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Glory to God in the Highest

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." - Luke 2:11.

FOUR MILLENNIUMS had passed by since that tragic day when, through the disobedience of one, sin had entered to mar God's perfect creation. Four millenniums, which had seen the blight of ever-increasing sin and degradation take their toll in the sufferings of humanity. Four thousand years of woe-sickness, pain, death. The night of weeping ever darker, -the future ever more hopeless. A spectacle, surely, to awaken the pity and compassion of the heavenly hosts, who from the beginning had been observers of the sad plight of the children of Adam. What a dreadful torrent of evil had been unloosed by that one act of selfwill, and how oft must it have been regretted. But no way of repentance, though sought with tears, could revoke the inexorable decree: "Dying, thou shalt die." The downward course of man continued with increasing tempo as age followed age, generation succeeding generation, "'born but to die," till any ray of hope which may have resided in the human breast must have been well-nigh extinguished. Man himself was helpless, unable to give a ransom for his brother, and heaven seemed not to heed.

"Long Lay the World in Sin and Error Pining"

But indeed, was heaven heedless? Was there no ray of sunshine to rift the clouds of darkness for the groaning creation? Ah yes, and therein lies the story, the sweetest story, which shall never grow old though oft we hear it. It is the story of divine love, the story of Jesus, the gift of God to reveal that love for the world. For God had not forsaken His creation, and His ears were open to their cry. Yes, He had in all ages revealed glimpses of His purpose for humanity, though often in dark sayings and mysterious rites. For beginning with the words spoken in Eden, the so called Proto-evangelism which foretold the Seed, and continuing through the promises to Abraham and the succeeding patriarchs, and through Moses, David, and the prophets -- we can trace the word of hope which kindled the spark of faith to await the Promised One. And there were not wanting those who had clung to these precious rays of divine hope and who waited for the "consolation of Israel." To Israel, awaiting their restoration and future preeminent glory at Messiah's advent, this was the promise unto which, in their "instant service night and day, the twelve tribes hoped to come. To this "sure word of prophecy," they would "take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a

dark place," until the day should dawn, and the day-star arise in their hearts. And this Messianic hope gave meaning to their worship, filled them with patience in suffering, kept them separate from the nations around, and ever fixed their hearts and thoughts upon Him who was to come. And now the signs of His advent were discernible, and at any moment there might burst upon them the gladsome tidings that He had appeared. With what earnest longing, with what eagerness of gaze did they await the dawn of the long-expected day; and lo, it is at hand, and the first step in preparation for Him is about to take place.

Zacharias, the Under-Priest

It was the time of the morning sacrifice. Within the courts of the great temple all had long been busy. Priests and Levites hastened about their duties, and as the massive temple-gates slowly swung on their hinges, a threefold blast from the silver trumpets of the priests seemed to awaken the Holy City in a summons which could not leave unmoved patriot, saint, or stranger. It was scarcely daybreak, but already the preparations for the offering of the lamb were ended. And now it was brought forth, to once again make sure of its fitness for sacrifice, to water it from a golden bowl, and then to lay it in mystic fashion (as tradition described the binding of Isaac) on the north side of the altar with its face to the west.

In the words of Edersheim: "All, priests and laity, were present as the priest, standing on the east side of the altar, from a golden bowl sprinkled with sacrificial blood two sides of the altar, below the red line which marked the difference between ordinary sacrifices and those that were to be wholly consumed. While the sacrifice was prepared for the altar, the priests whose lot it was, had made ready all within the Holy Place, where the most solemn part of the day's service was to take place -that of offering the incense. And now the lot was cast to indicate him who was to be honored with this highest mediatorial-act. Only once in a lifetime might any enjoy that privilege. Henceforth he was called 'rich,' and must leave to his brethren the hope of the distinction which had been granted him. It was fitting that, as the custom was, such lot should be preceded by prayer and confession of their faith [the so-called Shema, consisting of Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41] on the part of the assembled priests."

In the group, ranged that autumn morning around the superintending priest, was one of "the course of Abia," on whom the snows of at least sixty winters had fallen. But never during these many years had he been honored with the office of incensing-and it was perhaps well he should have learned that this distinction came directly from God. In many respects he seemed different from those around. His home was not in the great centers but in a small town in the uplands, south of Jerusalem. He was of the humbler class of the priesthood, but yet possessed the twofold honor of being married to the daughter of a priest. Zacharias and Elisabeth, his wife, were truly "righteous" in the sense of walking, so far as man could judge, "blamelessly," alike in those commandments which were specially binding on Israel, and in those statutes that were of universal bearing on mankind. Elisabeth was childless. For many a year this must have been the burden of Zacharias' prayer; the burden also of reproach, which Elisabeth seemed always to carry with her. They had waited together these many years, till in the evening of life the flower of hope had closed its fragrant cup; and still the two sat together in the twilight, content to wait in loneliness, till night would close around them.

And now, on this day, the lot for the daily incense offering had fallen on Zacharias. In his white sacerdotal robes he entered the Holy Place that the clouds of the incense, which symbolized Israel's prayers, might herald the way for the smoke of the victim presently to be burned in their stead. And as he pours the incense on the flames, as the intercessor for his people, he too joins his supplications. We need not question what the burden of that prayer must have been with one who, like him, "waited for the consolation of Israel," and "looked for redemption." It was, doubtless, that the sins of the nation, his own sins, and the sins of his household might be forgiven; that Jehovah would accept the atonement of the lamb presently to burn on the great altar in their stead; and that the long expected Hope of Israel, the Messiah foretold by prophets, might soon appear.

Zacharias' Prayer Answered

And as he prays, on the right side of the altar there appears what he could not but recognize as an angelic form. Never, indeed, had even tradition reported such a vision to an ordinary priest in the act of incensing. No wonder, then, that Zacharias "was troubled, and fear fell on him," as suddenly he beheld what afterwards he knew to be the Angel Gabriel ("the might of God").

Gabriel had come on a mission befitting the world from which he had been sent. The hour had arrived when the prayer which Zacharias and those like him had so long raised, should be heard. The Messiah was about to be revealed, and the faithful priest who had so longed for His appearing would be honored by a relationship to Him. He had for many a year desired a son; not only would his wish be granted at last, but the son to be born would be the prophet, long announced, to go before the Expected One to prepare His way. He need not fear: he who speaks is Gabriel, the archangel, who stands in the presence of God, and as one who always beholds the face of the great Father in heaven, he has a tender love to His children on earth.

