

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXIV August, 1941 No. 8

Consecrated Thinking

Excerpts from sermon by Brother B. H. Barton

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." - Phil. 4:8.

THOUGHT is the beginning of all things; therefore, fore, it is of great importance. Sometimes we hear the remark, "Oh, a thought isn't very much-just a little thought, what does that amount to?" But this afternoon we will try to magnify, or exalt, the power of thought. We are going to show that the little thought is more important than the word we speak, or the act we perform; that the place we will have in the Kingdom will depend on the thoughts we think. We want to recognize that the ease with which we will gain the victory will depend upon our thoughts; whether we have a place in the Little Flock or in the Great Company is merely a matter of our thinking. The possibility of our being ultimately lost will depend on the thoughts we think.

We might say that thoughts are seeds which are planted to make things grow. In a sense each person is like a farm. We are growing a crop on our farm, and that crop we call character. That is the reason Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church: "Ye are God's husbandry." The real thought is, "You are God's farm." As with natural farms there is great diversity; so with individuals. One, has a character like a nicely cultivated farm-there is patience, love, zeal, godliness, earnestness, and other grand qualities growing in his character. Another has a character like a farm overgrown with weeds. In such we see envy, jealousy, malice, strife, and all kinds of evil fruitage.

Just as seed has to be planted to raise a crop on a farm, so thought is required to develop the character desired. The seed is a very little thing, yet it produces a large plant. So a thought is a very little thing, yet much grows from it. We find the idea expressed in the Bible that the seeds we plant are the thoughts we think. The Apostle Paul refers to this when he says, in Galatians 6:7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of

the Spirit reap life everlasting." When the Apostle referred to sowing, he referred to thought. The same Apostle says again, "I have sown, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase." Here again he referred to thought.

Parable of the Sower

We find the same thing brought to our attention in the parable of the sower who went forth to sow. Some seed fell by the wayside, some upon stony ground, some among thorns, and some fell on good ground. Then the Lord explained what the seed is. He said the good seed is the Word of God. And what is the Word of God? It is simply a statement of God's thoughts -- a collection of thoughts which God has put in a book for our advantage and help. Other books record the thoughts of men, whereas the Bible gives us God's thoughts. This is shown in Isaiah 55, where the Prophet says: "My thoughts are not your thoughts; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My thoughts higher than your thoughts." We need to plant more of these thoughts in our hearts and minds, that they may spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God.

There are two kinds of seeds--seeds that produce things helpful, like the grain and flowers, and seeds that produce injurious, hurtful plants, such as thistles and weeds. Even so there are two kinds of thoughts--good and bad, helpful and evil. As the good seeds produce grain and flowers, correspondingly good thoughts produce patience, godliness, humility, gentleness, meekness, and faith. And as the bad seeds produce weeds, correspondingly bad thoughts produce jealousy, malice, hatred, envy, strife, ungodliness, and all sorts of evil things.

Another thing about the two kinds of seed--a good seed requires much attention and fertilizing or it will not amount to anything. That is the way with a good thought. We must work it over, cultivate it, water it, and give it attention if we expect it to grow. It is different with bad seed that produce weeds. They do not have to be worked over and cared for to make them grow. So with bad thoughts. The great trouble is to keep them from growing. The work of the successful farmer or gardener is to make the good seed grow, and to discourage the bad seed from growing. So the work of the Christian is to encourage the good thoughts to grow, and to discourage the bad thoughts so they will not grow.

Seeds Reproduce Themselves

There is another important thought here. Seeds produce more seeds like themselves. The plant grows, and if allowed to continue far enough, by and by that plant will go to seed, and there will be more seed of like kind to the first. If in the corner of the lawn there is a little dandelion plant and it is not plucked up, by and by that dandelion plant will go to seed, and there will soon be not a lawn, but only a dandelion patch. So if a good thought is planted and it is encouraged, watered, and cultivated, that good thought will grow and produce a prolific harvest of good thoughts. On the other hand, if a bad thought is planted, it will by and by go to seed, and there will be an abundant reaping of bad thoughts. So we see how necessary it is that the Christian start with right thoughts, for so much will grow out of his thoughts.

Another point which we believe very essential: A good seed will never do any good unless it is planted. The bad seed will never do any harm unless it is planted. A good thought will never amount to anything unless you think it; and a bad thought will never do any harm unless you think it. Most people do not distinguish between a thought and thinking the thought, but there is a vast difference. To plant a seed, you must bury it; you must cover it up. So a thought is one thing, and to think a thought--to welcome, to encourage, to harbor it--is another.

An Important Distinction

Let us note the distinction between thought, and the thinking of a thought. You remember the account of Jesus being baptized of John in Jordan, and how immediately He went out into the wilderness. He was without food forty days, and finally He hungered. Satan came to tempt Him-not visibly-he doubtless suggested a thought to His mind: "Command these stones to be turned into bread; You have the power; You are hungry, why not use Your power, making some bread out of these stones." He refused to entertain that thought; He would not plant it. He said, "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He refused to plant the seed-to think the thought. We are glad He was proof against the temptation. The seed was handed to Him by the Evil One, but He did not plant it.

Thoughts and Thinking

There is a lesson for us here. We are not to blame for our thoughts, but we are to blame for what we think. We are not always to blame for bad thoughts. If some one puts a thought into my mind by a statement which he makes, I am not to blame. But I am to blame if I harbor it, if I welcome it, if I think the thought. The Scriptures say: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is not, "As a man's thoughts are, so is he."

So in our text the Apostle says: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." This is the idea expressed by the Apostle in Galatians 6: "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." When he says, "He that soweth to the flesh," he means he that thinks thoughts out of harmony with God's will-thoughts altogether in keeping with the spirit of the flesh. If he entertains such thoughts, he is sowing to the flesh. The Apostle says he shall reap corruption. In our text, Paul tells us what the thoughts are that we should think. Let us take these "things" and analyze them.

First, "Whatsoever things are true." If any thought comes to our mind, therefore, that is not true, we should crush it, put it down, not entertain it, not harbor it. Exaggeration is simply the result of entertaining untruthful thoughts until an untruthful disposition is developed.

Untrue Thoughts Concerning God

As we do not want to entertain untrue thoughts of any one or anything, let us be careful not to entertain untrue thoughts about God. He has stated "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He says that "He will supply all of our needs, according to the riches of His grace." He says, "No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly." These are only a few of the passages the Christian has to rest his faith on. If you and I entertain the thought that God is going to desert us, we are entertaining an untrue thought. As we entertain that thought, it will begin to develop the weeds of doubt. When a thought of this kind comes to our mind, let us reason that it is impossible for God to forget His promises; it is impossible for Him to go back on His word: it is as impossible for Him to desert His child as it would be for us to do the most impossible thing imaginable. In one Scripture the Lord says: "If you walk contrary to Me, I will walk contrary to you." What did the Lord mean by that? He is walking with us, and we with Him. He says: "If the time ever comes when you walk contrary to Me -- if you turn around and walk in another direction, I will go right on, but it will be walking contrary to you. I will not turn around and walk the other way to keep with you. I will go straight ahead and walk contrary to you." Why? Because we have turned around and are walking the other way. We want the faith that will not entertain a

thought that God will be untrue to what He has said. Whatsoever things are true, think on these things, and do not for one moment think of the untrue things.

