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The Privilege and Power of Prayer

"And Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." - Luke 18:1-8.

TO THE thoughtful, appreciative mind, one of the greatest privileges which the Word of God offers is that of personal audience and communion with the King of kings and Lord of lords. When we consider how great is our God, and how exalted His station, how wonderful is the condescension that thus regards our low estate! He it is whose glory covereth the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over the whole universe. He it is who is without beginning of days or end of years: "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." He is the immortal, the self-existing One, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see." The heavens declare His glory and the firmament showeth His handiwork. In all His vast universal domain there is nothing hidden from Him, nor can He be wearied by its care. His wisdom, who can fathom? and His ways, who can find them out? or who hath been His counselor? His mighty intellect grasps with ease all the interests of His wide dominion, from immensity to minutia. His eye never slumbers nor sleeps, nor can the smallest thing escape His notice-not even a sparrow's fall; and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. It is His skill which clothes with life and beauty the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven. And are not we, the creatures of His hand, "fearfully and wonderfully made," and the subjects, too, of His love and care? "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways; for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me.

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold Thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, . . . even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." - Psa. 139:1-12.

Fallen creatures though we be, from the noble estate in which we were created, God so loved our race, even while we were yet sinners, as to make provision at great cost for our redemption and restitution and subsequent eternal glory. And therefore it is, because He loves us, that through Christ He extends to us the gracious favor of coming to Him as children to a father. Wonderful is the condescension, wonderful the love and favor of our God!

As Jesus Taught Us to Pray

Yet our God is a God to be revered; He is not one like ourselves, our equal, into whose presence we may come without that ceremony and decorum due to His glorious person and office. (Job. 9:1-35.) The court of heaven has regulations and ceremonies of respect and due deference which must be complied with by every man who would gain an audience with the King of kings; and it behooves us to inquire what those regulations are before we presume to address Him. Here the Word of God gives explicit directions. Our Lord Jesus, the appointed "days-man" for which job so earnestly longed (Job 9:32, 33), said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. [I am the way." (John 14:6.) Then He gave us an illustration of the manner in which we should address Him, in what is known as the Lord's prayer. (Matt. 6:9-13.) The illustration teaches (1) that we (believers in Christ) may consider ourselves as in God's estimation reinstated (through faith in Christ) to the original position of sons of God, and that we may therefore confidently address Him - "Our Father." (2) It indicates on our part worshipful adoration of the high and holy One, and profound reverence for the glorious character and attributes of our God. -- "Hallowed be Thy name." (3) It expresses full sympathy with His revealed Plan for a coming Kingdom of righteousness, which will be according to His will -- "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This shows the attitude of heart to be toward righteousness, and fully submitted to the Divine will and purpose, that God may work in it to will and to do His good pleasure. (4) It expresses in plain and simple language its dependence on God for daily needs, and the confidence of a child in the Father for the supply of those needs out of His abundant fulness--"Give us this day our daily bread." (5) It seeks forgiveness for trespasses, and recognizes also the obligation thus incurred to render the same to those trespassing against us--"And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"; and (6) it seeks to be guarded against temptations and to be fortified by God's abounding grace against all the wiles of the Adversary--"And abandon us not to trial, but preserve us from evil."

Such are the principles which must ever characterize our attitude of mind and heart when we would avail ourselves of the privilege of addressing the throne of heavenly grace. In brief, our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with the Divine Plan and submission to the Divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgment of sins and shortcomings, and desire for forgiveness, with a forgiving disposition on our part toward others, and a humble craving for the Divine guidance and protection. These may not all ways all be expressed in words, but such must at least be the attitude of the soul.

May Come Boldly

Those who thus come to God are privileged always to have their interests considered at the throne of grace, and the welcome we shall always find there may be judged of by the cordial invitations to come often and tarry long. Well might we hesitate to avail ourselves of such privileges were we not thus assured, but having this assurance we may come with confidence to the throne of grace. - Heb. 4:16; 13:6.

The Lord knew how necessary to our spiritual life would be this communion with Himself. Tempest-tossed and tried, how much we need our Father's care and the comfort and consolation which His presence and sympathy realized imparts. And have not all the meek and contrite in heart the promise not only 'of the occasional attentive hearing, but of the abiding presence of both the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus? Jesus said,

"He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas-not Iscariot-saith unto Him, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." - John 14:21-23.

The thought which this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and Son conveys to our minds is that their thought and care and interest will be constantly upon us, and that at any instant we may engage the special attention of either or both. The same idea is also conveyed by the words of the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 3:12)-"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers." And we are urged to be "instant in prayer," to "pray always, and not to faint," to "pray without ceasing"; for "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him," and "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Yea, "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep His covenant and to those that remember His commandments to do them." - Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:17; Psa. 103:13, 14, 11, 12, 17, 18.

If any Man Sin

We cannot come too often, then, to the throne of the heavenly grace, if we are of those who can claim the abiding presence of the Father and the Son-if we are of them that love Him and keep His commandments and who recognize the Lord Jesus as the only way of access to the Father. And even "if any man sin" - be overtaken in a fault-so that from his outward conduct he might be judged as not loving the Lord, yet, if he repent, let him remember that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," who "is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins," "who also maketh intercession for us." "Who," then, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." - 1 John 2:1, 2; Rom. 8:33, 34.

Wherefore, the Apostle urges, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." - Heb. 4:14-16.

With such urgent and loving invitations let no child of God hesitate to come to Him often or to tarry long in communion and fellowship with Him. It is our privilege to enter into our closets and shut the doors and pray to our Father which seeth in secret, who will reward us openly. (Matt. 6:6.) And not only so, but He will go with us through all the business and hurry and commotion of the day; and at any instant in the midst of cares and perplexities we may turn our prayerful thoughts to Him for wisdom, for strength and Christian fortitude, or for comfort and consolation for ourselves or others. And though we hear no responding voice, if we are attentive to the course of His providence we will shortly see the shaping of events and circumstances for our good and the good of others in answer to such prayers. Beloved, have we not many a time proved this true? in perplexities, in tribulations, in afflictions, in persecutions, in bereavements, in temptations and trials?