But the heart is slow to receive the access of any sudden joy and to lay aside disappointment. The thought rises in the heart of Zacharias that the glad tidings of the birth of the Messiah may well be true; but, as to the son promised to his wife, stricken in years as she now is, can it be possible? A sudden dumbness, imposed at the angel's word, at once rebukes his doubt and confirms his faith.

From the Temple to Nazareth!

It seems most fitting indeed that the evangelic story should have taken its beginning within the sanctuary, and at the time of sacrifice. But now we pass from the forerunner to the Messiah, from the temple to Galilee, from the priest to the humble, unlettered family of Nazareth. While Zacharias and Elisabeth were rejoicing at their promised blessing in their quiet home in the south, there lived in the village of Nazareth, over a hundred miles to the north of them, a Jew of the name of Joseph, and a simple maiden named Mary who was betrothed to him as his future wife. It was now the sixth month from the appearance of Gabriel to Zacharias, and Mary's time of betrothal was passing quickly away in her family home. The future herald had been pointed out, and now the advent of the Messiah Himself was to be announced as silently and with as little notice from men.

In the words of Edersheim: "Five months of Elisabeth's sacred retirement had passed, when a strange messenger brought its first tidings to her kinswoman in far-off Galilee. It was not in the solemn grandeur of the temple, between the golden altar of incense and the seven-branched candlestick, that the Angel Gabriel now appeared, but in the privacy of a humble home in Nazareth. The greatest honor bestowed on man was to come amidst circumstances of deepest human lowliness, as if the more clearly to mark the exclusively divine character of what was to happen. And, although the awe of the Supernatural must unconsciously have fallen upon her, it was not so much the sudden appearance of the mysterious stranger in her retirement that startled the maiden, as the words of his greeting, implying unthought blessing. The 'Peace to thee' was, indeed, the well known salutation, while the words 'The Lord is with thee' might waken the remembrance of the angelic call to great deliverance in the past. But this designation of 'highly favored' came upon her with bewildering surprise, perhaps not so much from its contrast to the humbleness of her estate, as from the self-unconscious humility of her heart. And it was intended so, for of all feelings this would now most become her. Accordingly, it is this story of special

'favor,' or grace, which the angel traces in rapid outline, from the conception of the virgin-mother to the distinctive, divinely-given name, symbolic of the meaning of His coming; His absolute greatness; His acknowledgement as the Son of God; and the fulfillment in Him of the great Davidic hope, with its never-ceasing royalty, and its never-ending boundless Kingdom."

It would have been no more than human weakness if doubts had risen at such an announcement; but these the angel sets to rest, if they were springing, by telling her that a miracle, no less wonderful than that which would happen with herself, had already been wrought upon her relative Elisabeth. Mary's answer is the ideal of dignified humility, and meek and reverent innocence: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." And presently she was alone. Blessed Mary, favored of God. If she had but known the deeper meaning of the name Jesus, which, like an unopened bud, enclosed the flower of His passion, that was mercifully yet the unthought of secret of that sword which should pierce the soul of the Virgin Mother, and which only His future history would lay open to her and to others.

John the Forerunner

And now the long-looked-for event had taken place in the home of Zacharias. A son had been born -- the future Baptist. On the eighth day--the day of his admission into the congregation of Israel by circumcision -- the child would receive its name. No domestic solemnity was so important or so joyous as that in which, by circumcision, the child had laid upon it, as it were, the yoke of the law, with all of duty and privilege which this implied. To Zacharias and Elisabeth the rite would have deep significance, as administered to the child of their old age so miraculously given, and connected with such a future. It was at the close of the rite that, in the benediction in which the child's name was inserted, the mother had interrupted the prayer. Without explaining her reason, she insisted that his name should not be that of his aged father, but John. Of all this Zacharias was, though deeply interested, yet a dumb witness. But now the father deepened the general astonishment when he wrote the same name. But this was not the sole cause for marvel. For forthwith the tongue of the dumb was loosed, and he who could not utter the name of the child now burst into praise of the name of the Lord. His last words had been those of unbelief, his first were those of praise; his last words had been a question -of doubt, his first were a hymn of assurance. "It was all most fitting. The question of unbelief had struck the priest dumb, for most truly unbelief cannot speak; and the answer of faith restored to him speech, for most truly does faith loosen the tongue. The first evidence of his dumbness had been that his tongue refused to speak the benediction to the people; and the first evidence of his restored power was that he spoke the benediction of God in a rapturous burst of praise and thanksgiving. The sign of the unbelieving priest standing before the awe-struck people, vainly essaying to make himself understood by signs, was most fitting; most fitting also that, when 'they made signs' to him, the believing father should burst in their hearing into a prophetic hymn."

"But far and wide, as these marvelous tidings spread throughout the hill-country of Judea, fear fell on all--the fear also of a nameless hope. The silence of the long clouded day had been broken, and the light, which had suddenly riven its gloom, laid itself on their hearts in expectancy: 'What then shall this child be? For the hand of the Lord also was with Him!'"

"A Thrill of Hope, the Weary World Rejoices"

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock "by night." - Luke 2:8.

With what charming simplicity does St. Luke narrate the circumstances attendant on the greatest event in human history! An event compared with which all others in history are insignificant, is recorded in a few words, without any attempt at exaggeration or embellishment. And yet, simple as is the account, there is deep fascination in the scene as it unfolded before the shepherds. The stillness over hill and valley, broken only by the bleating of the sheep; the unclouded brightness of the Syrian sky, with its innumerable stars; and the associations of these mountain pastures, dear to every Jew as the scene of David's youth -- were over and around them. The flocks were destined for temple-sacrifices, and accordingly the shepherds were not ordinary shepherds. To have received such surpassing honor from above, they must have been members, though poor and humble, of that true Israel, which included Simeon and Anna.

"Of a sudden came the long-delayed, unthought of announcement. Heaven and earth seemed to mingle, as suddenly an angel stood before their dazzled eyes, while the outstreaming glory of the Lord seemed to enwrap them as in a mantle of light. Surprise, awe, fear were hushed into calm and expectancy as from the angel they heard that what they saw boded not judgment, but ushered in to waiting Israel the great joy of those good tidings which he brought: that the long-promised Savior, Messiah, Lord, was born in the City of David, and that they themselves might go and see, and recognize Him by the humbleness of the circumstances surrounding His nativity."

"Fall on Your Knees, O Hear the Angels' Voices"

But though His birth was mean on earth below, it was celebrated with hallelujahs by the heavenly host in the air above. "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will."

