He saw a glorious ascension into heaven. Literally rendered, His words would read, not "if I be lifted up 'from' the earth," but "if I be lifted up 'out' of or 'above' the earth." The "Diaglott" renders the words: "And I, if I be raised on high from the earth, will draw all to Myself"; and in this peculiar phrase, whatever its first intention may have been, all the great expositors find a reference to His resurrection from the dead and His ascension to the right hand of God as well as to the peculiar manner of the death by which He was to glorify God.

There is here, therefore, a splendid example of His faith in the love and justice of His Father and of His prophetic insight into His Father's will. Must not He have been in very truth a Prophet who could foretell an event so improbable, so incredible to human wisdom, as that One who was soon to perish on the cross of a slave should rise from the grave in which they laid Him and ascend the throne of the universe, to be forever at the right hand of God? Must not He have been a Seer who could foresee that death, so far from putting a period to His life, would but enhance the power of His life and that the shame of the cross, instead of making Him of no reputation, would only minister to and swell His glory?

He who predicted His own death, then, and even the manner of His death, also predicted His triumph over death and His ascension into heaven; and if the former prediction indicated but a comparatively low measure of the prophetic energy, it must be admitted that in the latter we have a splendid and illustrious proof of His prophetic energy and foresight. Yet even this latter prediction pales before the glory of those that follow it. For our Lord proceeds to foretell the **results** of His death and of His triumph over death, the **effects** of His being lifted up "from" the earth and of His being lifted up "out of" and beyond the earth.

### **Jew and Gentile to be Drawn to Him and to Each Other**

One result, He says, will be that He will draw all men unto Himself—all men, that is to say, without distinction of race—both the Jews who had rejected Him and the Gentiles who were ignorant of Him. And what could have seemed more improbable, more incredible, than that? Who but He could have seen in the crucifixion of a Galilean peasant, against whom the whole world, Hebrew and heathen, had conspired, the signal of a religious revolution which should cover the whole world and lift and bind its scattered and hostile races into one new and perfect manhood? The whole set of His time was against any such idea. The whole course of history had been against it for two thousand years. Through all those centuries God had had an elect people to whom, and to whom exclusively, He had confined the direct and immediate disclosures of His will. Was this divine procedure to be changed all in a moment? Could it be that the unique grace so long shown to the Jews was now to be extended to all mankind? True, God had elected Israel only that Israel might be His minister to mankind, but in the pride of its election Israel had long forgotten the end for which it was elected.

Now a conviction so ancient, so deeply rooted and widespread as this belief in the incommunicable immunities and privileges of the elect people, was not to be lightly shaken,

however high the authority and however noble the spirit in which it was assailed. If we would measure its strength and inveteracy, we must mark how long it resisted even the authority of Christ Himself and held out against the power and influence of the very spirit of God. When **Peter** was convinced (and he himself needed a vision to convince him) that no man was common or unclean and therefore no man, or caste, or race, could any longer claim special and exclusive privilege in the Kingdom of God, or any divine election save an election to serve their fellows, he found it no easy task to convert the church or even his brother apostles to his own new faith in the universal love of God. A large section of the church were never more than half converted to it, while some of them were never converted to it at all but made the life of Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, bitter to him by their uncompromising hostility to the new, generous Gospel he preached. All the more wonderful was it that, in the face of this ancient and powerful tradition -- this claim to be in some way dearer to God than others (a claim which seems to live in our *very* blood) -- all the more wonderful, we say, it was that the Lord Jesus should predict, even before He died, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself," without distinction of race or caste. If, because of men's sins, the prophecy is fulfilled only in part as yet, we can only the more admire the penetrating, prophetic glance which could look through the long centuries to a time still to come when all the world shall recognize its equal and common humanity and rejoice in the love which embraces and redeems us all.

### **Satan to be Cast Out**

Even yet, however, we have not exhausted this marvelous prediction, have not followed it out to its full scope. For just as behind the death of the cross Jesus saw the resurrection and ascension into heaven, so behind and beyond the extension of His Kingdom from the Jews to the whole Gentile world He foresaw and foretold the final triumph of good over evil.