In coming to God we need have no fear that He is too busy with other matters of greater importance, or that He is weary of our coming to Him repeatedly with things of small importance. It was to assure us against this very thing that our Lord spoke the parable of the importunate widow, who was heard and answered on account of her importunity. In so doing we evince both the earnestness of our desires and our faith that our prayers will be answered, if we faint not from lack of faith or zeal when the answer is delayed, as often it must necessarily be, since time is an important element in all God's work.

"Everything to Him in Prayer"

All night, until the break of day, Jacob wrestled in prayer, saying, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." Paul thrice besought the Lord until he was assured His grace would be sufficient for him. The Lord Himself frequently spent whole nights in prayer, and He prayed earnestly and with many tears. (Luke 6:12; Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; 1:35; Luke 5:16; Heb. 5:7.) And the Apostle Paul says, "In everything, by prayer and supplication [earnest pleading] with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." - Phil. 4:6.

The Apostle himself acted on this principle when he urged, in his letter to the Romans, that the saints "strive together [Greek, agonize] with me in prayers to God for me," that he might safely accomplish a certain work which seemed to be of the Spirit's leading. - Rom. 15:28-32.

"In everything" that signifies that our Heavenly Father is deeply interested in everything that relates to us and ours. What thing is too small for His notice who numbers even the very hairs of our heads? In today's household or business cares, then, we may have His loving sympathy and helpfulness. Do a mother's counsel and a father's wisdom seem inadequate to restrain and guide aright the wayward course of impetuous and over-confident youth? They may bring their cares and fears to the Lord; and, as the children cross the threshold to meet the world's temptations, His wisdom and providence may be invoked to so shape their circumstances and surroundings as to show them eventually the sure safe way and the folly of pursuing any other.

Do business cares perplex and annoy? Remember the Lord's caution, "Be not overcharged with the cares of this life," and the Apostle's warning, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and utter ruin; for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." And, remembering these things, come to the throne of the heavenly grace for wisdom and direction as to how you may so adjust your temporal affairs as not to be **overcharged** with the cares of this life. It is right to be charged with them to the extent of diligence (Rom. 12:11) and the utilization of such diligence in the Lord's service; but it is the overplus, the corroding care, that interferes with peace of mind and communion with God, that is to be avoided.

It Will Sweeten Our Days

Does poverty pinch and cause anxious thought? Take that also to the Lord in prayer; and then, while diligently using; the means at hand, to provide things decent and 'honest, patiently and confidently wait and watch the indications of providence, assured that He who feeds the fowl of the air, which neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and who clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, is both able and willing to clothe and feed you and yours.

And so through all the list of earth's trials and cares, its wants and its woes, its bereavements and disappointments and calamities and distresses, its failures and shortcomings and sins and mistakes, we may take them all to the Lord in prayer and receive that strength and sympathy and consolation and help we so much need. Let us live in the presence of the Father and the Son who have promised to abide with us. It will sweeten our days and comfort our nights and ease our burdens and lighten our cares and brighten our hopes, and, in a word, it will lift us up above the world into a higher and purer atmosphere. Such is the will of heaven concerning us: let us appreciate and avail ourselves of the privilege.

By all the encouragements of precept and example, the Lord assures us that the fervent prayer of a righteous man (a justified and consecrated child of God) availeth much. (James 5:16.) We are urged also to come in faith. Jesus said, "If ye have faith and doubt not, . . . all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matt. 21:22.) As He was addressing His consecrated disciples, it must of course be understood that all their petitions would be subjected to divine wisdom, and therefore the answers to their prayers, though always sure, might not always be in the way expected, but they would always be considered and answered in some way for their highest good.

What a blessed privilege, dear fellow-disciples of the Lord, is ours, to be instant in prayer, to pray always -- to lift up our hearts and minds to God at any time and in any place and to realize thus daily and hourly that the Father and our dear Lord Jesus continually abide with us. And then, when the active duties of the day have been performed under His eye and supervision, or at any (time when the soul realizes its necessity, how precious is the privilege of entering into our closets and there alone with God unburdening our hearts.

While secret prayer is the blessed privilege of every child of God, and one without which his spiritual life cannot be sustained, it is also the privilege of Christians to unite their petitions at the throne of grace. This united prayer is specially commended by the Lord. (Matt. 18:19.) "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father; for where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

If We Faint not

With such promises as these, together with an experience of their fulfillment, who can doubt the love and favor of our God and of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Therefore let us be encouraged to pray always and not to faint when the answers seem to tarry long, for time is often required to work out the deep designs of an all-wise and loving Providence. Remember the words of the angel to Daniel. Daniel said, "While I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God, for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer," the answer came by the hand of an angel who said, "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved." - Dan, 9:20-23.

On another occasion, when Daniel had mourned three weeks, fasting and praying, because of his inability to understand, the angel of the Lord came and said, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that 'thou didst set thine **heart** to understand, and to chasten thyself **before thy God**, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words." - Dan. 10:2, 3, 10-12.

Even so shall it ever be with all the beloved of the Lord: at the beginning of our supplications God begins to set in operation the influences and to shape the circumstances which are designed to work out the intended blessing for us-if we faint not, but continue instant in prayer, thereby evincing our continued earnestness of desire, and if we confess our sins, and set our hearts to understand, and chasten ourselves before Him. How many prayers are not heard or are hindered because the one who asks does not first purify himself of evil in his own heart! "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts"; that is, you ask selfishly and without regard to the will of God. (James 4:3.) But to the chastened and sanctified comes the promise-"Before they call [reading the desire of the heart even before it finds expression in words] I will answer [will begin so to shape events as to bring the answer sooner or later]; and while they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isa. 65:23, 24.) While this is in connection with a prophecy relating to the Lord's people in the Millennial Age, it nevertheless is true of all His faithful ones of this Age. Praise the Lord for all His loving kindness to even the least of His lowly children. - *W. T. Reprints, R1864, Sept. 15, 1895.*

The Seven Key Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation

A Meditation in two parts-Part 2

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy." - Rev. 19:10.

No. 3-The Handwriting on the Wall

OUR THIRD "key" prophecy is found in the fifth chapter of Daniel. It is the interpretation of the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzar's palace.

At Belshazzar's feast the golden vessels from the temple at Jerusalem were profaned by being used for the worship of gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. It was the culmination of the sin of Babylon.

