

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXIX July, 1943 No. 7

The Four Freedoms

"If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." - John 8:36.

INDEPENDENCE DAY, which is the annual memorial of the declaration by the colonies now constituting the United States, of independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain, is now, after one and two-thirds centuries, celebrated with quite as much good will and amity in the mother country as in this. The two countries now fight as one a war for human freedom.

The two great English-speaking allies are pledged as far as possible, by the declaration of their leaders in the Atlantic Charter, to seek through the war they are waging and the peace they hope to achieve, to guarantee the "Four Freedoms" to all mankind: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear.

History does not contain the record of any period in the past in which more than a small minority of mankind enjoyed these freedoms. The American Declaration of Independence, after one hundred and seventy-six years, has not accomplished such an ideal of human society, but its proclamation to the world as the objective for which untold blood and treasure are being poured out, stamps its authors as among the highest and noblest of the race.

Yet from a religious or philosophic standpoint, these four freedoms should be the assured heritage of every man and woman. The fact that Adam's race, despite six thousand years of opportunity and experience, has fallen so far short of this moderate ideal, but emphasizes man's deplorable condition, and his utter need of extraneous assistance to accomplish his uplift. For six thousand years he has been trying to raise himself by his bootstraps. There is, no good reason to expect that he will be any more successful in this effort in the future than in the past.

THE GREATER FREEDOMS

Nevertheless, there is hope; for man's Creator has promised the ultimate freeing of the race from *all* the disabilities, limitations, diseases, and degradations under which it labors and suffers—certainly a far more comprehensive, satisfying and glorious freedom than even that contemplated by the Atlantic Charter. This freedom is referred to by the Apostle Paul as "the glorious liberty of the children of God." The era, set apart in the Divine Program for its accomplishment is called by the Apostle Peter, "Times of restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. This period is typified under the Mosaic law by the observance of the "Year of Jubilee." The law provided: "Then shalt thou send abroad the loud trumpet throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his [hereditary] possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." Man's hereditary possession is the "image and likeness of God in which his first ancestor was created; his family is the earthly family of God, the Father, for it is written: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the, Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." - Romans 8:21; Acts 3:21; Lev. 25:9,10; Eph. 3:15.

Jesus added His testimony to this universal prophetic topic in His conversation-with the Pharisees recorded in John 8:31-36. He said: "Every one that committeth sin is the slave of sin. . . . If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

"Free indeed"! Jesus intimated that some who think they are free are really imprisoned, confined, restrained from liberty; and He implied that there are degrees in the attainment of the freedom which He had to offer. In fact, this freedom of Jesus, as it applies to His Church in the Gospel Age, may also be divided into four stages or degrees, to be attained before its beneficiaries finally become "free *indeed*."

THE FIRST FREEDOM

Paul, the great attorney of Christ, writing to the Ephesians, declares: ". . . Ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. . . Ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:1, 2, 12.) Truly a condition of condemnation, confinement and misery.

Thus it is seen, from the standpoint of the truly free, that all men who have not known Jesus Christ as their Savior are "carnal, sold under sin"; clad in the "filthy rags of their own righteousness; "captives" of death, "hid in prison houses" of disease, of poverty, mental and physical; preyed upon by "that corruption that is in the world through lust." Miserable prisoners in a filthy dungeon!

And as for many generations most men have been born in this dark and dismal dungeon, they do not realize their condition; and in all sincerity reply to Him who speaks to them of possible freedom as did the Jews of old: "We have never yet been in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?"

Nevertheless, *some* of "the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the earth, in the deep darkness of death, upon them hath the light shined." (Isaiah 9.) A ray of sunshine has pierced into the dungeon.

"He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," declared John the Baptist of Jesus. Accordingly, shortly after John had so hailed Him, Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth "opened the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, and found the place where it was written,

"The spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor;
He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."
And then He said: "Today hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears."