When He heard the great voice out of heaven which assured Him that as He had been successful in bringing glory to His Father's name by His work among the Jews, so on a much grander scale He would in due time bring glory to His Father's name by a world-wide work among all nations, He cried: "Now is a judgment [that is, there is now a judicial crisis], of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out"; while in the next breath He adds: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself." Evidently, therefore, He implies a contrast between Himself and the prince of this world--a contrast also between their respective destinies.

Who this false prince of the world is we can have no doubt if, at least, we accept the teaching of the New Testament. The Jews habitually called Satan--the adversary of man and God--the prince of this world. And Jesus adopts both the name and the conception which underlay it. Not here alone but again and again this title falls from His lips, as when He said: "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me" (John 11:30) or when He predicted that the Holy Spirit should convict men of judgment "because the prince of this world hath been judged." (John 16:11.) It is this evil prince, then, of whose downfall from the seat of power Jesus finds a signal in the extension of His own Kingdom to the Gentiles. It is this prince whom He Himself is destined to replace.

## The World Itself to Become a Holy Place

But notice the force of the solemn and picturesque phrase: "The prince of this world shall be cast out." He who before this had seen Satan fall like lightning from heaven now predicts that he is to be cast out from the earth. And this phrase "cast out" is very suggestive, for it is the technical phrase for excommunication, for the solemn and formal expulsion of one who has sinned against the light of a synagogue, a temple, a church -- of any holy place or community. To affirm, therefore, that Satan is to be cast out of the world implies that he has no right in it. It implies that the world is (or is to become) a holy place, a place sanctified by the divine presence, and therefore a place for which he is unfit, in which his presence is a usurpation, and an offence, from which he is to be solemnly and forever expelled.

As yet, indeed, we see not that he has been expelled, whether from the world or even from the church. But He who came to destroy the works of the devil, He who is able to measure all spiritual forces with a precision to which we cannot pretend and to calculate the issue between good and evil with an infallible prescience -- He here assures us that as the result of His coming into the world, His death for the world's sin, and His judgment or rule of the world, the power of evil is to be broken, that the supreme representative of evil is to be overcome, dethroned, driven out. He pronounces the issue certain, however long the conflict, the campaign, may last. He affirms that the temple of the world (God give us faith to believe that this world is yet to be a temple) is to be purged from whatsoever offendeth, or loveth and maketh a lie. The prince of this world has been judged, self-judged and self-condemned, in that he stirred up men to reject their wisest and best, set himself and tempted them to set themselves against the supreme revelation of the righteousness and love of God. Sentence has gone forth against him, and in due time that sentence will infallibly be carried out. Oh! it is a great promise, alive with the inspirations of courage and hope, and may well nerve us to carry on the conflict with evil in ourselves and in the world around us, which often looks so hopeless that we grow weary and faint in our minds. Failure is impossible, however imminent it may seem. Victory is certain, however improbable it may appear, however distant it may be.

But though He is to displace the prince of this world, our Lord' will not be, as the Jews expected Him to be, only another and a better Prince of this world. He is to be lifted up, lifted out of and above the world. To Him the elevation of the cross, the throne of love, is but an emblem of His elevation to heaven, the throne of power. From thence He will **draw** men--draw them by the sweet and healthful influences, by the gentle compulsions of the love He has shown for them and revealed to them, until at last they shall all come to Him -- all, that is to say, who do not willfully resist Him, and be changed into His image, clothed with righteousness, crowned with the glory and honor of perfection; some, the Church, to share even in His nature and His throne; all to partake of eternal life, made possible for them through His sacrifice.

The scope, then, of this great prediction is very wide. It is charged with the music of a hope that reaches beyond this present life. It presses on through century after century, unfulfilled or fulfilled only in part, and will never tire nor rest until it shall close in the complete fulfillment of a redeemed race, a regenerated universe. It conducts us from the travail of the cross to that supreme moment when, seated on the throne of universal dominion, Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, when, having-subdued all things unto Himself, He shall deliver-up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

"A glorious time is coming, the morning promised long,  
When truth and right with holy might, shall overthrow the wrong;  
When Christ the Lord and rightful King, empowered from on high,  
Will stretch His hand throughout the land, with justice by and by.