Silently her doom was written. "In the same hour," we read, "came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."

Moved by curiosity and consternation the king asks his wise men to interpret the mysterious words upon the wall; but none of them can do it. At the queen-mother's suggestion he sends for Daniel. Evidently she, a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, had profited by the Lord's judgment and mercy upon her father, for she seems to have been the only one of the palace who had taken no part in the impious banquet-feast.

The aged Prophet stands in the presence of the illustrious monarch, and, while refusing his proffered gifts, says: "I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. "This is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

History, both sacred and secular, records the fulfilment of this prophecy. **In that** night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. The kingdom of Babylon, proud, sensual and idolatrous, fell before the Medo-Persian power. In the interpretation of the word "Peres" the Prophet plainly indicates the name of the second of the four kingdoms, that of the Medes and Persians. Thus the silver breast and arms of the great image are interpreted. As the first of the four kingdoms is Babylon, so the second is Persia. In accepting this interpretation we build on plain statements in the Word of God, confirmed by the witness of history.

The temptation is strong with us to pause awhile here to note some of the striking fulfillments in antitypical Babylon. None of the wise men even to this day can interpret the mysterious words, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," as they apply to antitypical Babylon. Only the truly "wise" understand. One of these was our late brother, C. T. Russell. As our readers well know, a large part of the Fourth Volume in his Scripture Studies series was written to demonstrate that antitypical Babylon (Christendom) was being weighed in the balance and found wanting. He and a few other faithful pastors and teachers fearlessly and accurately portrayed its judgment, socially, ecclesiastically, politically, economically; and today it is fulfilling rapidly before our very eyes. But we must not digress from our main purpose, which is to show the relationship of

each of the seven key prophecies to the others. However, as we leave this third one, let us not fail to notice three things concerning it

1. That its interpretation is divinely given. We do not rely on the word of uninspired men for its meaning.
2. That it does not deal with any new subject, but relates to the same general, broad outline as the first two prophecies considered.
3. That what it has to teach is in complete harmony with the meaning of the first two prophecies, but that it supplies additional details, which only confirm the interpretation of the earlier prophecies.

No. 4-The Ram and the He-goat

The interpretation of the Ram and the He-goat in the eighth chapter of Daniel is the fourth of the "key" prophecies we wish to consider. We are discussing this prophecy before we turn to the one in the seventh chapter, because it gives us the name of the third empire.

The Persian power is represented in this vision by a Ram, while the power which destroyed and succeeded it is depicted by a "He-goat."

The Ram has two horns, and is thus interpreted "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia."

The He-goat that came from the west on the face of the whole earth and touched not the ground, which had a notable horn between his eyes, and which smote the rare. and brake his two horns and cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him, is thus interpreted: "The rough goat is the king of **Grecia**; and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." - Dan. 8:21,22.

Exactly the same succession of historic events is again plainly foretold in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, verses 2-4 (Dan. 11:2-4). There the revealing angel says to Daniel, "Now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up his kingdom shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others besides those."

Turning to history, what do we find? Events which exactly correspond to the prophecy. There were four Persian kings who followed Cyrus, as the prophecy foretold. Their names were Cambyses; Smerdis; Darius, the son of Darius Hystaspis; and Xerxes. Xerxes, the fourth, was far richer than his predecessors, as had been foretold. Because of his riches, and the strength which they brought him, he thought he could invade and conquer Greece. He did invade Greece, but instead of conquering it, was defeated, and his defeat brought about the crisis of Persian decay. The mighty world-conquering king who overthrew the power of Persia was Alexander the Great of Macedon, and history shows that Alexander's kingdom was divided in four, just as the prophecy had foretold.

Prophecy and history agree in determining the Grecian Empire to be the third in the succession of world-empires, of which Babylon and Medo-Persia were the first and second respectively.

No. 5-The Four Wild Beasts

For our fifth "key" prophecy we turn back to the seventh chapter of Daniel. Here Daniel presents the interpretation of the four Wild-beast kingdoms and of the Kingdom of the Son of Man.

There is no change of subject matter in this vision. The same broad outline, covered in the first vision, is under discussion here. But the symbols are strikingly different, and there are some added details.

When the four great empires of earth appeared to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:31-45), the symbols employed present quite a contrast to those in which the self-same kingdoms are seen by the Prophet. In the case of Nebuchadnezzar a worldly idolater looked up, and beheld a great fourfold Image, of earthly dominion; it was terrible, yet it was also attractive, to him, in its brilliancy. In the case of Daniel, as recounted in this seventh chapter, a man of God looked down, and beheld four great Beasts, terrible only in their fierce brutality.

The identity of the four kingdoms seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the dream of the Image, with those seen by Daniel in his vision of the four Wild Beasts is evident. The number is the same, four in each. The starting point is the same, for each was given while Babylon was the ruling power. (Dan. 2:1; 7:1.) The issue is the same, for both are immediately followed by the Kingdom of Christ. The order is the same, for the kingdoms in the first vision, as all admit, are successive; and in the other, there are no less than seven or eight clauses which denote succession in time. There is the same gradation, for the noblest metal and the noblest animal take the lead in each series. Further, the kingdoms in each vision are described as occupying the whole space of time till the dominion of the saints of God. The first empire is that of Babylon, for to the King of Babylon it was said: "Thou art the head of gold." If we require the names of the two next kingdoms, the angel Gabriel continues the message of the Prophet: "The ram having the two horns are the kings of Media and Persia; the rough goat is the king of Grecia." If we ask the name and character of the fourth empire, the New Testament supplies the answer: "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed;" "If we let Him alone, all men will believe on Him, and the **Romans** will come, and take away both our place and nation." Four supreme and ruling kingdoms, and four only, are announced by name in the Word of God, from the time of Daniel to the close of the sacred Canon of Scripture.

The narrative of the vision of the four Wild Beast empires and the Kingdom of the Son of Man in Daniel 7, occupies the first 14 verses (Dan. 7:1-14), while the interpretation follows in verses 16-27 (Dan. 7:16-27). Note the words: "So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of these things."