Whatsoever - Things are Honest

Then he says, "Whatsoever things are honest, think on these things." A child of God has a very different conception of honesty from the people of the world. The man of the world considers every one as honest that would not rob another man of money, or property, or anything that belongs to him. The Christian has a higher conception of honesty, for everything he has belongs to the Lord. His eyes, his ears, his tongue, his hands, his feet, all are the Lord's; all of the money in his pocketbook, all -of his money in the bank, and all of his interests are the Lord's. The Christian considers that it would be dishonest to take that which he has given to the Lord and use it selfishly. It would be dishonest to let these hands engage in anything that would be displeasing to the Lord; it would be dishonest to let my feet take me to any place that I could not go with the Lord's endorsement. The dishonesty, however, is not merely in doing a thing, but it is in allowing oneself to entertain the thought.

Usually, when the time comes to do a dishonest thing, the Christian, if he has permitted himself to entertain the thought, has persuaded himself that it is honest. If you entertain a dishonest thought -- if you do not crush it, you will come to the place where you find yourself overcome. If a thought comes to us that is not quite honest, let us say, "Here is a thought that is not honest-help me, Lord, to crush it." Then we have gained the victory. "Whatsoever things are honest, think on these things."

The Just Things

Then, "whatsoever things are just, think on these things." This would mean that a Christian has no right to do what God would not approve of, he has no right to endorse an unjust thought -- to entertain any thought that would be inconsistent with the principles of justice. For instance, it would be unjust to entertain a thought of some other brother that you would not like that brother to entertain about you. It is unjust for you to think that God will make allowance for your imperfection and weaknesses, but that He will not do the same for others. It is unjust to think that others should not be harsh in judging you, while you are harsh in your treatment of them. The Scripture says: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure you mete it shall be measured unto you again." This is like saying, "Lord, You just give me exactly what I am giving others. Lord, I do not make much allowance for others; do not make much allowance for me." Or, as we pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," which is equivalent to saying, "Lord, do not forgive my trespasses, because I do not forgive those who trespass against me"; or, "Lord, only make believe that you forgive me, as I make believe that I forgive them"; or, "forgive me today, but tomorrow and the next day bring my weaknesses up a-gain with interest, for that is the way I do." If we truly realize that God measures to us as we measure to others, what allowances we would make for others!

When Peter asked the Lord: "How often shall I forgive my brother; unto seven times?" the Lord replied, "Peter, forgive your brother seventy times seven," or four hundred and ninety times. Suppose Peter had said: "Lord, if I do forgive my brother four hundred and ninety times, and he sins against me the four hundred and ninety-first time, I will not have to forgive him that time, will I?" I imagine the Lord saying, "Peter, it will not be so hard for you to forgive the four hundred and ninety first time, after you have forgiven four hundred and ninety times. By the time you have reached the place where you can forgive four hundred and ninety times, you can start over and forgive as many times more." We should think just thoughts. Let us be careful in this

particular. As we are just in our thoughts of others, the Lord will think similar thoughts of us. It will be an evidence that there is a place for us at the Lord's side in the Kingdom.

The Pure Things

Again the text says, "Whatsoever things are pure, think on these things." Here again the child of God has a higher standard than the man of the world. A man of the world would think that any thought was pure that was not terribly immoral, but that is not the way with the child of God. The child of God recognizes that any thought is impure if there is any selfishness or any pride in it; or if there is any envy, jealousy, or malice in it. It does not have to be immoral to be impure from the Christian's standpoint. If a thought comes to us and we realize there is selfishness in it, we should crush it; if there is envy in the thought, we should seek to put that thought down. We cannot afford to entertain a thought that is impure, or a thought that is adulterated—a thought that is mixed with the spirit of the world. As has been said, it is only as we do this that we can properly understand just what kind of character the Lord wants us to have, because the more impure thoughts we entertain, whether they are impure along the lines of selfishness or pride, or some other line, the more they are dominating our heart and we are less qualified to judge what is right and what is wrong. Let us be careful that we think only on "whatsoever things are pure."

Lovely Things and of Good Report

Then the text says, "Whatsoever things are lovely, think on these things." If any thought comes to our mind that is so unlovely that we would not like others to know about it, do not entertain it. I have often thought how careful we would be about what we think if God had made us so others could look through and read our thoughts. Though we cannot read the thoughts of one another, God can look through, and read them, and the angels and the Devil can also. So the Devil tempts us. He looks into our heads and sees what thoughts we are entertaining, and knows where we are weak. Let us be careful whenever anything unlovely suggests itself, that we do not think on these things.

"Whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things." We are not to think on whatever the neighbors may say, but on what God has given a good report on. If there is any thought we do not find a good report on in the Bible, we should not entertain it.

If There be any Virtue

Then the text says, "If there be any virtue"—that seems to suggest to think thoughts that will help to make us better men and women, or better Christians. Do not think any thoughts that will not have that effect. If a wrong thought tries to come in, put a good thought in its place. Call some passage of Scripture to mind, sing some helpful hymn, put good thoughts in place of bad ones. Out of the simplest events of life we can extract blessings; we can get helpful lessons and draw closer to the Lord. "Whatsoever things are virtuous [if there is anything helpful], think on these things." The word virtue is not used here in the sense we use it, as opposed to vice. It means having something helpful in it -- that which would strengthen and fortify for our Christian battles.

Things Praiseworthy

Then, "If there be any praise, think on these things." If we find that God would praise us for thinking certain things, "think on these things." If you find you can praise God better as a result of

them, "think on such things."- If there are things that would not meet with His approval; if there are things that would not enable you to praise and glorify God better, do not think on such things.

In these words, we have the rule for attaining skill and success as a Christian. Whether or not we have a place in the Kingdom, the rapidity or slowness with which we make progress, the degree to which we will be helpful to our brethren-all will depend on our thinking on these things. While this seems to be simple and easy, few want to do it; yet there is nothing more important to impress on our minds than the lesson of this passage, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things," and thus bring "every thought into obedience to Christ."

Dearer to Me

Hark, 'tis the voice of love
Calling to thee;
Spirit disconsolate,
Come unto Me;
Come, though with sorrow's dart
Bleedeth thy loyal heart,
Dearer to Me thou art;
Dearer to Me.

Bravely, the path of pain
Thy feet have trod,
Farther from earthly joy,
Nearer to God.
Child, I have heard thy plea;
Yearneth My heart to thee;
Dearer art thou to Me;
Dearer to Me.

Comforts have fled from thee;
Let them depart.
I will, with sweeter joy,
Solace thy heart.
Loss thou hast borne for Me;
Loss shall be gain to thee.
Dearer art thou to Me;
Dearer to Me.