Those who have come to this Light, and have heard the proclamation of "release to the captives," and have qualified by faith for its benefits, feel that they have been made "free, indeed." We hear them singing:

"Free from the law, O happy condition!
Jesus our Lord hath purchased remission;
Cursed by God's law, and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeemed us, once for all.

"Now we are free, there's no condemnation . . . "

But sooner or later, some of those who have been justified by faith, and so experienced the First Freedom of Jesus, realize that they are not yet entirely free. Though released from the dungeon, they are still confined to the house! Their condition is described by the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians. He has been writing mainly to Jewish Christians, but in the fourth chapter of the Epistle he seems to broaden his theme to embrace all those who show by their conduct that they are still laboring under a certain restraint. He writes: "I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a slave, though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world." To do justice to the Apostle's very idiomatic Greek, the word rendered "rudiments" might be more freely translated "goose-stepping." The Jewish converts were still ostentatiously and foolishly trying to keep in step with the Jewish law and traditions; the Gentile converts were still marching along to the "hep, hep," of their Gentile associates. The Apostle continues: "Howbeit, at that time, not knowing God [well], ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods: but now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly [cringing] 'goose-stepping,' whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?" This marching along with the world is not freedom for the Christian. It is bondage.

The Apostle James also has something to say of Christians who are still in bondage. "Whence wars and fighting among you?" he demands. "Come they not from your pleasures that war. [with your consciences] in your members? . . . Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" This inward fighting is not freedom.

"Ye were called for freedom," continues Paul to the Galatians, "But . . . the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would."

So both the world and the flesh crack the whip over us, and we continue on our "weak and beggarly" course until our partially-freed spirits get tired of the miserable performance and we turn again unto Jesus to hear Him say: "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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

The word "yoke used by Jesus in this passage is not the same Greek word He used in the parable in which He referred to "five yoke of oxen." It is the word used in Acts 15:10: "A yoke upon the neck of the disciples"; in Galatians 5:1: "Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage"; in 1 Timothy 6:1: "As many servants as are under the yoke of bondage"; and none of these suggest a partnership yoke. R carries the same thought as the "yoke" of Jeremiah 27:6, 11: "The nation -that shall bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him...." Jesus invites the justified believer to submit to Him -to His rule. And He intimates: "Compared to the servitude you are under, My rule is *freedom*. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Some of the dungeon-freed earthlings accept this further freedom; and of them Paul writes to the Colossians (Col. 1:12, 13): -"Giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the [present] inheritance of the saints in light [by releasing us from the dark dungeon of condemnation], and [further] translated us into the Kingdom [sovereignty] of the Son of His love." These have now been released from the house-the house of Adam-the house of human-mindedness.

No longer citizens of the world, their "citizenship is in heaven"; while properly described as "aliens and strangers," they have been appointed "ambassadors for Christ," hence are assured extritorial privileges and protection in "this present evil world." "For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, that the righteous [be not forced to] put forth their hands unto iniquity." Thus the Psalmist explains the matter in the 125th Psalm; and he counsels those who have received the freedom of God's out-of-doors: "Forget thine own people and thy father's [Adam's] house." - Psalm 45.

Truly these doubly-freed ones may say with the Psalmist (18:17, 19) "He delivered me from my strong enemy [death, the dungeon] . . . He brought me forth also into a large place"-out of the house, into the condition of the consecrated, the spirit-begotten.

A glorious freedom -- but is their freedom yet complete?

No! The Apostle writes in the seventh chapter of Romans a vivid description of a condition of mind experienced by every freedman who, released from the dungeon of the Adamic condemnation and from the house of human-mindedness, has received a new mind, "which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." The Apostle reminds us that we are still obliged to carry around with us a "body of death"-it is the only body "we," the New Creatures, have-a body that in many of the laws of its being is contrary to the New Mind-the will to serve God, "For I delight," says Paul, "in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."

Thus even in the open air of God's outdoors the freedman finds that he is still infested with some of the crawling things of his former prison cell: the habits, desires, appetites, passions, entrenched in his fallen flesh-reckoned dead, indeed, but still actually alive and in torment.