First a general interpretation is given of the four Wild-beast powers and of the kingdom of the saints of the Most High (Dan. 7:17, 18) and then a more detailed interpretation of the fourth kingdom. "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." Here, as in the symbol of the great Image, a ten-fold division of the Roman Empire is predicted. In the vision of the Image the interpretation went: "The kingdom shall be divided. As the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken [fragile]." (Dan. 2:41, 42.) In the vision of the Wild Beasts we are now considering, this tenfold division is represented by the ten horns of the fourth Wild Beast. Among these rises

another little horn with eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking- great things, which horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, for a definite period. "They shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." - Dan. 2:25-27.

No. 6-The Seven Candlesticks and No. 7-The Woman, Babylon the Great

The sixth and seventh "key" prophecies appear in the Book of Revelation.

The sixth is the interpretation of the Seven Stars and Seven Candlesticks of chapter one, while the seventh appears in chapter seventeen, and is the interpretation of the Woman, Babylon the Great, and of the seven-headed, ten-horned Beast that carried her.

It would be going beyond the scope of our present purpose to enter upon a detailed discussion of these last two "key" prophecies and their interpretations. Here we wish to notice only one thing concerning them both, namely, that at the time John received them, the first, second, and third world-empires had come and gone; the fourth, that of Rome, was holding sway. Evidently, therefore, they are to be properly understood only as they are seen to fit into the general outline of the fourth empire.

The Candlesticks in chapter one are interpreted by our Lord Himself to be the seven churches. Doubtless the vision was intended to show the wise and loving watch-care which He Himself would exercise over the true Church all down through the Gospel Age.

Contrasted with the history of the true Church is the history of the false. In the seventeenth and following chapters both are doubly symbolized, as women and as cities. The Harlot City is arrayed in purple and scarlet color, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls; while the Bride, the New Jerusalem, is arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints, and has the glory of God. The one is the associate of the Beast, the other of the Lamb. The one is drunken with the blood of saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; the other consists of saints and includes many of the martyrs. The one is punished with both temporal and eternal judgments; the other is rewarded with everlasting honor and felicity. The contrast between them is complete.

As we close this brief review of the seven "key" prophecies, let us not do so without thanking God afresh for the wonderful Plan of salvation they unfold, and let us go forward with renewed determination that the vision shall not have been vouchsafed to us in vain, but that by His grace we will give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, and assist others in "this way" to do the same.

In this and the preceding article we have attempted to present a brief summary of the seven key prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, with the primary purpose of showing their relationship to each other, and their essential unity. Students will not be satisfied with this bare outline but will desire more detailed discussion. We urge upon all such who are not already in possession of same that they secure a set of the three volumes on Daniel and the Revelation, by R. E. Streeter, published by our Institute. Write us for particulars. - Ed. Com.

A Discussion of 1 Thessalonians 4:15.17

ON THE basis of the Apostle Paul's assurance that there is a "crown of righteousness awaiting all those who **"love His appearing,"** our brethren of Thessalonica are evidently among those that we, if faithful, will in due time meet in the heavenly courts. One needs to read only a few verses from either of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians to realize that these brethren had as intense an interest in the Lord's return as we today have. Nevertheless, there evidently was some difference of opinion among them upon this engrossing subject. The Apostle is not less interested than they in this great hope; but, though this is the subject under discussion, he devotes much more of his time in both epistles to the matter of Christian living and preparation for our Lord's return than he does to the subject of His return—a point it is well for us to note today. As we consider a few features of this chapter, it is not with the intent that our thoughts may be drawn even one moment away from this great objective before us -- a sanctification through the truth—but rather, in order that this truth made a little clearer may be yet more powerful in its sanctifying influence.

Critically examined, the phrase "alive and remain," used in both the 15th and 17th verses, is one the Apostle Paul would never have used to express the thought usually ascribed to it. It is not Paul's custom to use senseless repetition; and, with the former idea, that is what the phrase would be. To speak of certain ones as **"alive** unto the coming of the Lord" would have exactly the same meaning as to speak of them as **"remaining** unto the coming of the Lord." A less careful writer might use such a repetition, but not the Apostle Paul. The first supposition to occur to one naturally is that one of these words is a mistranslation. An examination of the Greek does not however bear this out. The lexicons support the Authorized Version.

We have already examined the word **"parousia"** on previous occasions and have found the scholars in agreement that its actual meaning is "presence." It comes from the -verb "pareimi," defined, "to be by, be at hand, to have arrived, to be present." It never means on the way. In Rotherham's latest edition of his translation he says

"In this edition the word parousia is uniformly rendered 'presence' ('coming,' as a representative of this word, being set aside). The original term occurs twenty-four times in the N. T., viz.: Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 16:7; 2 Cor. 7:6, 7; 10:10; Phil. 1:26; 2:12; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:3; 4:15; 23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8, 9; James 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4, 12; 1 John 2:28. The sense of 'presence' is so plainly shown by the contrast with 'absence' (implied in 2 Cor. 10:10, and expressed in Phil. 2:12) that the question naturally arises—Why not always so render it? The more so, inasmuch as there is in 2 Pet. 1:16 also, a peculiar fitness in our English word 'presence.' This passage, it will be remembered, relates to our Lord's transformation upon the Mount. The wonderful manifestation there made was a display and sample of 'presence' rather than of 'coming.' The Lord was already there; and, being there, He was transformed and the 'majesty' of His glorified person was then disclosed. His bodily 'presence' was one which implied and exerted 'Power'; so that 'power and presence' go excellently well together—the 'power' befitting such a 'presence'; and the three favored disciples were at one and the same moment witnesses of both. The difficulty expressed in the notes to the second edition of this N. T. in the way of so yielding to this weight of evidence as to render **parousia** always by 'presence,' lay in the seeming incongruity of regarding 'presence' as an event which would happen at a particular time and which would fall into rank as one of a series of events, as 1 Cor. 15:23 especially appeared to require. The translator still feels the force of this objection, but is withdrawn from taking his stand upon it any longer by the reflection that, after all, the difficulty may be imaginary. The **parousia**, in any case, is still in the future, and may therefore be enshrouded in a measure of obscurity which only fulfillment can clear away: it may, in fine, be both a period—more or less extended, during which certain things

shall happen-and an **event**, coming on and passing away as one of a series of divine interpositions. Christ is raised as a firstfruit-that is one event; He returns and vouchsafes his 'presence,' during which He raises His own-that is another event, however large and prolonged; and finally comes another cluster of events constituting 'the end.' Hence, after all, 'presence' may be the most widely and permanently satisfying translation of the looked for parousia of the Son of Man."