I have enough for thee;
All things are Mine.
Yea, I have kept for thee
Treasure divine.
Ask: thou shalt sharer be;
Seek: thou shalt nearer be;
Trust: thou shalt dearer be;
Dearer to Me.

Rise on the wings of love;
Soar into light;
Though earth grow dim to thee,
Heav'n shall grow bright.
Thou shalt the purer be;
Holier, dearer be;
Transformed to be like Me:
Dearer to Me.

- *Charles C. Tracy.*

The Letter to the Colossians

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." - Col. 1:1, 2.

ARCHES, VAULTS, squared stones, broken pottery, and other vestiges of an ancient city are visible near Chonos, in western Asia Minor, reminders of the departed glory of the city that rose on the ruins of the village, Colosse, of Paul's day. Soon after the writing of his letter, the city, together with the neighboring cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis, was destroyed by an earthquake. Strabo tells us that this earlier community was merely a "small town," doubtless better soil for the increase of the Gospel than the later community that is spoken of "as among the most opulent of cities."

Written at the same time as those to Philemon and the Church at Ephesus, this letter bears a strong resemblance to the one to Ephesus in topics discussed, their order of consideration, and the method of connecting them. There is one very evident and important distinction, namely, that while the letter to the Ephesians dwells on the teaching that the Church is the Body of Christ, this letter has as its main theme the glorious Head of that Church.

The time of writing seems to have been less than thirty years after the Cross. But even at this early date errors had been introduced into the Church. Paul's method of counteracting error is worthy but difficult of emulation. It is not easy today to discover from a reading of this letter just what errors are being combated, for instead of a lengthy advertising of the fallacies, Paul's answer to all error is Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It is not necessary to know the details of the "stranger" and his voice. All that is necessary is to be familiar with the "Good Shepherd" and His voice. "The sheep follow Him: for they **know His voice**. A stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

The principal false teachings this letter is written to combat seem to be that salvation may be secured by the keeping of the law; by severe abstemiousness; by obedience to the traditions of men; or by Grecian, Oriental, or Jewish philosophies-to the speculations which, a few centuries later, came to be called Gnosticism, a system of religious philosophy which taught that "knowledge rather than faith was the key to salvation." In all this there was evident a failure to "hold the Head" as also in the prevalent "worshiping of angels." Of this latter doctrine at the period of this letter Drumelow writes:

"This doctrine had received a great development in the centuries immediately preceding the birth of Christ. The world was imagined to be full of angels and demons, who presided over all the operations of nature and entered into the closest relations with the life of man. Every blade of grass had its angel, much more the mightier forces and elements of nature. Each nation had its angel, who guided its destiny and fought its battles. The common view that the angels are sinless was unknown, and even the best were not regarded as free from moral imperfections. Owing to the distance which later Jewish theology set between God and the world, it was natural that many should turn for help to the angels, who were ever close at hand and were the actual controllers of the ordinary course of nature and human affairs."

The doctrine of "angel worship" is not likely to prove a serious menace to the "brethren" today; however, the dangerous doctrine of salvation "by works," by severe abstemiousness, by

asceticism, has always attracted some in the Church, as has also the gnostic idea; and it is against these snares that inspiration has provided in this letter the best of material for the guidance and protection of the Church today. A careful study of it we believe will be of great benefit to all. And may we here suggest that we begin our study with Bible in hand, that we lose none of the inspired words fraught with deep meaning and valuable lessons for the consecrated heart.

Greetings to the Brethren in Colosse

From internal evidence we conclude that the Apostle has not yet visited the Church which he addresses. (Col. 2:1.) It is particularly appropriate therefore that he should open the letter with the customary introduction recommending himself, not, however as a great scholar, a deep thinker, a prominent Jew, but as "an apostle [one sent] of Jesus Christ."

During His earthly ministry frequent assurance was given His disciples by Jesus that He and the Father were completely one in purpose. He has left for our inspiration and example expressions such as, "The word which I speak is not Mine, but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do"; "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me"; "I can of Mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge, and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me"; "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that **I do nothing** of Myself"; "Though He were a Son [perfect, and, always and under all circumstances obedient], yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered," is the testimony of one who knew Him when the Father's work in Him had been completed. - Heb. 5:6.

Having finished the last lesson in obedience, and having been given "all power in heaven and in earth" we might have expected Him to desire to do and be permitted to do some works and make some plans of His own. Instead, Paul's greetings in the opening of this letter assure us that he is "an ambassador of Jesus Christ, by the will of God." Jesus has learned obedience not to exercise it merely during the brief period of His earthly ministry, but that for all eternity He might be "subject unto the Father."

It is not surprising that it should take a long and, to us, tedious process to find and develop a company sufficiently humble and submissive to be worthy to share with such an obedient One in His future work of establishing the Father's will in the earth. Those having less degree of obedience might be unwilling to "bind kings with chains, and princes with fetters of iron, executing upon them [merely] the judgments written," the will of God; and there would be the danger that they might not, at the end of the Millennium, share in the joy of their Head in that the time had come to "turn the Kingdom over to the Father." It is evident how important it is to examine every minor detail of our present lives with the utmost care that we may be assured we have made "**no** provision for the flesh to satisfy the desires thereof," but that in all things His will is our will. "Even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should **follow His** steps." (1 Pet. 2:21.) Doubtless only "through much tribulation" (Acts 14:22; John 16:33; Rom. 5:3-4; 8:17) can the proud and stubborn flesh be forced to yield so completely that "**whatsoever** we do, whether we eat or whether we drink, we do all to the glory of God." One who today, even in some trifle, either of the conduct of the flesh or of the study of the Scriptures, prefers his own thought, which can be only of the flesh, earthly, to Jehovah's thoughts, which are "as high as the heavens, would be unsafe to trust with the execution of "the judgments written." "This honor [will] have [only] His saints," "all" those holy ones who during the reign of sin and Satan have demonstrated that their will is wholly the Father's; those that, faithful even to the hour of death, can say: "Thy will, not mine be done."

Saints and Faithful

"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." - Colossians 1:2.

"In his earlier letters Paul addresses himself to 'the Church'; in his later, beginning with the Epistle to the Romans, and including the three great epistles from his captivity, namely, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, he drops the word Church, and uses expressions which regard the individuals composing the community rather than the community which they compose. The slight change thus indicated in the Apostle's point of view is interesting, however it may be accounted for." We suggest that perhaps by this time conditions were evidencing that not all "called out ones" were "faithful and holy." Within that circle of "called out" ones, there has always been, nevertheless, a closely knit brotherhood of "faithful" ones. "Faith weaves the bond that unites men in the brotherhood of the Church, for it brings all who share it into a common relation to the Father. He who is faithful, that is, believing, will be faithful in the sense of being worthy of confidence and true to his duty, his profession, and his Lord." -

A faithful one according to Thayer's Lexicon, is "one who has kept his plighted faith," as the betrothed bride to her intended; one "believing, confiding, trusting;" one who is "easily persuaded." These are therefore those who, drawn by "the mercies of God," are proving themselves worthy to be members of the Bride class. But note that their holiness, their trustworthiness, and their trusting are traceable to their being "in Christ Jesus." Thus only those who are "saints **in Christ Jesus**" are Christians. Such, wherever they live, it may be in Colosse or London, or some unknown village in the "new world," or in whatever part of the Age, the year 60 or 1941, may have fulfilled for them Paul's all-inclusive prayer for "grace and peace." "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus," and that is "grace sufficient for every time of need." "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God," and that faith continuing to control in every detail, peace in the sylvan retreat or amid the din of battle,, perpetual peace, and every other grace, is the heritage of one wholly devoted to the Lord (a proper definition of holiness), and will be eternally his if he continue to the end of the earthly trial "loyal to his plighted faith." Such have abandoned the misery that comes from pleasing self, for the peace that results from devotion to God; for the "work of righteousness is peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." - Isa. 32:17.