"O Night Divine, O Night when Christ was Born"

The hymn had ceased; the light faded out of the sky; and the shepherds were alone. But the angelic message remained with them, and in amazed joy they hastened unto Bethlehem to "see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

And with this thought we leave our meditation on the divine circumstances incident to our Savior's birth. To us, in a far deeper sense, hath the Lord made know "this thing which is come to pass." To us who can see in that Holy Night the birth of Him who is the Hope of the world and who shall soon be revealed in a mightier manifestation with great glory, when heaven and earth shall together sing His praises; to us the first Christmas anthem still ever rings with its message of "glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." - W. J. Siekman

The Spiritual Beehive

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." - Prov. 6:6-8.

IN the following discussion we shall follow somewhat the injunction of the above verse, except that we shall substitute the bee for the ant.

The hive of the honey 'bee presents a most interesting phenomenon and quite a marked analogy to the household of saints of this Gospel Age. Maeterlinck, in his "Life of the Bee," says, "They display an intelligence that, in many respects, is superior to any other creature outside of man, with the possible exception of the ant.

Many men have devoted their lives to the study of bees and their habits, so consequently a great deal is known about them, but in some respects they are still an enigma. For want of a better name, Maeterlinck speaks of the instinct or intelligence that seems to motivate bees in all they do, as being "the spirit of the hive," and back of that, of course, he says, is the law of the God that made them so.

The life of the hive centers about the queen, not as an individual but as an office. A normal hive consists of a queen, 7 or 8 princesses, several hundred drones, 9,000 eggs, 18,000 larvae, 36,000 nymphs, and 70,000 to 90,000 unfertile females, or workers. The life of the hive is very well systematized and ordered. Every worker knows just what is expected of it, and performs that duty day in and day out faithfully. Just how it is, decided what each individual bee is to do has never been definitely discovered. There is a competent police force, but there does not seem to be any head to the organization, for the queen is as mercilessly subject to the so-called spirit of the hive as is each and every bee in it.

The family life of the hive is centered in the queen; she is the mother of all, for she lays all the eggs. The drones, or males, do no work: they have no sting and are produced and tolerated solely that the queen or princesses may have a group from which to choose the unfortunate one with whom they mate, for he has but a short time to live following that event.

The unfertile females, or workers, are divided into many groups, each having its own particular duties to perform. There are the queen's bodyguard and helpers, who see that she is properly cared for and fed; there are the nurse-maids, who look after the eggs; and another group that feed the larvae and the nymphs; there are the honeycomb and cell workers; there are the housekeepers, who sweep and remove every particle of dirt; there are the guards, or police force, who watch to see that no alien bees or other foes intrude or harm the hive; and there are the honey-gatherers and honey-storers, whose duty it is to gather and store the honey for future use.

One very unusual and interesting feature about bees is their positive control over the development and future destiny of each egg. All the eggs are the same when laid but can be developed as unfertile females or drones or princesses, depending upon the way they are treated and fed.

Another characteristic well worthy of notice here is their utter self-sacrifice. In the spring of the year when the new generation has developed sufficiently to care for itself and when the hive

would thus become too crowded, the old bees leave the hive in a swarm to seek a new home, where they will begin again to provide for those that will come after them. All the intricate construction of a well ordered beehive and all the honey they have worked so hard to store up is left to the young bees. To all appearances they do this joyfully; ordinarily, bees will sting on the slightest provocation, but on this, their one national holiday, they can be handled and picked up with bare hands.

Maeterlinck states that the experts have been unable to determine whether it is instinct or law or intelligence or what it is that enables a hive to perfect and control its very efficient organization; he is certain, however, that it is not the blind following of instinct, for when accident or other circumstances require a change, the bees will conform their course of action immediately to the need at hand. There is no head or boss of the hive; the queen is the most carefully nurtured and protected member, but that is because of her significance to the life of the colony. The queen, being the mother of all, lays all the eggs that give promise of future life; and so, for want of a better name or explanation for the directing force of the bee's organization, we use the one Maeterlinck gives us, namely, "the spirit of the hive."

All of this presents a very fitting analogy to the New Creation, for the Holy Spirit, the power or force or intelligence that directs the efforts of the New Creation, is also invisible; nevertheless, this is what begets and quickens and energizes us and causes us to grow in Christ-likeness when we really function as new creatures. Our invisible Head operates through this spirit, and we are admonished to call no man (or organization) master. It is the Lord, through His Holy Spirit in the Word of truth, that enlightens us and begets us through the promises of that Word to the hope of a heavenly inheritance. There is nothing in connection with our experiences as new creatures that does not result from the Holy Spirit, and consequently from God, whose spirit it is. Therefore, we are admonished to "be filled with the spirit," otherwise we will not have proper direction and will lean to our own understanding and desires. To be filled with the spirit, we must maintain our connection with the fountain of life so that, as our capacity grows, we may be filled by having the sluices and ducts of our lives open to the fountain.

There is no lack or limit to God's spirit; the measure of that spirit which we possess is determined by our capacity to receive and by the way we keep the channels open for its free flow. Jesus declared (Luke 11:13) that the Father is more ready and willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him than is an earthly parent to give good gifts unto his children. The Father is willing to give, and the spirit is there in abundance: what, then, limits the amount of the spirit we possess? or what keeps us from being filled to overflowing? Merely our own capacity and readiness to receive.

More than likely, in voicing this admonition to be filled with the spirit, the apostle also had in mind the fact that we are leaky vessels and must go to the fountain-head daily in order to keep filled.

The One Mother

We often cite the fact that we have but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father over all; but we seldom mention the fact that we also have but one mother common to each and all of the New Creation. Insofar as we know, we who have been nurtured in present truth are the only ones who realize that we have a mother. Who or what is our mother?

In Isaiah 51:1, 2 we read: "Hearken unto Me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the Rock, ["whence" not in the original text] ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit, ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that **bare you.**" Now, how may we identify the class to whom these words are spoken? Fortunately, it is not necessary for us to identify it, as the Apostle Paul has done so for us.