"The boast of haughty tyrants no more shall fill the air,  
But age and youth will love the truth, and speed it everywhere;  
No more from want and sorrow shall come the hopeless cry,  
But war shall cease and perfect peace will flourish by and by.

"A glorious time is coming, the time of Jubilee,  
With shout and song 'twill sweep along, like billows of the sea;  
The joyfulness of nations shall ring through earth and sky,  
This day of grace draws on apace - O, happy by and by.

"The glories of Christ's Kingdom we gladly watch and pray,  
Till o'er the height the morning light shall drive the gloom away.  
For when the balm of healing shall reach mankind from high,  
They'll turn toward their precious Lord and love Him by and by."

- P. L. Read.

## **Gleanings from the Lake Mills Convention**

IN THE August issue of the "Herald," page 127, there appeared a little article under the caption, "Among Those Mentioned," in which our attention was drawn to some of those lesser known, but none the less faithful, of the early Church, whose staunch support of brethren more prominently identified with the ministry enabled the latter to "carry on" under circumstances in which they might otherwise have become altogether discouraged. These were such as "oft refreshed" the great Apostle Paul, who "labored with him in the Gospel" and whose sterling worth of character-manifested as it was in loving, kindly, sympathetic deeds and in whole-hearted, sacrificing zeal -- the apostle with evident satisfaction, delighted to recall and mention in his letters.

It is with something of the same feeling of satisfaction that we are constrained to write a few lines concerning the recent convention held at Lake Mills, Wisconsin. There was nothing about it which one might truthfully report as outstanding. The number in attendance was not large -- probably not more than a hundred gathered from a radius of a few hundred miles. The themes discussed from the platform introduced nothing which had not been told many times before, yet as often as we think of the fellowship we experienced there, so sweet a memory returns that among the conventions which find brief report in the pages of this journal, we feel that the one held in Lake Mills July 27, 28 should not pass unmentioned.

Throughout the two-day period in which its sessions were held, there was an evident realization that the "things coming to pass" are in fulfillment of prophecies long foretold and should but confirm our faith in the "more sure Word" and its Author. Indeed, one of the speakers referred to Luke 21:25, 26, in which our Lord foretold "the distress of nations" which we find present on earth today. This speaker also called attention to the fact that nations laboring under such distress

and fear may cause the innocent to suffer in their efforts to eradicate internal enemies and that we should treasure our present privilege of fellowshiping together and walk in such a way that our actions and belief be not misunderstood by the "powers that be." He further expressed his personal belief that we stand on the threshold of further enlightenment as to many of the books of prophecy, particularly that of "Revelation." He urged to a very diligent study of these prophecies and a careful comparison of their statements with contemporaneous events that we may be strengthened and encouraged in the difficult days which may be before the last members of the body of Christ.

Nor should any suppose that the "rejoicing" at the close proximity of the Kingdom joys and honors to be ours on the other side of the veil, was unmixed with a very genuine feeling of sympathy with the present experience of any undergoing affliction of various kind, especially those of our brethren in the war-stricken countries. In addition to the "best of bonds" which unite all our hearts to those "beyond the seas," several of the conventioners have blood relatives there, and our hearts could not but feel torn and bruised, even while "lifting up our heads."

The program provided for one meeting to which the public was especially invited, the subject selected being "The Shaking World and, the Happy Outcome.' \* In addition to distributing leaflets, this meeting was announced in a rather unique way. Weather was such that on Saturday evening the local band was rendering music selections in the park which is situated in the center of the town. During an intermission the bandmaster, on request of the brother having local arrangements in charge, announced our meeting over the band's loud-speaker system, so that none of the many visitors to this lake-side summer resort could have failed to hear it. When we remember how easily such requests are refused-indeed, how rarely they are granted-we cannot but be impressed with the value of a consistent Christian life in its influence on those with whom we live, for surely, it must have been because of the bandmaster's knowledge of the long life of kindly, considerate Christianity regularly followed by the elderly brother who requested such a favor that this courtesy was extended to our group. The writer of this report has more than once asked himself if his life has been lived in such a way that from those who know him well he could expect a similar result.