The Apostle is very sensitive to this condition. The "law" in his mind and the "law" in his members are "warring" against each other, and he feels himself a 'victim of this internal strife. He is "brought into captivity"-he uses a word meaning a prisoner of war, literally, "spear-hedged" - and is pricked on every side by his tormentors as he seeks to escape. "O wretched [literally, trial - enduring] man that I am," he cries; "who shall deliver me out of this dead body? I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Eagerly we inquire: When, O Paul, shall this deliverance come? Is there some formula of immediate escape that you have discovered, and of which we also may avail ourselves? Answer, we pray; for we, too, long to be free indeed!

Not here does the Apostle directly answer this question; elsewhere he is explicit. "We wait for a Savior," he writes the Philippians, "who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory"-His risen, spirit body. And to the Corinthians he writes: "We know 'that, if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, . . . being burdened." Thus, to the Romans, the Philippians, the Corinthians, the Great Apostle writes the same message: "Indeed, we- that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon; that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life." - Rom. 7:22-25; Phil. 3:20,21; 2 Cor. 5:1-4.

"Here in the body pent, Absent from Him we roam;
Yet nightly pitch our moving tent A day's march nearer home."

So those who may be, said to have been successively released from the dungeon and the house, are still traveling and traveling in an alien country; they are still "groaning" and "seeking another country, even a better."

But meanwhile shall we be content with merely "groaning"? Is there nothing that we can do about the "body of humiliation" with which we are still hampered? Cannot we get rid of some, at least, of the dungeon-soil and crawling things?

THE THIRD FREEDOM

Yes, indeed! There is the cleansing by "washing of water by the Word" to be done, and we all find plenty of scrubbing needed in the corners! The Apostle's exhortation is: "Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilements of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It is not difficult to define the defilements of the flesh, but what of the defilements of spirit which we must seek to wash away? What are they?

The English word "spirit" and the Greek word so rendered, both have the significance of unseen power or force, ("like the wind," as Jesus explained) whether personal or impersonal. The mind is the unseen power that controls the body; the motives and intentions, often deeply hidden and disguised even from our own consciousness, constitute the unseen power that dominates our minds. These motives and intentions are often tainted with "spiritual" pride, or ambition, or vainglory, or insincerity. These are defilements of the spirit.

In Hebrews 4:12 it is written: "The word of God is living, and active ' . . . and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Word both discerns and cleanses, even the defilements of the spirit. But the process must be continuous. The fleshly "tabernacle" is inherently weak, fundamentally unsound, persistently vicious, its reactions powerfully influence the deepest

functions of the mind. The Prophet Jeremiah realized this when he declared (Jer. 17:9): "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?" Even our motives, at best, are obscure and mixed!

However, the longer the cleansing process through "washing by the word" continues, and the greater the degree of freedom from defilements of flesh and spirit attained, the more keenly conscious of the dead body still on his back, does the freedman in Christ become. Often his voice is heard raised in plaintive song:

"If I in Thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of Thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
The fetters of flesh, and be *free*!"

The gyves, the fetters, that bind the free spirit, must still be struck off by the Great Armorer, before the liberated prisoner is free indeed!

THE FOURTH FREEDOM

So one who has conceived a passionate desire for the ultimate and complete freedom: of which Jesus spoke can never be satisfied as long as his thoughts and actions are in any degree "subjected to vanity," to that "corruption that is in the world through lust." This "corruption of blood" affects every man of Adam's condemned race. So long as the judicially justified freedman's thoughts or actions ever wander, even for a moment, from the objective of serving God to which he has pledged himself, he is to that extent "subject to vanity" and to the corruption of carnal desire or "lust," however innocent he may be of offense according to the standards of the present, evil world. So he increasingly longs for that new sphere of life to which he has been invited by his Lord; but the desirability of the vast "change" which this involves is purely a matter of faith. For, if he is a realist, or if he has learned sufficient humility, he cannot feel that he is prepared, fitted, competent for the new status and environment to which he aspires., He cannot with confidence assure himself that mentally, morally, and physically he is ready to meet so profound and sweeping a change.