In Galatians 3:26, 27, 29 (Weymouth) we read "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then are you indeed true descendants of Abraham, and are **heirs** in fulfillment of **the promise.**"

Here Paul tells us that the Church are not only the sons of God through coming into Christ by faith, but that also, by the same act of faith, they have become the seed of Abraham in fulfillment of the promise God made him. Now note what he says further, in Galatians 4:16-28: "It is written that Abraham had two sons; one by the slave-girl and one by the free woman. But we see that the child of the slave-girl was born **in the common** course of **nature**; whereas the child of the free woman was born **in fulfillment of the promise.** All this is allegorical; for these women represent two covenants. One has its origin on Mount Sinai, and bears children destined for slavery. This is Hagar; for the name Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, which is in bondage together with her children. But the Jerusalem which is above is free, and she is our mother. . . . And you, brethren, like Isaac, are children born **in fulfillment of a promise.**" - Weymouth.

So then, our mother is the original Abrahamic covenant, pictured by Sarah; she represents the free covenant, or promise, that God made to Abraham, for her child, Isaac, representative of the true Church, as well as of Christ (Gal. 3:29), was born in fulfillment of the promise: "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you."

Here, then, we have the analogy between the beehive and the New Creation in that each has but one mother. As the queen is the mother of all the bees in the hive, so we, including our Lord and Head, are all children of the original covenant, Sarah, which for a time was barren but eventually brought forth children through faith (Heb. 11:11) in fulfillment of the promise. The queen is the mother of the hive, not the ruler: she simply represents the promise of seed, of children. Likewise, the Abrahamic covenant is not our head, or ruler, but simply represents the womb of promise through which the Holy Spirit begets us as new creatures in Christ when, in answer to the call, we present ourselves in whole-hearted consecration to do the Father's will. The promise which God gave to Abraham was unconditional; but to become inheritors of that promise, we must follow in Jesus' footsteps and dedicate ourselves wholly to the will and service of God. Manifestly, the members of the Church are the ones referred to when God, through the prophet, says, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." This is the step which each one must take to place himself in line as an inheritor of God's promise to Abraham.

It is not the intention here to try to fit every peculiarity and custom of the bees into an analogy of some feature in the life and development of the New Creation, but only a few of their traits that stand out as good object-lessons.

Predestined Characteristics

There is never any uncertainty as to the kind of duties each bee is to perform. Just why or how they know what to do has never been fully determined; possibly the answer is found in pre-destination, in the preparation, care, and kind of food each larva and nymph receives in the various stages of its development; for, as Maeterlinck points out, the variations of sex and rank are determined, not by the kind of an egg the queen lays, but by its placement in the hive under the nursemaids, who watch over the cells, eggs, larvae, and nymphs to minister proper care and food for the desired end.

The ability of the fully matured bee to know and execute the particular duties expected of it very aptly pictures the condition which we believe will obtain in the glorified Church. There is nothing haphazard about our development, for God has predetermined the characteristics and number that shall make up the Bride of Christ, twelve thousand out of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Does this exclude Gentile Christians?

No, for Paul shows how that the natural descendants of Abraham were cut off from the promise and we Gentiles who manifest the faith of Abraham were admitted to take their place. He likens the original covenant centered in Abraham and his seed to a tame olive-tree from which the natural branches, because of unbelief, were broken off that we, naturally branches of the wild olive-tree but brought near through faith, might be grafted in. One peculiarity of the olive-tree, we are told, is that wild olive branches grafted in the tame olive-tree will bear tame fruit. This is not true of other fruit-trees, and no doubt Paul was led to use the olive-tree for this very reason.

This has not been an age of free grace; it has been an age of election. "No man [says Jesus] can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him." And He further says that "all that have been drawn of the Father have come unto Him." This definitely excludes from the "drawing" all who have not come unto Jesus during this age.

God, in predetermining the characteristics which each one of this class will have to develop, arranges through His Holy Spirit his environment, experiences, and other providential leadings (the nurse-maids, so to speak) so as to work out in him the pleasure of His will. He does not coerce the will or compel us to prove worthy; no, there must be whole-hearted cooperation and sincere desire on our part.

The apostle's statement that "God hath set the members in the body as it hath pleased Him" indicates that God retains control over matters pertaining to His New Creation. This does not mean however, that every ruling and every appointment made by the various class or church groups is necessarily the Lord's will, for past experience shows that at times God overrules the voice of such and makes His own appointments. When the early apostles sought to replace Judas, even going so far as to do it by lot that, as they thought, God's will might be expressed thereby, God simply ignored their choice and, in His own due time and way, appointed the Apostle Paul. - Then time and again in the past two thousand years the Lord's true saints have been forced to repudiate leaders and organizations which had gone astray from the truth and spirit of the Lord. If all church appointments are to be considered as appointments of the Lord, then we should never

repudiate a leader or take a stand against a majority; and if that were the case, we should still be members of the Society or the Catholic Church. We should always endeavor to be directed by the Lord's spirit in appointing our leaders, but if we make a mistake, the Lord can overrule it for our good.

With bees, as already mentioned, there is first the egg, then the larva, then the nymph, and finally the fully developed bee. You cannot tell by looking at the egg or the larva what the result will be, but by the time the development has reached the nymph stage, there are definite indications.

The egg would illustrate the stage of our begetting, when hope is born in us of eventually attaining to joint-heirship with our Lord in the queenly station. Then comes the quickening into life and activity of the embryo new creature, when food and exercise begin to play an important part. This stage would correspond to the larva, but there are as yet no very distinguishing marks or characteristics; but by the time the larva has developed into a nymph, the distinguishing marks of its future are quite evident. This would illustrate the transformed state in our development as embryo new creatures, the development that has been attained by the transforming or renewing of our minds. Those who reach this stage are able to partake of strong meat instead of being fed simply on the milk of the Word. These have attained to quite a degree of knowledge of God, whom to know is life eternal.

The Christian's development has been compared to a race-course having a starting-point, quarter marks, and a finishing goal. The nymph stage would compare to the third quarter-mark, which, in this comparison, would represent an advanced stage in Christ-like development. It is the "spirit of the hive" that causes the bee nurse-maids to work out the proper development of egg, larva, and nymph; likewise, it is God's Holy Spirit working in us and through the various agencies that minister to us, that brings about our development. "As many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God." "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, **even as by the spirit of the Lord.**" "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren."

The last quarter of the course brings crucial tests of fitness and endurance. It may seem to those closely associated with us that our development gives evidence of all the elements of God-likeness; but until the goal is reached, there is possibility of failure. It is he that endures unto the end that will be saved and gain the crown of life. "In your patience [patient endurance] possess ye your souls."

Paul knew when he had reached the goal. Previous to that time he says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The time came, however, when he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day."