The greatest test as to the enduring quality of this peace, however, is to come, not when physical dangers threaten, but in the peculiar "perils of the **last days**," our days -- tests from "false apostles," appearing as "angels of light," deceptions that "if possible would deceive the very elect," for "they will show signs and wonders" for the very purpose of "seducing even the elect" (Mark 13:22), "for such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is **transformed into an angel of light**. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the **ministers of righteousness**; whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. 11:13-15.) Such are used of the Lord to test the quality of our peace. Even though they shall surely succeed in "drawing away followers, after them," as has been the case in the past, God will grant to those who are faithful to their Bridegroom, those who "love peace and pursue it," an experience of outward peace, and inward peace at all times.-See also Mark 9:50; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:2; Jude 2; Luke 1:79; John 14:27; Rom. 14:19.

The grace of a peace of sterling quality can be secured from only one source, "the God of peace." "Be perfect [complete, wholly God's], be of good comfort, be of one mind [the mind of Christ], **live in peace**; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." "The God of peace shall bruise

Satan under your feet shortly." (2 Cor. 13:11; Rom. 16:20; see also Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3; 2 John 3.) Peace may be, should be, ours-enduring peace such as theirs-peace upon which the intense jealousies and hatreds of the disintegrating Roman world could not intrude. What grace it was that Jew and Gentile should unite the incense of their prayers, the Greek and barbarian mutually edify one another in their search for the supreme wisdom; slave and master both be humbled at the feet of one Lord, eating now at one table, His table, all "one in Christ Jesus." Brethren, Paul calls them, but the term originally meant more than just "friends." It implied peace between them under adverse conditions. It meant common possession, common love, a common father, a common mother. Literally it is, "from the same womb." Resemblance, sympathy, cooperation are in that word. All previous differences of race or culture or fame or fortune can be obliterated when the phrase "brethren in Christ" is sincerely spoken. That is a power beyond the human. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.

For a fuller exposition of the relationship of these "saints in Christ, in their coordination as members of one Body see all of the Epistle to the Ephesians and 1 Corinthians 12 and 13. The Apostle John also dwells at great length upon this theme in his letters, making it as Paul does his chief theme next to that of Christ Himself.

Strictly none are in Christ Jesus except those who figuratively eat His flesh and drink His blood (John 6:56); only these bear the perfect spiritual fruit. (John 15:5.) Only "in Him" are any "made the righteousness of God." (2 Cor. 5:21.) Though "weak in Him, we shall live with Him." (2 Cor. 13:4.) We were "chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1:4.) We are "rooted in Him," "built up in Him," and "we walk in Him." (Col. 2:6, 7.) "Ye are complete in Him" (Col. 2:10), and "in the dispensation of the fulness of times our Father will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." (Eph. 1:10.) No wonder Paul was willing to go to any length that he might "win Christ and be found in Him." (Phil. 3:8, 9.) "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (1 John 2:6.) "Walk in love, as Christ also path loved us, and hath given Himself for us." (Eph. 5:2.) How evident it is that all of these blessings, even the confession of our weakness, are ours because we are "in Christ." Many nameless slabs in the catacombs bear the inscription, "In Christo."

Grace and Peace

In closing his salutation Paul blends the Greek salutation, "Grace" with the Hebrew "Peace." In the word grace are comprehended the two thoughts of the gifts and of the love which condescendingly bestows them patiently and forgivingly on the suppliant. A love and gentleness that we must emulate are in it. "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." - John 1:16.

Our wilderness journey is not more safe today than when Paul's mind turned to the greeting of the traveler of the desert, "Peace be unto you." This was the assurance given that the stranger was no enemy. That was a base deception if grace was not also evident. When grace reigns in our hearts, ours will be both by word and act the message of "peace on earth, good will toward men." Like Paul we will not merely wish our brethren "grace and peace," but will be willing to devote our all to the work of enriching their lives with every heavenly grace in Christ. Paul could not give these graces, but he could teach the brethren to accept the headship of Him who said, "My grace is sufficient for thee," "My peace I give unto you." - 2 Cor. 12:9; John 14:27.

- P. E. Thomson

Faithful Sayings

"God never opens wide the windows of heaven to the man with a closed Bible" -- nor with a closed mind either.

"When God gives us unique blessings, Satan besets us with unique temptations."

"The Scriptures are as wise in their reservations as in their revelations. Enough is revealed to make faith intelligent. Enough is reserved to give scope for development."

"Paul does not tell us he *complained* three times about his thorn, but that he *prayed* three times concerning it."

The Joy of God in His Children

*"The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night
His song shall be with me." - Psa. 42:8.*

THE PSALMIST has well said that praise is comely in the mouth of God's people, and that joy should characterize the upright in heart. The testimony of all those to whom God has shown His special favor should be, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." His loving-kindness controls the forces and agencies that minister to our joy in the daytime, and the remembrance of this should fill our nights with praise. To be forgetful or ungrateful in regard to the multiplied blessings received from the hand of God, surely denotes a very perverted condition of mind. But the Lord's children, mindful of His goodness, will not forget to offer the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to His name.

Selfishness and ingratitude never sing in the higher key of praise. The mind is too self-centered, the finer sensibilities too dwarfed to appreciate the benevolent character of a God who sends His rain on the just and the unjust alike. But gratitude and love must sing, and tell forth what the Lord has done. It is from hearts filled with these finer qualities that the statement comes, "Therefore will I offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." (Psa. 27:6.) As the manifold evidences of God's faithfulness are recalled, the receptive heart will express its wondering praise, singing as unto the Lord,

"When *all* Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise."

The angels who dwell in the presence of God, beholding with never-ceasing wonderment the operation of His love and power, are revealed to us as chanting their reverent, "Holy, Holy, Holy," before Him, in admiration and joy; singing also the worthiness of the Lamb "to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." But none should ever be able to sing redemption's songs so enthusiastically, so gratefully, as those who have been "redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb." - Rev. 7:4.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice," is the spirit of happiness urged upon us by the Apostle Paul. If this be a practical thing, it follows then that he who lives near to the Lord,

loving His will, and living "as seeing Him who is invisible," can have joy continually in his heart though all may not be serene in his surroundings.