The following from the May issue of the English magazine, "Words of Life," will also be found of interest on this point:

"An article in the 'Witness' upon the meaning of 'parousia' is of interest. The article by W. E. Vine, M. A., and commenting upon and contrasting the two 'parousias' of 2 Thessalonians 2, he writes 'To understand their significance it is necessary to know the meaning of the word 'parousia' as used in the Greek-speaking world when the Scriptures were written. The word consists of the prefix 'par,' which is short for 'para,' signifying 'with,' and 'ousia,' from a form of the present participle of the verb 'eimi,' to be, so that primarily the word has the meaning of 'being with.' . . .

"Several passages in the New Testament can rightly be understood only in the light of the meaning of the word, 'parousia' thus explained. The rendering 'coming' is misleading."

With these three words, "alive," "remain," and "coming" examined, and the proper translation established, there is only one word left to consider the little word, "**unto**." Many times in the past we have found that the little word in a text has been given too little attention and that some important fact has been missed on this account. In this instance, we are again richly rewarded for examining into little things. With the correct translation of this word the passage becomes a very Pauline one, all suspicion of repetition being removed and each word freighted with thought.

Thayer in his lexicon gives three and one-half pages to the consideration of this word, which is used with various meanings under different circumstances. For instance, one must consider whether it is used with regard to time or place, and the nature of these must also be taken into consideration. For our present discussion we need note only the definition that applies under the circumstances of this verse.

Since the translators of our Bible have all been men whose theology held that the events connected with the Second Advent of the Lord were to occupy comparatively only a moment of time, they of course have thought of this preposition "**eis**" as having the meaning which it does properly have when connected with a point of time: "they that are alive and remain **unto** the coming of the Lord."

Former Misconceptions Still Confuse

Banishing from our minds all previous misconceptions to the effect that our Lord's return is to be only for a twenty-four hour day, let us approach this passage with the true teaching of the Scriptures in mind; that is, that He comes for the purpose of reigning one thousand years, until the last enemy is destroyed. With this correct understanding of His "presence," let us turn to the lexicons for the definition of the word when used regarding **a period of time**.

When relating to a point (either time or place), the preposition "eis" has the meaning of "unto"; but when relating to a space, a period (either time or place), it has the meaning of "into." (See Thayer's Lexicon, p. 183; Winer's Grammar, gyp. 396.) Unless we forget that the "parousia" of the Lord is Scripturally indicated to be a **period** of time, there would therefore seem to be only

one translation to make of this passage: "This we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain into [the period of] the presence of the Lord, shall not precede those which are asleep."

The sixteenth verse tells us that the "dead in Christ [those who have slept during the 'two thousand years of this Gospel Age, until the beginning of our Lord's parousia] will rise first." Paul had already told us that those who are living at the time of the Lord's return will remain into the period of our Lord's presence, not saying how long they would remain. He does, however, indicate by the words, "first," "remain," and "then" - "afterwards," that the sleeping and the living ones are to receive their change at different times. The word, "then," that introduces the seventeenth verse is correctly translated "afterward" in the literal rendering of the Diaglott, for the Greek word never has any other meaning.

With What Body do We Rise?

When the Apostle speaks of the "dead in Christ" rising, he has no reference to human bodies but new creatures. He has made that clear in 1 Corinthians 15, where he tells us that for each of us a new body is provided and that because we have been developed along the line of the spirit, "transformed by the renewing of our minds," the resurrection body will correspond. Similarly, when he speaks of those who are alive and remain down into the period of the presence, as being caught up, he is still discussing new creatures in Christ Jesus and has no reference to human bodies. The following footnote from the Weymouth Translation is interesting along that line

"Caught up -- Whether in the body or apart from the body we are not told. Compare the use of the same words in 2 Cor. 12:2, 4; Rev. 12:5. Since the ... spirit is the essential man [new creature], **we** may be caught up to heaven although our bodies are left behind on earth and perish. So in the present day the really consecrated Christian does not go down into the grave at death, but rises to Christ and God. He is no longer here; he has ascended to heaven."

Those who have not made a study of languages are often perplexed as to why the various translators should so often disagree. The reasons are various. One very frequent cause of divergence is the fact that a large percentage of words in any language have more than one meaning. In translating such words the one who is doing the work is under the necessity of concluding which meaning it is most likely the writer had in mind. In most instances this is a simple matter, but not always so.

One of the difficult instances is a word in the passage now under consideration. It is the word translated "together" in the King James Version. This English word has two meanings, for it may apply either to time or to place; and this is exactly the meaning of the Greek word. The translator might therefore render it either: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up at the same place with them [those saints who had slept until shortly before that time]," or, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up at the same time with them." Another possible rendering would be to use the word "together" as it is used in the King James, leaving it to the reader to decide whether time or place is meant, and this is manifestly the preferable thing to do in this and every instance. We suggest that possibly the Apostle Paul wished to incorporate both thoughts in the text, since following this, two matters are suggested which could be interpreted as associated one with time and the other with place. With this in mind we suggest the following as the significance of the Apostle's words, in harmony with Brother Russell's explanation of our text: Upon our Lord's return every member of His Body asleep in death would be awakened on the spirit plane, "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." That event, however, would find some brethren still in the flesh who had not yet completed their course. Each would be given time

to make his calling and election sure, and then, without the necessity of sleeping in death as the others have done, these would one by one be changed from human to spirit, also "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." The last members are to be "caught up in the clouds" of the **time** of trouble that Daniel prophesied would be the indication of the presence of the Lord. The **place** to which they will be taken will be the place of spiritual rulership, symbolized by the word "air."

In closing let us say that our sharing with the Lord in His reign depends not on our agreeing with the above, or any other interpretation, but on whether we "love His appearing."

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Oneness of Mind

"Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another." This oneness of mind does not demand the monotony of similarity, but unity in variety. Not the oneness of a hop-pole, or a pile of hop-poles; but of the plant which, with tendril, leaf and fruit, rears itself aloft in the summer air. Not the oneness of a brick, or of a pile of bricks; but of the house, in which so many different materials and contrivances combine to shelter human life. Not the oneness of a child; but of a family of children who differ in age, character, temperament, and chosen pursuits, but are one in love and tender sympathy.