The unique characteristic of bees in their ability to control sex and development through care and quality of food was used by our Pastor to illustrate how it is possible to be begotten of the spirit in one hope of our calling and then end up in widely differing classes. Any egg laid by the queen bee may become a princess if the right food and conditions are maintained; or under other conditions it may become an infertile female, or a drone.

Drones play rather an ignominious part in the life the hive: they are lazy; they feed only themselves; they are greedy and careless and dirty and indifferent to the welfare of the hive. And as soon as the new queen is chosen and has mated, the workers round up the drones and destroy them.

In our study of the Lord's Word we learn that there are also three possibilities for every one begotten of the spirit, depending upon development and growth in Christ-likeness. If we give diligence to make our calling and election sure, adding in our faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-affection, and love, we shall not fail, "for so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." But if we do not study to show ourselves approved unto God, if we are not diligent in partaking of the food designated by the Holy Spirit as being essential to those who will become the queen-bride, the potential mother of restored mankind, then we may be of the great company class, the unfertile nurse-maids, so to speak, servants before the throne, but without the functions of the bride. And failing this, there would remain only the fate of the drones, "total destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power." - 2 Thess. 1:9.

Wisdom and Sacrifice

Maeterlinck's statement that bees display an unusual intelligence, "more than any other creature outside of man with the possible exception of the ant," is also of interest in this analogy, for as their habits are observed, it becomes evident that this wisdom is not for self-preservation but is with the view to the future, particularly of those that shall follow them. They lay by in store for the long winter months and for the new generation that will occupy the hive when they leave because of overcrowding. This means a lot of self-sacrifice on their part in behalf of the new generation and in obedience to the "spirit of the hive."

Likewise, according to the Scriptures, the class that obey the leading of the Holy Spirit and follow in the Lord's footsteps of self-sacrifice, also display a wisdom that is far in excess of the wisdom of all other classes in this world.

All classes do not display the same amount of wisdom. There are those who think only of their immediate need or lust or desire; such will steal or murder or take any advantage they can in order to satisfy their desires. This course displays a very low standard of wisdom even for fallen man. Closely allied to this group is the class whose whole aim is to accumulate worldly riches by any means they can, so long as they can escape the hands of the law. Then there are those whose aim it is to get glory and honor; and again those whose desire it is to rule. And so on until advancing in the scale of earthly wisdom, we come to the classes who seek wisdom in one form or another. Some of these spend their lives delving into the secrets of nature or science or astronomy; such men display considerable wisdom and are of much benefit to the race. And then, there is a class, very unselfish, who devote their lives to social uplift and to physical, mental, and moral betterment of their fellow man; such show considerable wisdom and much self-sacrifice and will no doubt receive honor of the Lord and be suitably rewarded.

But those who seek to follow in Jesus' footsteps, follow a course of wisdom that is much higher than any of these: theirs is the wisdom from above, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

In the display of this heavenly wisdom, the illustrious leader of this class-seeing with vision afar off, a restored, righteous, and happy world, capable of fulfilling their intended destiny to the glory of God -- willingly gave up the glory He had with the Father, came to earth as a man, suffered and died in order that He might bring about the realization of this vision. So God-like was He in this course that it is declared of Him in the eighth chapter of Proverbs that He is the personification of wisdom: "I am understanding."

Those who follow in His footsteps display this same heavenly wisdom, and through self-sacrifice and self-denial seek to fit themselves to assist in the great work of restoring mankind. They, like the bees, look to the future, to the blessing of all mankind, and are willing to undergo all manner of suffering and depredation that they may have a share in bringing about the blessings of life and happiness. This seems utter foolishness to the world, but on the other hand, the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, whereas He approves of those who follow His Son. So when we are admonished that "wisdom is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding," this is the kind of wisdom that is meant.

Honey

The Bible contains a number of references to honey, and the inference is that bees, in storing up honey, are of much benefit to mankind. When Jacob sent his sons into Egypt to buy corn, he sent honey with them as a special gift to the king. This of itself would seem to indicate that honey was greatly prized. Then, too, one of the great inducements held out to the Jews to encourage them to press on to Canaan was that it was a land flowing with milk and honey, two perfect foods supplied by nature without destruction of life. Then again, when the Lord desired a superlative comparison that He might convey to men's minds the value and desirability of His Word and His judgments, He said, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." "How sweet are Thy words to my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" - Psa. 19:10.

Bees gather honey by searching out the nectar from myriads of blossoms of fruit and flower, and so carry the pollen from flower to flower that thereby we may have fruit. Without the bees our fruit crops would be very small.

Perhaps the analogy is not as well marked here as in some of the other points we have noted, but it is manifest that if we work in obedience to the dictates of the spirit, we will store up sweetness from the flowers (usually spoken of as trials and tribulations) along our way even though they be covered with thorns. Furthermore, were it not for the pollenization of experience with experience in our trials, we would bear but little fruit. As workers together with God, we are interested in laying up the nectar, or essence, that comes from the fruit and graces of the spirit, that sweetness which, considered as one fragrant and life enriching whole, is summed up in the word love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law"; "love is the end of the commandment." Love, tested and approved, is the goal for which we strive.

"How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower:

"How skilfully she builds her cell:
How neat she spreads the wax;
And labors hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

"In works of labor or of skill,
I would be busy too:
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

"In study, work, and grateful prayer
Let my swift years be passed,
That I may give for every hour
Some good account at last."

- WALT WHITMAN.

- *Contributed by J. T. Read*

A Rendezvous with God

"And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat." - Exod. 25:22.

A RENDEZVOUS with God! A trysting-place where He will condescend to come near to His servant Moses in intimate communion, and there unfold His will. A meeting-ground provided by God Himself where He, the high and lofty One inhabiting eternity, will hold special converse with a mortal man. Wonderful indeed was such a "mercy-seat," center of close communion- and unique revelation, that holy place where Moses, "faithful in all his house as a servant," might be alone with God. How exceptional were his privileges, and how extraordinary the revelations he received in this rendezvous with God.

And yet this was all only a typical approach into God's presence. Wonderful though it was, yet it was but a shadow cast before, giving promise of better and greater things to come. In a time, then distant, with a glory far excelling, a greater "Mercyseat" would be provided by God in His progressive purposes; then again with still more sublime meaning He would speak to recipients of His grace, saying, "And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy-'seat." In due time "Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house are we," would be the center of a greater intimacy with God, a greater unfolding of His grace, and a richer inheritance, "eternal in the heavens." Truly, "if what faded had its glory, then what lasts will be invested with far greater glory"; and now through the spirit, and by a nearer approach to God, "we all mirror the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, and so we are being transformed into the same likeness as Himself, passing from one glory to another." - 2 Cor. 3:11, 18, Moffatt Translation.