All man's conscious existence has been confined to crawling slowly about at the bottom of the sea of air that surrounds the comparatively tiny earth upon which he lives. He cannot exist outside the limits of a very narrow range of temperature; he must breathe constantly a rare and exact mixture of gases under just the right amount of pressure, or he quickly dies. His requirements of food and liquids are equally essential and specific in recurrence. All his reactions, of mind and body, are keyed to these surroundings. Hence he is by nature "at home in the body," but his new mind has begun to cultivate the relationships of a new sphere just to the extent that these relationships have become a reality to him is he "absent from the body" and "at home with the

Lord." But under his present limitations-physical, mental, moral--this severance from the earthly and living in the heavenlies is incomplete and subject to frequent interruptions. His sanctified reason tells him, as expressed by the Apostle, that the still better, infinitely more to be desired condition is "to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven . . . that what is mortal may be swallowed up of [the] life." Yet the instinctive human fear is that in losing the one, he may not be quite prepared for the other-that, in the graphic metaphor of the Apostle, reiterated by the risen Lord (Rev. 16:15) he might be "found naked." If he loses his earth-life, and is not fully adjusted to the spirit world the Apostle feels that he would be "unclothed," "naked" in the Universe-physically, mentally, psychologically.

With our present equipment of perceptive organs, the thought of existence in the intense cold of interstellar space, or in the fierce heat of the sun-stars, is equally repugnant. Poor humanity, in the effort at self-consolation, has invented (with some encouragement from metaphorical Scriptures) a conception of a future "Heaven" very similar to earth, only glorified. This, of course, is what Jesus taught His disciples to pray for all mankind -- the return of God's sovereignty to earth -- "even as in heaven." This will be all that the best of mankind could possibly desire. But the freedmen of the Gospel Age have a diverse and much higher destiny.

Torn between his aspirations and his limitations, each one in some form asks himself the question:

"O how can I, whose native sphere
Is dark, whose mind is dim,
Before the Ineffable appear,
And on my naked spirit bear
That Uncreated Beam?"

What *can* the seeker after the ultimate freedom of Jesus do to complete his preparation for the great Change—a metamorphosis vastly greater than would be the instantaneous transformation of an ant into a man? As a matter of *fact* -- *nothing*, but trust. This the Apostles intimate. "Having done all [that you *can* do, or that is commanded], *stand*." God's spirit is working in the freedman candidate. The trials and difficulties of his experience are producing qualities in him suitable to his future sphere. He has "need of patience, that having done the will of God, [he] may receive the promise." (Heb. 10:36.) Yet patience is not a deliberate or voluntary acquisition. James says (James 1:3, 4) that "the trial of our faith" *produces* patience, and that it is our part to "*let* patience have her perfect [complete] work, that ye may be perfect [complete] and entire, lacking nothing." Does this mean perfection in the flesh, mental, moral, and physical? Ah, no! It means that Christ's freedman must have certain educational and preparatory experiences; and if he draw back, the process will not be complete, the education unfinished.

But since it is admitted that perfection in the flesh is not to be expected nor attainable, there yet remains a tremendous work to be accomplished to; prepare the freedman for his ultimate destiny. This work requires the energies of the divine Creator Himself. "Wherefore," says Peter, "let them also that suffer according to the will of God, commit their souls [beings, conscious existence] in well-doing, to a faithful *Creator*." This is the only place in the New Testament that God is called the "Creator." It is indeed a sovereign act of creation that is now to be accomplished.

In the fourth and fifth chapters of Peter's First Epistle, the fact, conditions, and certain details of this creative work are set forth. He says:

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you . . . but *inasmuch* as ye are partakers of [the] Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of His glory ye may rejoice with exceeding joy. . . . And the God of all grace [giving], who hath called you unto His eternal glory in [the] Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, *Himself* to complete you, He will establish [adjust to surroundings, integrate], He will strengthen [mightily empower] you."