We shall never be of one mind in the sense of all holding the same opinions; but we may be all of one mind when, beneath diversities of opinion, expression and view, we are animated by a common devotion to Christ, a common loyalty to the great underlying facts of Redemption, and a common love to all who hold the head, though they may differ from us in an infinite variety of minor *considerations*. - *Selected*.

Creed and Character

"The Kingdom of God is not in word only, but in power." - 1 Cor. 4:20.

WE CALL ourselves Christians, that is, we profess to be disciples of Jesus Christ. Let us not make the mistake of taking it for granted that because we are students of the Bible, we are therefore Christians; for too often the Bible is treated only as a text book from which is to be extracted and expounded a theology. Discipleship is lost sight of in the pursuit of mere knowledge. "Knowledge [alone] puffeth up, but love buildeth *tip*." (1 Cor. 8:1.) One makes a balloon of us; the other a temple of God.

Now the Scriptures certainly do contain theology; that is, the truth of the existence, character, and attributes of God; His laws; the plan of salvation; the doctrines we are to believe; and the ethics we are to practice.

The Scriptures, being of God, are the expression of a vital, personal Spirit Being. As we read in Hebrews 1:1: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past," etc. And although they are a collection of the writings of many men, produced over a period of more than sixteen hundred years, they contain that which suggests a single, paramount idea, as though they are the revelation of a single mind. There is a unity that binds them together as a whole.

And what is that unity? It is the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:10)-of His advents, ministry, doctrines, sacrificial death, resurrection, and Kingdom. Or as Jesus Himself said: "The Scriptures testify of Me." And again, beginning at Moses, and all the Prophets, He expounded to them of all the things concerning Himself." - Luke 24:27.

The Upward Look of Faith

It is sometimes urged against Christianity that it is merely a historical faith. It is true that the basis for faith is historical; but this is no cause for reproach. Faith holds the records of the past, but the attitude of faith is not that of looking back. Faith receives the evidences of history of the character of Christ; faith accepts the testimony of the eye-witnesses of His resurrection-eye-witnesses who made it the work of their lives to proclaim that resurrection; and who sealed their testimony by their death. Faith sees in the Church a living, historical evidence of this truth; but faith's gaze is beyond and above all these. It is true that faith's feet are firmly planted on the solid ground of historical fact, but faith's look is upward; faith's eyes are fixed on a risen, living, ascended Lord.

We sometimes forget that Christ is the object of our faith. Faith is not a creed. It is an attitude of soul. No profound spiritual thinker has ever been able to put his deepest convictions into the language of theology; for faith makes substance of what to the purely natural sense does not exist; it proves things unseen, and knows them by the immediate evidence of their power in the soul. That Christ should not have been bounded by the grave; that He with whom the Father was well pleased should be proved "to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4), is to faith nothing strange. Stranger far would it have been if He had not risen; if the object of faith had disappeared before our eyes and existed only in the records of the past. The object of faith is not merely a life or example; it is the person to whom that life or example appertains. If the eyes of faith are turned upon a Life passed long ago among the hills of Galilee and Judea, if by the aid of history, faith loves to trace the lineaments of a Character seen and

known among men nearly two thousand years ago, it is because they are those of an ever living Lord, Savior, and Friend.

Jesus tells us that the words He speaks "are spirit, and they are life." That being so, then, they must have a living force, and true Christians must realize that force or power, or spirit alive in themselves. To this agree the words of Peter: 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.' - 1 Pet. 1:23.

It is not just saved, repentant sinners that God desires, but surrendered saints. We are given a twofold plan whereby this is accomplished. We cannot afford to neglect either: First, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16); second, 'Be ye filled with the Spirit.' - Eph. 5:18.

It is the province of the Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and reveal and interpret them to us; to so energize and quicken these dedicated lives as to transform them into Christ's image. For "the Kingdom of God is not in word only, but in *power*. (1 Cor. 4:20.) "When the Spirit of truth is come, He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:13, 14.) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." - Rom. 8:14.

There are two great spiritual forces, which are operating in the world through human beings, in this Age. These are directly opposed to each other, and in the ensuing conflict lies the explanation of all that is mysterious and puzzling in human affairs. As the Age draws to a consummation the conflict deepens in intensity. God's mighty purposes are being accomplished in the energy of the Holy Spirit, and its operations impart to the Age some of its characteristics. On the other hand, the great forces of evil, under the leadership of the head of the principalities, powers, and world-rulers of darkness, are directed to the accomplishment of certain definite objectives, directly opposed to the purposes of God. The display and exercise of these stupendous energies likewise impart to the Age some of its characteristics.

Now, it is the clear testimony of all Scripture that each and every one of us was born a subject of the ruler of this world. As we read in Ephesians 2:1-3: "You were dead in trespasses and sins in which you moved as you followed the course of this world, under the sway of the prince of the air -- the spirit which is at present active within those sons of disobedience among whom all of us lived, we as well as you, when we obeyed the passions of our flesh, carrying out the dictates of the flesh and its impulses, when we were objects of God's anger by nature, like the rest of men." - Moffatt's Translation.

Enlightening and Operating Force of the Spirit

It is quite evident, too, that God's purpose in giving us the light of His truth is to dispel the darkness of mind-the superstitions, errors, ignorance, and prejudices, by which Satan holds the race in subjection, so that we might become willing subjects of Christ. This is the thought of Colossians 1:13: "The Father has delivered us from the power [dominion] of darkness, and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." It is a truth, voiced by the Apostle in Ephesians 5:13: "All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever does make manifest is light."

It is by the light of truth unfolded to us that sin and righteousness, truth and error are discerned. As we all know, only light can dispel darkness; and it is by the revelation of Himself, in Christ, the true Light, that God delivers us from the power or dominion of darkness; and it is by that Light becoming a force in our lives that we become subjects of the Prince of Light-" translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son."