To have learned to rejoice always, whether in the daytime of pleasant tranquility, or in the night of perplexity, is to have reached a state approximating that of the Apostle's admonition. The darker hours of "encircling gloom," which must be expected, will be brightened by reflections of the abiding faithfulness of the Lord. Greater than the crushing weight of trial, sweeter than the bitterness of tears we may not be able to check, will be the assurance that He knows, and loves, and cares. Thus we carry the perpetual song in our hearts, even praises unto our God.

God's Song of Joy

Let us look at our text again: "The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night **His** song shall be with me." We readily grasp the idea of our singing songs to the Lord, since all His intelligent creatures ought so to do. This is not, however, the only suggestion of our text. Taking it as we have it in our King James translation, and most others, the thought is not so much that of songs we may sing to God, but of "His song" being sung to us in the darkness-singing to us the comforting assurances of His constant watch care over us. In Ferrar Fenton's translation our text reads, "By day Jehovah shows His love, and sings with me at night." As to the correctness of that translation there could be some question, but as to the blessed truth it declares there should be no doubt. The God of the Psalmist is our God. "The God of all comfort," is our Father, and He assures us: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (Isa. 66:13.) The picture here is that of a mother who soothes her child, singing meantime the songs that can never be so sweet as when set to the music of a mother's love.

God's character combines all the attributes of fatherhood and motherhood. Thus we read, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." "Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (Psa. 103:13; Isa. 49:15.) It is therefore quite proper to think of God as singing those songs most suitable to our present needs. Times without number He has consoled us by anticipating our every need, and revealing His power as equal to every emergency confronting us. Our names "engraven on His hands," assures us of being constantly remembered: and He being for us is greater than all that be against us. It is a truth, God does sing to us of His power. Did not the ear of the Psalmist catch the majestic strains of God's song vibrating through myriad stars, telling of creative energy and eternal order?

"The music of the spheres should tell
How He created all things well."

The music of God's song comes to us not only in the worlds that tell of His power and wisdom, but it comes to us in a sweeter strain:

"Not alone do worlds of light,
And earth display Thy grand designs;
'Tis when our eyes behold Thy Word
We read Thy name in fairest lines."

"The various testimonies of the Law and the Prophets are the several chords of that harp, which, when tuned by the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, and swept' by the fingers of the devoted servants and searchers after divine truth, yields the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ear. Praise the Lord for the exquisite melody of the blessed 'song of Moses and the Lamb'

which we learn through the testimony of His holy Apostles and Prophets, of whom the Lord Jesus is chief!"

This indeed is God's song. No such story could ever have been conceived in the mind of mortal man, or originated in the thought of angels. It was faintly heard in the time of Enoch and Abraham, but grew in volume as dispensations moved onward to days of greater light, and as holy men of old, the heavenly choir over the fields of Judea, the faithful Apostles and succeeding generations of the saints have added their voices to the glad chorus. Faith rejoices in looking forward to a time when every creature in heaven and on earth will lend their voices to sing together the song of redeeming love, in harmony with God's song of love.

"An Eye That Never Sleeps"

Thus it is that our text, "The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime," takes on a very literal aspect. He who controls all influences for the good of His children, with unlimited agencies at His command, stands ready to marshal all these around our dwelling, if need be, to reveal His love in rich supplies of grace, or to protect us from the "ten thousand foes" seeking to do us harm. It is He who controls the forces of nature-the warming sun, the rain, the snow, the supply of fruit and flower, and the vegetation which absorbs from the soil the elements so necessary to human life. He it is who is the Author of all the elements of beauty, tenderness, and sympathy conducive to the happiness of His creatures. All of these minister to our joy and comfort.

Likewise, in the night He who neither slumbers nor sleeps, ceases not His loving ministrations. When sorrow comes, or adversity has overtaken us, He is near with His comfort to cheer, and His grace to sustain, for He knows how to "give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning." We hear His song of love and joy, and find it easier to "glory in tribulation," for **His** song tells us that "through much tribulation we shall enter the Kingdom." Therefore as we read over His exceeding great and precious promises, as we ponder over the repeated assurances of His never-failing care through all the deep waters of unexpected trials, disappointments, and discouragements, let us listen ever more attentively to His song of love, consoling us with visions of eternal and inexpressible joys.

Ten years in the gloom of Bedford jail were lightened for John Bunyan by a vision of the pilgrim way, which has cheered many another Christian. Out from Wartburg Castle came Luther's translation of the Bible; and who that has heard God singing His song of comfort can doubt that He drew very near to the great Reformer as he translated the sacred Word and gave it wings to soar, and to enlighten the world.

The sweetest song this world has yet heard came in the night. It burst over the fields where the shepherds watched their flocks in the darkness. How wonderful it must have sounded in a land where no voice of holy prophet had been heard for centuries. So it has been again and again. The announcement comes at midnight, "Behold the Bridegroom, go ye out to meet Him." Just when the heart is heavy because deferred hope has made it so, the burden is to be lifted. In all the history of the Church, the hour of extremity has been the season of God's opportunity. Her history's most touching memorials of faithfulness, and memory's most frequent and hallowed resting places, are eternally linked with those dark, critical hours when God intervened by sending His "song in the night" to give courage and strength to His children, and to show Himself strong in behalf -of those who trusted in Him, and who had learned to tune in with the word of His grace.

"For warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He;
And faith has yet its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

"The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again."

- *Contributed.*

The Separated Life

SO LONG as the Church remains amid earthly environments and more or less subject to the enticements presented by "the world, the flesh, and the Devil," she will find it necessary to keep fresh in mind the real facts of the separated **life** God expects of His people. She will also find it necessary to be frequently reminded that it is an important part of Christian experience to spend and be spent in the service of God. Inasmuch as the New Testament abounds in references to self effacing sacrifice as a feature of our privilege in imitating Christ, let us give consideration to some of these, turning first to the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love. This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that man lay down his life for his friends. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." - John 15:9, 12-13; 13:14-15.

True Nature of Love

In these several texts Jesus distinctly tells us to imitate Him-"do as I have done unto you." Here He teaches us that there will need to be a laying aside of all feelings of superiority in our approach to our brethren. He gives no encouragement to any one to note the soiled feet of others and then in self-congratulation take the position that one's own are not soiled, and become occupied in parading the infirmities of others-some of which may be real enough to be seen, and some perhaps wholly imaginary. It is the true nature of love to "cover a multitude of sins." It is the spirit of true sacrificial love to believe that we would find it better than we thought, if we only understood. Verily, the noblest trait of Christian character springing out of loving God with all the heart, is that of loving one's neighbor as oneself. Will not such love abounding in one's heart be manifested in "esteeming others better than himself"? Will it not lead us to minimize the defects, and "if there be any virtue, any praise, any good report" to magnify these? With this love, which is the love of God and of Christ, really abounding in all hearts, will it not be easier to make all needed provision and allowance for diversities, which in the very nature of things will be found among believers so long as the Church is in the flesh? Surely so!