Well indeed should we call to mind that holy men of old "searched diligently" concerning the grace that should be the happy estate of some favored ones in a coming day, our day. We should never forget that righteous men of other ages could not see or hear things now unfolded to us and

placed within our reach, "which things" even "the angels desire to look into." Never should we forget that "not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain" could give peace to the conscience, "nor wash away the stain" of sin. But now, since God has in Christ reconciled us unto Himself, "from above the Mercy-seat" He sends the word of His grace to us through His ministering apostle: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." - Heb. 10:19-22.

The Word of Peace from the Mercy-Seat

God was indeed in Christ reconciling us unto Himself. He was in Christ in such intimate union, in such sympathetic tenderness, and in such immeasurable sacrifice that His redemptive love remains too profound for us to fathom, and costly beyond our comprehending. How dear to the heart of God are His blood-bought children. What insight into the depths of that love comes to those grateful receptive hearts who keep constant tryst with God close by His own lovingly provided Mercy-seat. What words from above that great propitiatory are heard there, and how much those words are constantly needed by even the most faithful saints. Dark stains from the pit from whence we were digged can flash across the mind. Recollections can come which send a dart of pain through the now cleansed conscience; and moments, acts, and memories we fain would forget forever, can come trooping back like a cloud over the spirit within. How all this painful recollection will be shut out from our unsullied and unbroken communion in heaven, we know not; but while we are yet tabernacling in flesh wherein is no perfect righteousness, it is well that we do thus visualize at times the "horrible pit" and the "miry clay" out of which redeeming love has lifted us. Praise be to Him by whose kind favor we have been washed, cleansed, and sanctified, and there is therefore now no condemnation.

Oh, the peace the Savior gives. Truly, "He is our peace." The past, with all its stains and shadows, its foolishness and indiscretions, is under the blood-that efficacious, full-atoning blood which cleanseth us from all sin. The voice which speaks from "above the Mercy-seat" speaks peace, the perfect peace of which the Psalmist wrote, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." (Psa. 32:1.) A blessed state surely is this-when concerning it an apostle challenges: "Who will bring accusation against God's chosen ones? Will that God who justifies? Who is he who condemns? Will that Anointed One who died; and, still more, who has been raised; who also is at the right hand of God, and who intercedes on our behalf? Who shall separate us from that love of God, which is in the Anointed Jesus?" - Rom. 8:33-35, "Diaglott."

"We have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom, also we have been introduced into this favor in which we stand; and we boast in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5:1, 2, "Diaglott.") "This favor in which we stand" -- what a heritage it is. Here "the God of peace" shall be with us; "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" stabilize us; and here we may be filled "with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit." (Phil. 4:9; Rom. 14:17; 15:13.) How complete is our peace with God, and how marvelous the peace of God into which it leads us. Does life have its disturbing incidents, and problems their disquieting distractions? Are there burdens of our own to bear, and loads borne by others we must share in fulfilling the law of Christ? None are immune from such personal burdens, nor exempt from such load sharing, if so be they are true to God and His children. But has God not said, "I will commune with thee from above the Mercyseat"? And there

He speaks, "Be not anxious about anything: but in everything let your petitions be made known to God, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving; and that peace of God which surpasses all conception, shall guard your hearts and your minds by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6, 7, "Diaglott.") What a "Mercy-seat" is ours! Blessed rendezvous with God, where weary spirits often find relief, oft escape the snare of the tempter, and find at times a ladder such as Jacob saw, and exclaim with him, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" - Gen. 28:17.

The Word of Endearment from above the Mercy-Seat

Wonderful words came from the lips of Jesus, words of life and beauty indeed. Words illuminating prophetic pages, words establishing new standards of life and conduct, and words so laden with endearment that we are left in speechless wonderment. To those with whom God can commune "from above the Mercy-seat" the word is, "The Father Himself loveth you." Loves us! yes', but with what an astounding depth and measure! Jesus gave us its dimensions: "As Thou hast loved Me." (John 16:27; 17:23.) Could there be, therefore, any surer test of our nearness to God through 'Christ than in finding our hearts responding with an inexpressible gladness to such declarations of so unique a place in the love of God? If, as we are told, "the goodness of God leadeth to repentance," it must surely follow that when repentance has prepared the way for this further revelation of divine love, a greatly increased inflow of love to God will lift one up where communion above the Mercy-seat will be habitually sought after, blessedly real, and give to the whole perspective a maturity embracing greater nearness to God, greater light on His inspired Word, and richer foretastes of heavenly fellowship.

Do we ask if God really craves this close, intimate, reciprocal love from us, or wonder if He finds in our ardent affections toward Him an odor of sweet incense? Can it be that His emotional depths are stirred in a special way by the warmth of our responsive love, when, as we know, He has the sublime, unceasing, outpouring adoration of heaven's higher creatures? His Word reveals that it is even so. Is He not asking for this love in His appeal, "My son, give Me thine heart"? Is it not the same appeal in this other word to us, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind"? Herein we perceive the divine delight in our love. He does rejoice in its overflowing purity and permanence. He is love, and it is the very character of true love to crave reciprocation. He who bestowed mother love upon womankind, bestowed it out of the fathomless depths of His own great parental affection. Our power to love with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind was given us to this great end. We turn the pages of the written Word, and we gaze upon the reflection of infinite love revealed in the Living Word, and love begets love, reciprocal affection becomes a consuming joy within, and from our inner being we say:

"Take my love, my God; I pour At Thy feet its treasure store; Take myself-I wish to be Ever, only, all for Thee."