This, be it noted, is to take place "*after* that ye have suffered a little while" -- after the "light afflictions, which are but for a moment," are ended. This "establishing" and "strengthening" by our God Himself, is just what, and *all* that is then needed. The work that we had begun, but never could finish to our satisfaction, is now to be completed, finished. Adjustments made easy for us, to our new and strange surroundings; integrated in the position to which we are assigned, so that we shall harmonize and cooperate with our surroundings as completely-ay, far more completely--than we did with our earthly circumstances; finally, empowered for all requirements-of space, time, wisdom, position.

Does this mean that the final and complete freedom will be miraculously given to those who truly stiffer with Christ? Yes; such is the declaration of that Peter to whom were entrusted the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. His was the commission to first declare the Sovereignty open to the

Jews, which he discharged at Pentecost; and later to similarly open the door to the Gentiles, when he received Cornelius into the Church. It is particularly fitting, therefore, that he should be the one to conduct, in anticipation, both Jew and Gentile overcomes through that open Door to full entry in the miracle of the First Resurrection, into the Kingdom. So he adds a seal, as it were, to his declaration quoted above: *"This is the true grace [gift] of God. Stand ye fast therein."*

And on this same subject of our final freedom, the other great Apostle, Paul, writes to the Philippian Church: "For our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we *wait for a Savior*, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself." - Phil. 3:21.

The "body" to which the Apostle here refers is not merely the physical body, nor is it the mystical Body of Christ, the Church. Paul is not here speaking metaphorically, and the context forbids this understanding. *Soma*, which is the Greek word here rendered body, Dr. Strong defines as literally meaning "a sound whole." Liddell and Scott's Lexicon cites its use by classical Greek writers to mean "one's life in the flesh, life; existence," and "a person, human being." This comprehensive ego, or personality, is what both Peter and Paul are referring to, and this is what must be "fashioned anew" and "completed." And our late beloved Pastor Russell declared (R5789): "Soon the resurrection 'change' will perfect the elect Church of Christ, and qualify them as kings and priests and judges of the world." Amen!

"The prize, the prize secure!
The athlete nearly fell,
Bore all he could endure,
And bore not always well.
But he may smile at conflicts gone
Who sets the victor's garlands on!

"Safe home, safe home in port!
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck.
But oh! the joy upon the shore
To know our voyage of peril o'er."

"If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed!"

- H. E. Hollister.

(NOTE: In quoting from the sacred Text, the improved translations of the American Revised Version, Rotherham's and other Critical translations, and the definitions of Dr. Strong's Greek Dictionary, have been freely drawn upon.)

Annual Report of the Institute

BECAUSE OF its many blessings it is always a pleasure to look back over the activities of the Institute year, though there is always the regret that there is not more that can be looked back to as having glorified our Heavenly Father's name. With each year there comes a deeper realization of the solemnity of dealing with things so sacred, and of the fact that we are both nearer the end of our course and nearer the entrance into His blessed presence. As the signs multiply about us of the closing of the Age, they speak to us also of a shortening of our time of preparation. Since those who have done all that it is their duty to do are permitted only to say that they are "unprofitable servants," there is no room left for boasting regarding the little service that has been rendered, for we cannot suppose we have done all our duty.

Ill health and changed business conditions and death itself have made inroads in our service -- our dear Brothers Friese and Bennett having both been removed by death in the past year, the former from Pilgrim service and the latter from the Directorate. These brethren have been greatly missed in our service and fellowship, but we rejoice that we were for so long a time granted the privilege of a spiritually profitable association.

As required by our charter, the Board as promptly as possible filled two vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors as the result of the death of Brother Bennett and the resignation of Brother Stiles, and we were glad to welcome to our councils two brethren, Brothers Essler and Siekman, who were appreciative of finishing out with us the few months that remained of our year of service.