We know full well why God's Word makes love for the brethren so vital a matter, and makes our spiritual sonship dependent on our love for them. He has told us why, by pointing us to the Son in whom He was well pleased. That Son pleased not Himself. He came to reveal the love of God to

sinful, selfish men. He came to completely separate His own from the world and its spirit by implanting love for righteousness and hatred for sin in their hearts, and He came to unite in a compact and heavenly unity the Church He redeemed, unifying them not by creeds and rituals but by the cords of the love wherewith He loved them. Love of self must necessarily be eradicated from the heart before this feature of sacrificial love will hold sway there.

United in a Bond of Benevolent Love

Between the saints who shared the experiences of the day of Pentecost, and those of us now awaiting the completion of the Church, there have been many differences of character, of experience, of knowledge, and of service, but in heart the saints have been, and the **saints** still are, one in faith, because there has been faith in the one Lord. They have one hope, because waiting for the same consummation, "that blessed hope." They have been one in love, when the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts; and blest be that complete tie.

When believers are rivals in their love for the Lord, each heart absorbed with the greatness of the love and mercy by which salvation and sonship have come to them personally, they can be, praise God, united to one another in a bond of benevolent love which the influences of this present time of shaking will not disturb, and which eternity will wonderfully enlarge and confirm. The highest blessing of heaven will therefore rest on the one who has labored by word and deed to foster the spirit of loving consideration for others, who has by life and conduct striven to remove barriers between brethren, by bringing them together in the bonds of Christ's love. Barriers that will grow higher and higher whatever other remedy for discord may be tried, will melt away before the warmth of the love of God shed abroad in a truly sanctified, loving, benevolent Christian heart. And, beloved, if we want to have a place in the heart of God, the way thereto lies directly through the pierced heart of the beloved Son of God, that heart which knew no selfishness, no enmity, but which was full to overflowing with love to God and man. O that we may in a fuller and greater measure be known as "imitators of God, as dear children; and **walk in love even as the Anointed One loved us.**"

"I would not seek in earthly bliss
To find a rest apart from Thee,
Forgetful of Thy sacrifice
Which purchased life and peace for me."

- *Contributed.*

"Come Now, Let Us Reason Together"

Questions and Answers of General Interest

"THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD"

Dear Brethren in Christ:-In reading the two articles in the recent issues of the "Herald" entitled "Clear Vision Brings Strength," I took notice of the interpretation placed on John 12:31-33. After giving this text and the cross-references cited due consideration, I am inclined to question the application of those texts, and if you will permit me, I will give my reasons.

Many of us have been led to place an interpretation or certain meaning on words or phrases occurring in prophetic utterances, to which I offer no objection except to say that we are apt to carry the practice too far and apply the rule to all Scriptures regardless of their general context. I have had a number of unpleasant experiences with ambitious leaders of Classes who justified themselves by the use of texts thus wrested from their settings. So, with the Apostle's admonition in mind, to "Study to show thyself approved unto God," I will give you my understanding of these texts.

First of all, please let us remember a sound and correct rule, namely, to interpret Scripture in harmony with its setting, or with the context. At the beginning of the chapter we read that it was six days before the Passover when Jesus came to Bethany, and on the next day He rode into Jerusalem on a young ass. (John 12:14.) The record says that many people were there, who came not only to see and hear Jesus, but also Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the Chief Priests were conspiring, not only to put Jesus to death, but Lazarus also.

There were certain Greeks present who had come to worship at the feast, who came to Philip and said: "We would see Jesus." Philip and Andrew went to Jesus with their request. "Then Jesus answered them saying: The hour is come that the Son of Man be glorified. Verily I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." No question but that Jesus was here conveying to His disciples the fact that His hour of departure from this earthly scene, in which He was the principal actor and leader, had come. There is no thought or reference here in the context to Satan. Jesus was the one who was being cast out, judged, by the responsible rulers, the priests, supported by the Roman ruler, Pilate, even if unwillingly. The world was passing judgment, as it were, on Jesus, and casting Him out by putting Him to death.

We find corroboration of this in John 16:7-11. Jesus said: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. . . Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." To me it seems clear from the context of these Scriptures, Jesus referred to Himself as "the prince of this world." What meaning can these words have, except that the world is passing judgment on Him now and is casting Him out. And that agrees perfectly with what has happened.

I would like to ask, Where, in the light of the context, does Satan come in, and what connection does he have in this and the twelfth chapter?

There is one other reference to the "prince of this world" in John 14:30, which is a little more difficult to harmonize with the thoughts expressed. But the same thing holds true in the context of

this chapter, namely, that the evil powers of Satan are nowhere referred to. The future tense is used here: "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me." What can this mean? Perhaps the Lord is here referred to in His Second Coming, as the chief or prince of this world in much greater glory and power; so much greater that there was no comparison between Jesus the Messiah, and Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. When He came as Messiah the world saw nothing in Him. He came to His own and His own received Him not; yet He is the Coming One for whom all creation waits, and as such will be far greater and mightier than Jesus of Nazareth.

Satan is nowhere referred to in Scripture as the prince of this world, but rather as the prince of devils. Prophetically, Daniel spoke of the Messiah as "the prince." In Acts Jesus is spoken of as the "Prince of Life," and as a "Prince and Savior." Furthermore, events indicate that Satan was not then cast out of the earth, is not yet cast out, and will first be bound for a thousand years, according to Scriptural testimony, before being permanently cast out.

I would appreciate it if you would consider my reasons for disagreement and give me your reaction, which might help me to a clearer reasoning if I am wrong. C. G. F. - Ohio.

OUR REPLY

Dear Brother in Christ: -- We much appreciate letters of constructive criticism such as yours, whether we agree with the points made or not. It indicates at least that the "Herald" is read carefully by some of our subscribers, and sets our minds to work on the Scriptures involved -- which is one of the most valuable results of contact and fellowship among the Lord's people.

The correct understanding of a large part of the Scriptures is arrived at by a process of reasoning and deduction. (Isa. 1:18.) The rule of interpreting in accordance with the context is a good -one; certainly no passage should be understood in contradiction of its immediate connection; but we recognize that all Scriptures are in a sense "context" (2 Tim. 3:16), and that the rule of evidence laid down by our Lord and still recognized in our civil courts applies in guiding our reasoning, namely, that "in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." In cases where two or three different meanings seem reasonable to different brethren, what our courts call "the preponderance of the evidence" of the Scriptures should decide. Of course, only one understanding is really true; and this must harmonize all the Scriptures.

You present a very interesting hypothesis, that "the prince of this world" referred to in John 12:31-33; 14:30; and John 16:7-11 signify our Lord Himself, rather than Satan, as is generally held. You base your conclusion on the arguments (a) that Satan is not referred to in the (immediate) context; (b) that he is nowhere in the Scriptures called the "prince of this world"; (c) that Jesus is the rightful prince of earth; and (d) that Jesus can be said to have been "cast out" by this world.