But if we would know God's love thus drawing powerfully on our hearts' love, how much we need to remember that it is found only around His own appointed trysting-place, "the blood-bought Mercyseat." This is where the apostle brings us, saying, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10.) , It is therefore clear that only when we keep habitual rendezvous with God at the Mercy-seat, only then will our love for Him rise up as a sweet incense, rejoicing His heart. Then too, since love is the fulfilling of the law, where, if not in this same hallowed place where God communes with us from above the Mercy-seat, will His love become shed abroad in the heart, broadening and

deepening until God and neighbor are loved according to the command in which Jesus epitomized the whole law? Truly, it is through abiding in this sacred spot where God meets with man that we find joy and rest in His love, there receive and reflect His love, and there commune with joy unspeakable and full of glory. There indeed "heaven comes down our souls to greet, while glory crowns the Mercy-seat." Blessed rendezvous with God

Safe-keeping Promised from above the Mercy-Seat

Words of assured forgiveness have come from Him who promised to meet us at our Mercy-seat. Wonderful words of love have also been spoken there to our cleansed and dedicated hearts. The past has been put under the blood, and the present made a blessed walk of close communion with God. But still there is more to follow. How like the Lord to speak again and say to us now as He said to brethren long ago, "**These** things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (John 15:11.) And that our joy may now be complete He has spoken words calculated to give us the assurance that all we have committed to Him for the future is safely placed in His keeping. By virtue of our being His purchased possession, bought by the blood of His own dear Son, can we not by faith believe that He who began His good work in us will surely complete it? He who is able to make all grace abound toward us and whose spirit bears witness with ours, does indeed speak to us "from above the Mercy-seat," enabling us to rejoice in a hope both sure and steadfast. "He shall give His angels charge over thee" is a blessed promise. Another is equally assuring: "The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." (Psa. 121:5.) Again, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." (Psa. 91:1.) Such comfort coming from a keeper who never slumbers nor sleeps, must, if we be true-hearted, give us faith to 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." - 2 Tim. 1:12.

In the sacred Word-just as it is about to open its last book with these words: "A revelation of Jesus Christ, which God granted Him for His servants, to show them what must come to pass very soon"-we read this inspiring message: "Now to Him who is able to keep you from slipping and to make you stand unblemished and exultant before His glory-to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for all time."-Rev. 1:1; Jude 24, 25, Moffatt Translation.

Here, surely, is a message "from above the Mercy-seat" peculiarly comforting and assuring at this particular time. To such as are now waiting in hope "for the grace that is to be brought unto you **at the revelation of Jesus Christ**," what rest of heart there is in knowing that our trust is in One able to keep us from slipping and to make us stand exultant and unblemished before His glory. "He is **able to keep you** from falling." He who knows **you** with all your weakness, He who knows your "unprofitable" service and all about your mistakes and failings; yet "He is able to keep **you**." Faith believes He can and will, for

"His love in times past forbids me to think
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to keep me quite through."

All along the way there has never been wanting "from above the Mercy-seat" the word in season for present needs. God has never failed to speak to us through the medium of His all-embracing

Word. Comfort, warning, great and precious promise, reproof, everything necessary to our fellowship with Him, He has spoken. And now, even this wonderful **now** in which we live, there comes the message by which we are in a special way privileged to keep a rendezvous with God. On the border line we stand, our salvation so much nearer than when we first believed. All along we have been privileged to know "a place than all beside more sweet," a trysting-place of prayer and communion where "the oil of gladness on our heads" has been no figment of our imaginations but a true witness of God's spirit bearing witness with our own. He who had spoken forgiveness full and abiding, and sent into our life the needed heart strengthening words of endearment, has spoken in just as faithful a manner to loyal hearts those words whereby such may rejoice in hope of a final attainment of the glory to which they have been elected in the love and foreknowledge of God. Thus, among the incidents and diversified experiences of life we treasure recollections that memory preserves for us as hallowed resting-places and to which our hearts turn for fresh encouragement when faith needs reminders of God's never-failing love and care. And He who has spoken the word of good cheer to our hearts along the way over which we have thus far come, He will not be silent to us now in times like these in which we live. As before, so He will continue to speak to us "from above the Mercy-seat," giving strength for daily needs and assuring us that soon, perhaps very soon, He will have us with Him yonder in His immediate presence. Then face-to-face, and in a glory excelling all our previous conceptions, ours will be an eternal rendezvous with God.

Thanks be unto Him for all past and present joys of communion through Christ our Mercy seat. Praise His name that even here in the house of our pilgrimage He has walked with us and communed with us in such priceless fellowship. In love and joy we now long for the hour when no more with veil between, we shall see Him in all His glory and know the rapture of a perfect communion with our Father, and with a Bridegroom whom our soul loves supremely. How transporting the prospect---this eternal rendezvous in *glory!* -- *Contributed.*

- J. J. Blackburn

Surrender Self-Will--Receive God's Will

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." - Acts 1:8.

CHRISTIAN LIFE is too often destitute of real spiritual power, and is essentially carnal; and it is the duty and privilege of every child of God to enter at once into the newness of life and to walk in the power of Christ's resurrection.

Hence the starting point--instant abandonment of sin and of every known weight which prevents or hinders progress. Whatever is wrong or believed to be wrong in God's sight cannot be indulged in with impunity. It is held up as utterly destructive of all holy living and testimony, as unnecessary (improper) because wrong, and as making impossible even assurance of salvation.

Secondly, a deadly blow is aimed at self-life, in its six forms: self-dependence, self-help, self-pleasing, self-will, self-seeking, and self-glory; in other words, a new practical center is sought for all the life to revolve about, and in this way a new step is taken in advance. Beyond the territory of all known sin there lies another almost as dangerous, where self-indulgence is the peculiar feature. There is a large class of pleasures, amusements, occupations which do not bear the hideous features of sin but which all tend to selfishness.

Thirdly, the surrender of the will to God in obedience. Christ must to every believer become not only Savior but Lord. (Rom. 10:9, R.V.) "No man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Spirit." (1 Cor. 12:3.) Hundreds who accept Him as Savior from sin have no real conception of Him as the actual Master and Sovereign of the daily life.

Fourthly, the infilling of the spirit. Here is perhaps the most delicate and difficult part of this teaching. But it is not well to stop on phrases; whether we agree or not on the exact form of words, we must agree on facts, and conspicuous among the facts is this, that thousands of professed believers, like the Ephesian disciples, do not practically know whether there be a Holy Spirit or not.

Fifthly, the revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul as an indwelling presence. This is the climax of this teaching. The supreme end of the Holy Spirit's indwelling and inworking is to manifest the personal Christ as consciously our possession and in possession of us.

Sixthly, beyond these there is always a last stage of teaching: the privileges and victories implied in this higher or deeper life such as the rest life of faith, power over sin, passion for souls, conscious fellowship with God, growing possession of promises, and prevailing prayer and intercession.

Wherein does this differ from the teaching now common in the majority of our churches? may be asked.

(1) It makes more of Jesus as a Savior who will save us from our sins. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." "Faithful is He who calleth you, who also will do it."