While reporting as the Directors whom you have appointed to serve during this past year, we trust that in a very real sense our Lord Himself has been *the* Director and we merely His representatives. Though appreciative of the privileges granted us by our position, we recognize that there is a similar responsibility placed upon every individual whom the Lord has accepted as a prospective member of His Body. However much or little each may serve, he is expected to faithfully use the talents that are his

The past year has brought into association with us a number who are new to our fellowship, and some of them new to the truths that are so precious to us. For the benefit of these we would remark, as on former occasions, that ours is not a church organization and that it does not have for its purpose a separation from others, but on the contrary was instituted that we might have a larger fellowship with those who are desirous of standing free in the liberty that our Lord provided for us. It is a voluntary association of Christian believers for mutual edification and comfort, having no creed, written or otherwise, but associated upon the one foundation of faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice and full consecration to the Heavenly Father's will. This association' has continued with great profit for twenty-five years, and as from the beginning, still seeks to stress the importance of putting away the spirit of sectarianism and intolerance and of recognizing the one foundation upon which all should be united.

SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

Always having in mind that the chief ministry of the Institute is for the spiritual development of those intimately associated with it, there has also been in mind throughout the years the importance and necessity of a proper witness to the public. Three editions of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" have been exhausted and a fourth has gone on the press at the time of the preparing of this report. There is always on hand a supply of tracts for general distribution as well as the special "Herald" reprinting Brother Russell's treatment of the two subjects: "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" and "What Say the Scriptures about Our Lord's Return?" These are not merely for those who are able to pay for them, in fact no price is set on the tracts, but a special fund provides them for all to whom the Lord gives the opportunity of distributing them. There are on hand also copies of the "First Volume" for lending. None, therefore, need be idle when the fields are whitened to the harvest.

SUGGESTIONS APPRECIATED

The Directors are elected for the purpose of carrying out the wishes of the friends. While it is not possible to comply with conflicting suggestions, we are always pleased to know the thoughts of the different individuals, and pleased to follow their proposals; as nearly as possible in harmony with what we understand to be the Lord's will.

It is not and never has been our thought that it is our province to tell the brethren what they shall believe, or that the Institute is a divinely appointed channel through which all truth must come. The Prophets and Apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as represented in the "Word, of Truth," are still the only channels of truth. The Lord does continue, however, to use uninspired humans to help each other to a clearer understanding of the inspired Word. We trust that our effort to serve along this line *has been* blessed of the Lord.

MINISTRY OF THE "HERALD" PAGES

Our most general contact with the brethren is through the means of the "Herald of Christ's Kingdom." That the Lord has been directing in its service, there can be no doubt, for we continually receive word from the friends that it is being used to answer their various questions and meet their different problems-questions and problems of which the Editors could know nothing. It is not probable that any issue has been prepared that was satisfactory to every reader. In this we ask the brethren to be patient with us, realizing that there are many types of minds to be satisfied. If, in endeavoring to assist the Bride to make herself ready, we are used to test the patience and charity of some of the friends, that will doubtless be a well worth-while service, though not the one we prefer.

During recent months the innovation of signing articles has been instituted as an experiment, at the suggestion of some of our readers, and the expressions of appreciation indicate a very general approval of the change.

Since those who are receiving this report are on our subscription list, we infer that they have found the "Herald" a blessing. We suggest that this places upon them the responsibility of sharing their blessings with others. Two arrangements make this possible. Those who wish may have one or more extra copies of each issue to use as samples for- distribution among their acquaintances, or they may send us lists, as long as they please and as frequently as convenient, of those to whom they wish us to send free a three-months' trial subscription.

There is perhaps a still more important form of service which those with tact can perform. There are without doubt many brethren who would like to have the "Herald" and would be benefited by it, but are depriving themselves of it because unable to pay for it and too modest to ask for it free. In view of the fact that none of us has ever repaid our Heavenly Father for any of His bounties, the acceptance of this one additional item is but a small matter. The prime consideration should be the spiritual advancement of the brethren, and those who cannot pay for the "Herald" should be made to realize that it is for the very purpose of serving them that a special fund has been provided. We believe the Lord will be as appreciative of any service you can render along this line as we ourselves are.