Answering your arguments in the above order: (a) While Satan is not referred to in the immediate contexts of these passages, they do not at all *forbid* the understanding that he is meant; and there is at least one reference to him in the general context, John 13:2: "The Devil having put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Him."

(b) Satan is called "prince" (chief, head), and is referred to in words equivalent to "prince" of this world, in the following Scriptures: "In trespasses and sins, wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children -of disobedience." ". . . them that are lost; in whom the god of this

world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities (princeships-same Greek root as "prince"), against powers, against the rulers (*kosmo-kratoras*, literally world-seizers) of this darkness, against wicked spirits in the heavenlies." "The whole world lieth in the evil one." - Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 6:11, 12; 1 John 5:19.

(c) and (d) The word that John uses in the original of the three passages in question, is "kosmos," meaning the order of things or affairs; not "ge," which means the soil, or the physical earth. While "kosmos" is sometimes used in the sense of the originally created order, in no Scripture do we find it said that either the Father or the Son is Lord, Head or Prince of the existing evil order, or world. In the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Matt. 21:39) Jesus said that the Son was "cast out" of the vineyard and slain. But the vineyard was an original planting of the Householder; and the Son makes no claims to its control. John uses the word "kosmos" more than seventy times in his Gospel, but not once does he say that Jesus is its Lord or Prince; on the contrary he quotes Jesus as saying of this kosmos: "For judgment am I come into the world;" "The world cannot receive the Spirit of Truth;" "I am not of the world;" "My kingdom is not of this world."

The Psalmist declares: "The earth is Jehovah's and the fulness thereof;" and quotes Jehovah as saying to the Son: "Ask of Me and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." (Psa. 24:1; 2:8.) But it is evident that Jesus did not enter upon His inheritance until after His resurrection-at first "de jure," then (still future) "de facto" (Luke 22:28-30; Phil. 2:5-11), when "the government shall be upon His shoulder ... and His name shall be called . . . the Prince of Prosperity." (Isa. 9:6.) This is evidently *a new* world or order, described as a "new heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," in 2 Peter 3:13.

It seems logical to deduce from John 12:20-33 that if Jesus was to be "lifted up" and "draw all men unto" Himself (evidently in dual significance-on the cross, and in eventual supreme authority in the new kosmos) then it will be necessary that the present evil ruler of the world be cast out. The word translated "now" in this passage is not quite as definitely "the present moment" as its translation; Strong defines it: "A primitive particle of present time; 'now' (as adverbial of date, a *transition*., or emphasis.)" It is variously translated; e. g., "of late" in John 11:8. But it appears to us to be used transitionally here; *because He* was to be lifted up, the prince of this world would be cast -out. As is frequently expressed in prophetic Scripture, that which is decreed of God is spoken of as though already accomplished. Also compare John 12:31 with John 9:39: "For judgment I am come into this world"-a judgment clearly *of* the world, not of Him *by* the world.

It also seems logical to understand that the reference of John 14:30 is to that ruler whose offer of a partnership in the world's government brought from Jesus no challenge of Satan's ability to deliver, but was indignantly spurned. (Matt. 4:8-10.) There had been no compromise on Jesus' part with the present usurper of earth's sovereignty; "The prince of this world cometh (appears - not future, but present-John 13:2) and bath nothing in (or "on") Me." -- See "The Newberry Bible" for determination of tenses.

In consideration of all these Scriptures, and others that might be quoted, it seems to us that the great preponderance of the evidence is that Satan, and not Jesus, was referred to as "the prince of this world." We hope that you may be able to see it with us, upon further consideration.

THE SCAPE-GOAT TYPE

Dear Brethren: - We wish to express our deep appreciation of *all* the articles in the February issue of the "Herald," especially "Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart," for with a'l due respect and appreciation for the various consecrated efforts of *uninspired* explanations and commentaries on the Scriptures, *nothing can take the place of a direct "Thus saith the Lord."* After more than forty years experience with and among us *Bible Students*, my matured observation leads me to the conviction that as a whole, *our up-setting sin*, and one that has caused *all the trouble and division in the past*, and is now taking on renewed vigor and is driving *a wedge of hate* into the ranks of the Lord's professed people the world over, *has been and still is* the accepting and contending for *a man's interpretation of a type*, instead of a direct *"Thus saith the Lord."*

As you well know from my previous letters, I am referring particularly to the type of the scape-goat in Leviticus 16:21, 22. The "accepted" Bible Student theology claims the antitype of the scape-goat is the "Great Company." *God's Word says it was Jesus Christ*, as can be verified by any one willing to *let God's Word be true*. Isaiah 53:6 reads: *"Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."*

If "Judgment is to begin at the house of God, and *if* that judgment is to be rendered by "the Word of God" (John 12:47-50) then *all* the philosophical explanations, theories, and deductions, indulged in by *"orthodox Bible Students"* in order to explain away a direct *"Thus saith the Lord," will condemn us as "man-worshippers"*. It is because of all this, and much more, that Sister S--- and I appreciated the February "Herald" for its consistent pointing *to Jesus Christ -- as God's all sufficient Ransom -- Sin-offering sacrifice, finished for all and forever on the cross of Calvary!* And our prayer for you all, as well as for ourselves, is, that we may *demand and accept a "Thus saith the Lord"* for every item of our faith, *at whatever cost! -- C. B. S., Ohio.* (Emphasis our Correspondent's.)

OUR REPLY

Dear Brother in Christ: -- With much that you say we can heartily agree. Truly, "Nothing can take the place of a 'Thus saith the Lord.'" The doctrines thus stated we can all heartily agree upon; and doubtless such statements are sufficient for our eternal salvation.

But how much of inspiration, stimulation, encouragement, and comfort, as well as intellectual satisfaction, we miss if we do not accept the invitation: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah." If we fail to do so, it relegates for us to the realm of the unknown and the inscrutable all the symbols, types, similitudes and parables of the Old and New Testaments, except such as are specifically explained; which latter are comparatively few in number, and given as *examples* of exegesis, since the explanation defeats one of the main objects of the use of parables. (Matt. 13:10, 13, 14, 34, 35; Mark 4:13; Isa. 28:10-13.) Only by a process of reasoning can we arrive at the conclusions properly to be drawn from these "dark sayings."

To reason, Webster says, is "to deduce inferences from premises; to infer conclusions from premises or to deduce new or unknown propositions from previous propositions which are known or evident."

Isaiah 53:6 is not a direct "Thus saith the Lord" *in reference to* the scape-goat of Leviticus 16, as it would be if it read: "Jehovah hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all, as Aaron did when he confessed the sins of Israel upon the head of the scape-goat." You *deduce* from the similarity (but

not identity) of the language of this passage to that of Leviticus 16:21, 22 that both these Scriptures refer to the same thing, and that therefore the scape-goat typed our Lord.