This dominion of Christ, then, is manifest in two ways: As a mind that enlightens and directs, and as a force that operates. It is not one without the other-not a mere knowledge of the Word of God; nor yet an exhibition of energy, either undirected or misdirected. It is the mind of Christ directing, and the Spirit of Christ operating. It is one and the same will in either case-"the will of My Father." (John 8:28-50.) It is not merely knowing "these things, but happy are ye if ye do them." (John 13:17.) We find ourselves, once subjected, enlightened, disciplined, built up by the Word of God and its power, until all our moral and spiritual actions are governed by the spirit or mind of Christ -- all under the dominion of God's dear Son

"bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.) What was it that made such a difference in those disciples on the day of Pentecost--those disciples who had previously forsaken Jesus and fled, and who had met behind closed doors for fear of the Jews? It was the spirit, mind, and power of Christ, which had that day been given. It was the beginning of the dominion of Christ; for, "The Kingdom of God is not in word only b--it in power." "God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power." - 2 Tim. 1:7.

One of the most powerful testimonies we can give of this power is to have and manifest the fruit of joy. One of the profits we get out of adversity is the fruit of joy. The advantage of the fires of sorrow does not lie in the things consumed, but in the things which they cannot consume. The sweetest of all the uses of adversity is to show us the joy which it cannot take away. There are substances which fire can not destroy. We could never have their qualities proved except by fire: yet the blessing is not the fire, but what it could not do. The benefit of the furnace, then, is the limit of its power. What God looks for is not the pain, but the tenacity of our joyfully enduring-the inability of the fire to extinguish His Word and Spirit in us. God appreciates our bearing and enduring; but it is joy in the Holy Spirit alone that enables us to bear and endure. Happiness is not the bliss of condition or environment, but of character.

But the virtue that is victorious in the crisis must be nourished and strengthened in the humdrum moments of life. No career is a dead level from the cradle to the grave; and we need the reserve power of the Spirit, stored up in the quieter days, for the emergencies and crises that surely come.

And be sure that emergencies and crises will come. At the conclusion of His discourse, which is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes a very startling statement: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. . . . Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:' and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." - Matt. 7:21-27.

An unalterable alternative-there is no escaping, either the one or the other results from studying and hearing the Word of God; either a house built on rock, or a, house built on sand. To continually search the Word of God to get a knowledge of the plans and purposes outlined therein, and then refuse to allow that truth to become a force or power in the life, is making mockery of it. But "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." - Gal. 6:7, 8.

"Corruption!" The very word itself brings to the conscience the sense of something repulsive. Who would knowingly choose "corruption in preference to "life everlasting"? Let us lay hold of all the promises of grace and power that we might be "more than conquerors." God's "divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory, and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." - 2 Pet. 1 :3, 4.

Marks of a Church Operating in the Power of the Spirit

Before closing our subject we might briefly consider the Scriptural marks of a church or ecclesia operating in the power of the Spirit. An ecclesia is an association of Christ's disciples formed for the purpose of worshipping together, serving- together, studying together, and fellowshiping together. Our worship should be simple and sincere. There is apt to be too much smoke from our incense and too little fragrance. Some confine their worship to Sunday, or sacred seasons, or even to conventions. Discipleship does not consist of sacred phrases to be put on or taken off with our Sunday clothes.

Also, the ecclesia should be a center for service in diverse spheres of activity, according to the diversity of gifts or talents. One has said, "We are saved to serve." Those who merely seek to be saved from the penalty of their sins have a very limited view of God's eternal purpose. God's great work, in which He is still engaged, is the New Creation. "We are laborers together with God." The ecclesia, too, is a school where the Spirit reveals, explains the things of Christ as we seek to know and do the will of God as set forth in His Word. To this end some have been made "apt to teach"; others have been furnished for evangelizing, etc.

And no church or ecclesia is complete unless it is a family home. In order to become a radiating point the church gathering must first be a rallying point, united in the bonds of brotherhood and love. Surely every mature Christian today, as we see all the signs indicative of the close of the Church's history on earth, should be beyond bickering over hairsplitting doctrinal points and should enter into that fulness of love Jesus manifested.

Paul caught an overwhelming glimpse of this, which he records in the eighth chapter of Romans, from the "no condemnation" to the "no separation." It overflowed his own heart; and he rose to the mark of perfect love when he stated that he would be willing to be separated from Christ (forego his own share in Christ, "the great salvation"), if only his kinsmen, Israel, might acknowledge and receive Christ. (Rom. 9:1-5.) He was proving to have that perfection of love that was like unto God's love. - See Matt. 5:43-48.

Do we have that compassion and love ourselves? Do we long for, and pray for those who, perhaps, having formerly walked to the house of God with us, are in danger of being overtaken by the dread extremity-separation from God by carelessness, indifference, and sin? Do we pray, "Think on them Lord, who in times past remembered Thee. Follow them where we cannot go; and though our resources fail, as did the power of the disciples in casting out demons on one occasion, may Thine infinite resources do what we may not, and bring them again to Thy feet, where they may know, once more, the sweetness and gladness of these closing days of the Church's pilgrimage"?

Our walk in life must not be inconsistent with our profession of faith, our creed. They must blend in perfect harmony; for, "the Kingdom of God is not in word only, but in power.

"Lord speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes *of* Thy tone;
As Thou halt sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children, lost and lone.

"Oh, teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words that they may reach
The hidden depths *of* many a heart.

"O, strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a helping hand
To wrestlers in the troubled sea.

"O, give Thine own sweet rest to me,
That *I* may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.

"Oh, *fill* me with Thy fulness, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow,
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

"O, use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where;
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy *glory* share!"

- *Contributed by F. A. Essler*

"We Would See Jesus"

LIFE HAS its battle grounds, where fierce conflicts are waged against opposing forces. Life has its fords and crossing places, where we go over from one great experience to another. Life has its mills, where are ground out the product of a greater love and a serener trust. And life has its gardens of peace, where one can sit beneath the blossoming boughs and rejoice in the warblings of the feathered songsters of the place.

And it was one of the gardens of peace that Jesus found in a certain home in Bethany. It was for Him a little oasis in the world's desert. We know not what took Him there on the occasion of His first visit, but we are told that He conceived a love for Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha.

There were many homes that might have entertained the Master, but they failed to do so. They failed to see their opportunity. It has been said that opportunity knocks once at every door. We do not know. But we do know that it can be turned away. It does not insist on entrance. It just comes. In appearance it may not even seem prepossessing, but it is Opportunity none the less, and it has precious jewels to give to those who can receive it.