(2) It magnifies the necessity of surrender to the will of God and breaking with the world. In apostolic times, if a man confessed Christ, he knew what it meant, for the world would break with him; but now it is not so. Many professing Christians go on hand in hand with the world, and their lives are barren and unfruitful in consequence.

(3) It makes much of the abiding presence of Jesus. The **heart** is opened. He is asked to come in and abide, and faith rests upon His promise to do so. His presence causes the heart to burn as did the hearts of the disciples going to Emmaus; brings peace, as when He came over the waves to the disciples on the sea; drives out evil as He cleansed the temple; and fills the soul with joy, as when He appeared to the disciples in the upper room.

(4) While the object sought is freedom from sin and effectiveness in service, it makes it more of receiving than doing. We must, with a childlike spirit, receive the good things God is ready to bestow before we can be a blessing to others. "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing," the Lord said to Abraham. The disciples must first receive the bread from Christ's hand before they could distribute to others.

There is no preaching of the truth more forcible than the silent influence of a consistent Christian character, bearing in richness and luxuriousness the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, and self-control. And no preaching of the truth, however eloquent, reasonable, and logical, is likely to be productive of results to the glory of God if not backed by the silent yet potent influence of a consistent Christian life.

Here is a way of preaching the Gospel which may be measurably overlooked by some who are anxious to do more active service in the cause we love. Let us not forget that golden opportunities lie all about us. Ye are indeed living epistles, known and read of all men. Our families, our neighbors, are judging of the truth by its effects upon us. Let us not forget this. We must be transparent and let the light of God's truth shine through all our doings. "

- R1151, R2164, R2165

Clean and Unclean Meats

"For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing." - Deut. 14:2, 3.

GOD GAVE certain instructions to the Jews regarding the use of foods, and it would seem that there was a physiological reason for this as well as a typical reason; but it is the "typeism" of the matter that is of the greatest interest to the spiritual Israelite.

Here are some of the things that God told the people not to eat. In the first place, anything that does not divide the hoof and that does not chew the cud. "The camel, the hare, and the coney . . . chew the cud but do not divide the hoof: ye shall not eat them. The swine divides the hoof, but does not chew the cud. It is unclean." Then there are unclean birds, such as the eagle, the kite, the osprey, the raven, the owl, the hawk, the pelican, the cormorant, the heron, the lapwing, and the bat.

These things are symbolical or typical of spiritual foods that Christians should not receive today. Good animals divide the hoof, and are ruminants. Good doctrines are similar-what they stand on is of two parts, and therein lies one of the great differences between the truth and the creeds. The truth teaches two parts of the divine Kingdom; and the nominal church creeds only one part, namely, the heavenly or spiritual. In Zechariah 14 we read of the Mount of Olives being divided into two parts. If only the Church goes to heaven, man must have the earth. These two parts take in everything.

After a public meeting a lady once said, "Why, that's a wonderful message you have. I see now where my boy will fit in. He died six years ago, out of Christ, and I have had no hope for his salvation until now."

We replied, "You can hardly say that he died out of Christ, for the death of Christ embraces every member of the human family, and because of this fact your boy will come forth from the grave and have a chance to win eternal life."

True doctrines are ruminating doctrines. They go over the same thing again and again. The great main things must be kept before our minds. Do we ever grow tired thinking of the works of creation? Did you ever closely examine a star-fish taken out of the ocean? It is one of the most wonderful things in the sea. Did you ever examine a common dandelion through a microscope? It is an exceedingly interesting creation. Take that large butterfly called the Chamberwell Beauty. Look at its wings. Man could never make anything like one of those wings.

Do we ever grow tired of the divine promises? Suppose that a friend in New Zealand told you that he was leaving you a vast estate. Would you ever grow tired of hearing about it? Does the great scheme of redemption weary us? We go over and over these things. It is an abnormal appetite that demands something now all the time. What did Paul preach in the Book of Romans? Christ. In the Book of Hebrews? Christ. In the Book of Galatians? Christ. And Christ Jesus was the theme of Peter, John, and all the rest of the early writers.

There are many things good to eat without eating mice and rats, pelicans and bats, dogs and cats. And who would want to eat a carrion bird such as a crow? It is black, and it says "Caw, caw," and feeds on dead carcasses. We do not want doctrines of the "dark ages" that say, "Caw, caw," and that are of carrion nature. We do not want to eat the owl, that says, "Who? who?" and flies about in the night-time. It is too mournful. No mournful doctrines for us. We do not want to eat bats that are part mouse and part bird, being neither the one nor the other, just likee certain doctrines that are not clear-cut, but are all mixed up.

Fishes that were classed as fit for food were to be possessed of fins and scales. Fins gave them symmetry and balance in the water, and scales a bright, shiny appearance, as well as some degree of protection.

And so, indeed, the doctrines of the Scriptures are well balanced. As we have already pointed out, they hold forth both heavenly and earthly promises. They are also bright and shiny, reflecting the glory of wisdom and of love.

So give us the clean things. For "the wisdom that is from above is first pure." Purity is a great thing. We do not care to drink water that is crawling with minute animals. We like pure water to drink and to look into. Yes, we love to look into pure water, far, far down, to see the reflection of the hills and the skies. "My oxen and My fatlings are killed," said the Master. So let us feed upon the bullock of the ransom; also, the passover lamb, the bread of life, and the green herbs in the form of the promises pertaining to everlasting life, and eliminate all unclean food from our spiritual bill of fare. - W. Sargeant

Items of Interest

New Arrangement Regarding Witness Cards

A test has been made of the efficiency of the "Witness Cards" which we now supply with our address as compared with a card giving the address of the one who distributes them. The latter has proved much more effective, securing a 6 per cent return, as compared with a 2 1/2 per cent return for the former. In small quantities, the expense of printing cards with individual address would be prohibitive. We can, however, furnish cards with your own address in lots from 200 up. Brethren who cannot use that many cards will, if they desire, be supplied with cards having a blank space in which they can write or print their own address.

Post-Cards and Mottoes

Post-cards at 12. and 20 cents a dozen with Christmas greetings, also with Christmas and New Year greetings combined, also some with "Season's Greetings," are in stock.

Mottoes, suitable for Christmas gifts, sell at 5 cents each' and up.

Photo Drama Slides Available

A letter from Brother L. W. Jones, M. D., 1020 Central Avenue, Wilmette, Ill., advises that he is prepared to supply Photo Drama slides, and other slides on Bible subjects, on both glass and film; also other helps, such as stereopticons; and he urges those who would like to use this means to witness to the divine plan of **salvation** to get in touch with him.