To our thinking it is more logical to connect the type of the scapegoat with Matt. 12:31, 32; 23:34-36 (direct statements of our Lord); and to conclude that since our Lord's sacrifice was typed by that of the bullock of Leviticus 16 (as we all agree), and His was a perfect sacrifice, the passage in Isaiah 53 cannot refer to the similar but pantomimic action of the high priest. Besides, the sending away of the scape-goat is never referred to as a sacrifice; and while Moses sometimes represents Jehovah in the types, Aaron never does. These **are** two more points in which, we believe, Lev. 16:21, 22 does not coincide with Isaiah 53:6 in meaning.

These conclusions respecting the scapegoat in no wise vitiate the statement of Isaiah 53 in reference to our Lord. This statement is confirmed by many passages found in the New Testament, notably Heb. 2:9.

Basing a conclusion upon deduction from *one* Scripture only, is at best uncertain. Our Lord laid down the rule that "Out of the mouth of *two* or *three* witnesses [only] shall every word be *established*." The facts regarding the Great Company Class are deduced from a great number of interlocking and mutually substantiating Scriptures.

You have reached your conclusions regarding Isaiah 53:6 by a process of deduction, and of course you will wish to accord others the same privilege. We quite agree with your implications regarding "orthodoxy" and "man worshipping"; we are firm in the conviction that any belief, based on deductions from Scripture, however reasonable appearing, should not work the slightest schism in the Body of Christ.

However, we do not expect any one to agree *absolutely* with everything that appears in the "Herald"; we should really deplore such uniformity of thought by imperfect human brains, implying, as it would, an admission of unscriptural, ecclesiastical and doctrinal authority. Nevertheless, we must speak our convictions, and hope that our readers may *all* find *something* helpful and inspiring in our publication. We are glad indeed to be assured that you and Sister S----- do.

THE GREAT COMPANY-A DELUSION?

Dear Brethren: -- I am sorry to note that in the recent issue of the "Herald" the "Great Company" delusion is still being fed to the Lord's children. Some years ago a great deal of nonsense was dispensed on the subject. Elders and others were classifying the brethren, and would say to some "You are undeveloped and in the Great Company Class." This happened in a Class at P----- which we attended.

During the closing years of Brother Russell's ministry he wrote several articles for the "Watch Tower" on the Great Company, and always referred to them as an unfaithful group of the Lord's children, and unworthy of the honor of being on the throne with Christ, consequently were "before the throne"; overlooking the fact that they were "before the throne of God" the Father. That surely would be a very high honor. They are called the "Great Company" in the Common Version because their number was so large they could not be counted. The Scripture account in Rev. 7 pictures them as having "come out of great tribulation," with palms of victory in their hands, having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

In contrast with the perfect happiness which obtained in Eden, the "great tribulation" began with Lucifer's rule, and as foretold by Daniel it was to become unprecedented in woes at the "end times," which apparently began about 1914.

I am not aware of a single Scripture which, in a literal sense, indicates that this Age will be consummated in a time of utter lawlessness, when "law and order, both civil and religious" will break down and universal anarchy prevail. For over ten years I have been witnessing the baneful effects on those who have believed and acted upon Brother Russell's interpretation of 1 Kings 19:11, 12. A revision of some things generally accepted by the Bible Students, and which are being perpetuated by your magazine and others, is long overdue. - T. G. W. -- B. C., Can.

OUR REPLY

Dear Brother:--Of course we have no sympathy with or approval of the extravagance of teaching and behavior into which many "Bible Students" have been misled since our late Pastor's death. We find it impossible to believe that he would ever justify such conduct as you relate of the Group, although doubtless the brethren composing it "verily believed that they were doing God service" in verbally "slaying" their brethren, as the Lord foretold that some would.

We think it would be more fair to say that Brother Russell taught that the Great Company Class in their course in the flesh were a *less* faithful and honorable company than the "Little Flock" of overcomers, to whom "it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom." A careful distinction should lie made between the attitude of these brethren during their trial time for Kingdom honors -- the High Calling -- and the position to which they eventually attain -- "before the throne" which, as you say, is an honorable and blessed one. This was Pastor Russell's thought. In Vol. VI, *Scripture Studies*, page 128 of the original printing, the author refers to "the position of honor and service they will occupy;" and in an article reproduced on page 4428 of the Watch Tower Reprints, he says: "Nor are we to think of these [the "Great Company"] as a dishonorable class, an unfaithful class." It would appear evident that since they are referred to as a "great" and "innumerable" company, they must constitute a different class from the "*little* flock," the number of which is fixed. (Rev. 7:1-8; 14:1-5.) To the latter is promised a seat "on the throne" (Luke 22:28-30; Rev. 3:21), which, it must be admitted, is a position of *greater* honor than "before the throne," which would be the position of courtiers or of subjects.

You will remember that our late Pastor specifically warned the brethren on many occasions against judging one another as to which class any one belonged, under penalty of the Scriptural punishments threatened against those who usurp this *exclusive* function of the Lord. It will not be necessary for us to cite you to the many passages in the divine Word in which judging our brethren is forbidden. This, the brother you mention very evidently forgot or disregarded, in passing his strictures upon the members of the P Class. He assumed a heavy responsibility in so doing. Certainly for his actions Brother Russell cannot in justice be blamed. A greater One than he has been persistently misrepresented for the past 1900 years, by the many who have borne His name and claimed to be His followers.

As to the "great tribulation" through which this numerous Company "comes up", it **seems** reasonable to think that the Revelator referred to the same period as did Daniel (Dan. 12:1) which he distinctly indicated was future at the time he prophesied, thirty-five hundred years after Adam, and half a millennium before Christ, in "*the time of the end*," to which our Lord referred (Matt. 24:21) as *still* future. Certainly Father Adam got all his descendents into a great time of trouble--six thousand years long--but that trouble commenced long *before* (not "since") there was a nation, and long before Daniel wrote and Jesus taught. All the human race have had more or less

experience with this time of trouble; but the Great Company are distinguished from others by passing through a *particular* "great tribulation," and by "washing their robes, which marks them as a Christian (Gospel Age) body. The "robe" is a figure of the imputation of Christ's merit. We do not know of any class before or after the Gospel Age who are represented as being so clothed.

The doctrine of the Great Company is dependent upon a great many Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments. Some years ago a brother compiled a list of more than one hundred.

Perhaps some of the brethren have been inclined to exaggerate the conditions of "utter lawlessness" and "complete anarchy" which they expect at the end of the Age. It would appear that we have been experiencing the "time of trouble" continuously since 1914, as you suggest. The conditions and events now present in Europe and Asia, doubtless with much intensification, are what we are to expect throughout the world; to be brought to an end by the revelation of Christ's Kingdom, in power and great glory. We also agree that a better understanding of prophecy should be ours now, than at the time of the death of our late Pastor, in the light thrown upon the subject by the events and developments of a quarter-century, and the diligent "searching of the Scriptures" by thousands of zealous Bible Students guided by the Holy Spirit, during that time. (Matt. 13:52; Prov. 4:18.) We are always glad to hear from our readers, and to receive of the increase of their treasures of light and knowledge of the Divine Plan, at any time.