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\*We are requesting the speaker to furnish us with a complete manuscript of this discourse, as we believe it most timely, and very profitable to all our readers. - Ed. Com.

That thought brings back another convention theme: "Self-examination." Turning to Psalm 139:23, 24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting," the speaker brought the lesson home to us each by pointedly observing: "The Psalmist is not here asking the Lord to examine (or critically investigate, or try, or prove) some of his friends or neighbors, but his prayer was, "Examine *me*, search *me*, prove *me*, O Lord, and see if there be any wicked way in *me*, and lead *me* [in the right way] in the way everlasting."

During a symposium one of the brethren dwelt at length on an article contributed by one of our British brethren which appeared in two instalments in the "Herald" for June and July under the caption "Call to Remembrance the Former Days." This brother, a young (?) man of eighty-three, after pointing out that the distress and collapse of nations which we had expected to take place almost instantaneously "had proven to be protracted and long drawn out," observed: "All this may have developed a lack of confidence and trust, and a lack of love for the brethren (Matt. 24:12), and because we have found some of our brethren untrustworthy, it may have had a chilling effect

on our souls. What, then, can we do to make these last days of our pilgrimage the best days of our life? We answer: 'Call to remembrance the former days, etc.'"

This speaker also alluded to the experiences of the Polish brethren as reflected in the letter from a brother in Poland published in the July "Herald," and he expressed the hope that we too might prove faithful and realize in any time of stress which God might permit, His continued love and care over us.

Taking the scripture 2 Corinthians 5:7 for a text, an other brother counseled us that "walking by faith," in the apostle's use of that expression, does not mean "walking by a system of religion gathered by some one and formulated into a confession of faith by his followers." Said he: "There is too much treatment of belief as though it were a pill or a dose of medicine-something to be swallowed. Some say, 'I believe all of present truth,' yet a little questioning shows that they know but little of the precious truths of God's Word. How can one believe what he does not know? Faith is believing with the heart, not with the lips alone, and it is by this heart belief, that is, by a living faith, a faith which 'worketh by love,' that we must 'walk by faith' to reach the Kingdom."

Continuing, this speaker observed: "We have a saying that the light is shining so brightly, we can almost walk by sight. The thought is right, although the wording may be faulty. What is meant is that prophecies are being fulfilled so plainly before our eyes that their fulfillment helps us to believe in the outworking of the Plan of the Ages." One of these prophecies which it is believed is now in process of fulfillment, the speaker proceeded to discuss briefly. "It is the vision given to Elijah as recorded in 1 Kings 19:11-17. The wind, the earthquake, the fire, and the still small voice, while directly fulfilled in the destruction of the Ahab and Jezebel dynasty, are being fulfilled in the larger sense today upon antitypical Ahab and Jezebel. The wind represents wars which weakened Ahab's kingdom then, and which have weakened Christendom today. The earthquake represents revolution; Jehu, then, the various Socialistic, revolutionary governments now. As Jehu drove furiously, so these are crushing the modern Ahab-Jezebel (church and state) governments. As fire followed the earthquake in the vision, so we may expect that following the revolutionary phase of the present time, there will be further experiences, perhaps a period of anarchy, permitted for a season. As God was not in the wind, earthquake, or fire, so He is not now 'for' the various 'isms' (Fascism, Nazism, Communism, etc.) that are taking part in the destruction of the present world order. No! He is not 'for' any of these. But just as in the vision the still small voice *followed* the three destructive forces, so at this time the still small voice of God will be heard *after* the storm of trouble has passed. His voice *will then* be heard, speaking peace to the nations, and the 'times of restitution' spoken of by all His holy prophets since the world began, will be ushered in."

In addition to the many helpful thoughts expressed in the discourses, the conventioners participated in a stirring testimony meeting, and from time to time were favored with selections of special sacred songs, which inspired to renewed hope and courage. Surely it was good to be there, and it is our confident belief that the brethren present received much of permanent blessing for themselves, the influence of which should extend to others with whom they come in touch to the honor and praise of the Lord.