Much has been said on the subject of Mary and Martha. No doubt they were both very good women. During one of our Lord's visits to their home it would seem that Martha was occupied with the housework more than was necessary. Consequently she was missing a thing of great value. Mary saw something of this and desired it. Yet at a later time Martha manifested great faith in Jesus, and we can believe that in her heart she was His true friend to the last.

There were times when, Jesus needed comfort and refreshment, just as His followers do. The world is a hard, stern place in which to live. We do not refer to the natural world, but to the world of affairs that man has reared. There are times when the heart grows weary with the incessant struggle with the inclement elements, and when we yearn to step out of it all for ever so brief a span. Then perchance we think of the home of a friend, one who will understand and whose words will buoy us up and cheer us along life's way. For a true friend is a priceless possession in a darksome world.

Mary and Martha appeal to us as being the friends of Jesus. And the Master did not have many friends on this earth. The people did not understand Him. He had been called with a calling that they knew nothing of. They failed to discern the temple wherein He dwelt. And little did they know that the dome of that temple reached up to the *very* skies. The thoughts of Jesus soared far above the selfish schemes and ambitions of men. He was in the world, and yet the world sawn Him not for what He was.

And the world sees Him not for what He is today. Yet the world needs to see Him more than it needs anything else. To see Jesus is the highest vision that Cod can grant to man. And if we belong to the favored few who see Him—His friends under all conditions of life—we have a source of joy that the sum total of the world's hardships cannot remove from us.

Suppose that by pressing a magic button we could transfer ourselves from this modern sphere of existence to the little town of Bethany over nineteen centuries ago. Here we are in the home of Lazarus. And here is Jesus, travel-worn and weary, yet able to speak as never man spake. And what is the Master talking about? Is it politics? Is it about the recent arrest of some criminal? Is it about the affairs that make up the Roman world? Is it about any one of a thousand things that frequently engage our conversation when we meet together? Evidently, not. It is something higher

than these things that so completely chains the attention of Mary. Jesus must have spoken some beautiful words in that quiet home. We are not given the discourse. But it must have contained something about His Father, something about salvation's mighty plan. How our Lord must have loved to speak of these matters to those who had the heart and mind to receive them! Ah, yes! here in this simple abode we see Jesus-not in the palaces of the great, but with the meek and lowly of heart, with those who possessed the capacity for faith and love.

But the spell is broken. We are back again in our modern world. Men are clamoring for dollars and cents. Pride and selfishness are turning human hearts to stone. Nations have brought upon the scenes the grins terrors of war. Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. Wild beasts of destruction have been unleashed! Oh! that we might see Jesus with the human eye. Oh! that we might hear the tender accents of His voice. "The world is waiting for the sunrise" - a sunrise to be brought to men by Him. Poor world! Poor human hearts that by the million are breaking. O golden Day of God, with your unspeakable plenitude of joy! Come soon! Come soon!

But while we cannot see Jesus with the natural eye we can see Him in a higher sense, even with the eye of faith. We see His tenderness, His compassion, His love. And there are times when His presence seems so real that other things just fade away. But for the most part the vision of His face is reposeful and calm, and, as we reach out in the darkness and touch His hand, He speaks to us in a still small voice, yet with words of strength and assurance that drive all our fears away.

We would see Jesus with a still closer and truer vision. Ere long the thunders of the world shall crash, and the billows of human passion shall surge upon the land. But "there is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the dwelling place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early." Let us then look up above the blackness and the gloom, and we shall see a star, and now while we gaze and gaze upon it, it assumes a form. It comes nearer and nearer. And now there can be no doubt about it -- it is indeed the very Christ, the Son of God. Ah! yes, He is looking on, and He knows that the world's approaching change is even now at the doors.

And soon this Mighty One shall wield the rod of His power over a boundless domain. No more then shall the pale specter of death stalk about the land. No more shall rivers of blood flow because of devastating wars. No more shall the gaunt hand of famine lay millions in the tomb. No more shall the sons of toil be exploited by the plutocrat and the profiteer. One country shall arise to catch the beams of glory poured forth by the Sun of Righteousness, and that country shall be the world. One people shall dwell therein in freedom, in happiness and in life, and that people shall be mankind. One law shall shine forth in a mundane paradise to eternally safeguard the interests of the human family, and that shall be the law of Love. And upon a new foundation shall be built a new world-the theme of all God's ancient prophets -- to reflect the radiance of righteousness, joy, and peace forever more. That is what the vision of the Christ will mean to the sons of men.

But in the present time what does this vision mean to us?

"We would see Jesus, for the shadows lengthen
Across the little landscape of our life
We would see Jesus, our weak hearts to strengthen
For the last weariness, the final strife."

We would see Jesus "when morning gilds the skies," before we start in on the tasks and duties of the day. We would see Him in the evening when night clothes the earth in sable robes, and we want to feel the assurance that His guardian angel will be with us during the hours of sleep. We would see Him when temptation assails us, and receive the overcoming power that He promised to His own. We would see Him when trouble like a gloomy cloud- 1-.as settled down, and the flail of anguish beats upon the heart. We would see Him every day, and under all the vicissitudes of the years.

Then let us see Him. Let us take care that nothing robs us of our heavenly vision. Let us follow the example of Mary of Bethany, and sit at His feet. Let us enjoy the good portion that cannot be taken from us while our hearts are right. Over two thousand years of sorrows, and over the world's dark sea of death, let us see the Master's face smiling upon us in love, and let us hear His words, pure and tender and sweet as when He uttered them so long ago: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." And, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." - Walter Sargeant

Recently Deceased

Mrs. Harry E. East, Mays Landing, N. J. - (April).
Mr. G. O. Anderson, Moline, Ill - (June).
J. J. Connell, Winnipeg, Man.,, Can. - (July).
Mr. J. F. Godfrey, Pictou, N. S., Can. - (July).
Mrs. Hanna Lundgren, Chicago, Ill - (July).
Mrs. Clara Shinn, Chicago, Ill. - (July).
Mrs. Margaret Johnson, Youngstown, Ohio - (August).
Mr. Conrad H. S. Kuehn, Toledo, Ohio - (August).