THE MINISTRY OF THE PILGRIMS

Neither we nor our Pilgrim brethren have any desire to intrude our ministry where it would not be welcome. However, we do wish to serve all who desire Pilgrim visits, and while during the past year our brethren have served many Classes throughout the United States and Canada, we judge from advices which reach us, that it is probable this, service could be considerably expanded if all would request the

visits who would be benefited by them. The traveling brethren find great profit in serving the ones and twos as well as the larger groups. Even brethren who feel- that they are located in some inaccessible quarter should not hesitate to make requests for Pilgrim service, for serving them might make possible the reaching of some other equally inaccessible brother. In case of such appointments it will be a great help to the Pilgrim brothers if these isolated brethren will write them fully of the various ways by which their location can be reached.

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| Miles traveled | 70,984 |
| Meetings held | 747 |
| Attendance | 10,620 |

DANIEL AND THE REVELATION VOLUMES

It is encouraging to find the brethren placing the Daniel and Revelation Volumes among their acquaintances in this time of distress, for there is no way of giving comfort to our friends equal to that of opening their eyes to the divine supervision of the ages past, that they may have confidence in His present supervision of world events.

MINISTRY OF CORRESPONDENCE

Our blessings are manifold and in a large measure contributed to by the helpful and encouraging letters that come to us regularly. Without these we should be able to serve with only the realization that we are honestly endeavoring to comfort and encourage the brethren; but the labor is much lightened by the many reports that come to us of blessings received through our efforts. Of course there are criticisms also, but these are likewise appreciated when manifestly given in the spirit of love and helpfulness.

It has not been in the Lord's purpose to supply us with sufficient time and strength for the writing of all the letters we would like to have sent out, and very frequently we have been forced to content ourselves with a mere post-card. We trust the friends realize our situation.

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Number of letters received | 4,210 |
| Number of letters sent out | 5,820 |

While contacts with foreign lands are increasingly difficult, we still have some little information as to the condition of our brethren in the war zone, having heard even from Greece early in this fiscal year that all of our brethren there were safe. We regret that there has been no recent word. We' rejoice with our brethren in Great Britain that they have been favored by Divine Providence with less trying conditions than formerly. Our prayers still go out for them, however, that whatever the trials, they may be faithful to the end.

"WE KNOW NOT WHAT AWAITS US"

The divine record is not burdened with details; but enough has been given us that we may "look up, and lift up our heads, knowing that our deliverance draweth nigh." How short our privilege of service and the time for being "prepared unto every good work" may be, we cannot know. God has wisely veiled our eyes, perhaps that we may be the more diligent in doing with our might what our hands find to do. May this be for each of us a service of "doing good unto all men as we have opportunity," especially in the "preaching of the Word, instant in season and out of season," each seeking not his own comfort but rather the "pleasing his neighbor unto his edification."

The greatest of our privileges has not yet been mentioned that ours is a prayer circle in which each member is daily borne to the Throne of Grace that divine guidance and assistance may work out our Heavenly Father's eternal purpose and finally gather the faithful into His Heavenly fold.

Treasurer's Report

Income:

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|------------|
| Contributions | \$6,032.07 | |
| Subscriptions | 1,124.59 | |
| Books and Mottoes | 858.03 | |
| Rentals | 639.00 | |
| Legacies | <u>400.00</u> | |
| | | \$9,053.69 |

Expense:

| | | |
|---|---------------|-------------------|
| Printing and Mailing Herald | \$1,319.95 | |
| Free Tracts | 37.87 | |
| Cost of Books and Mottoes Sold | 681.55 | |
| Pilgrim Expense | 2,158.60 | |
| Office Salaries | 357.70 | |
| Office Expense | 267.14 | |
| Interest on Mortgage | 311.10 | |
| Maintenance of Real Estate | 744.60 | |
| Addition to Reserve for Loss on Securities | <u>641.89</u> | <u>\$6,520.40</u> |
| Excess of Income over Expense | | <u>\$2,533.29</u> |

Statement of Auditors

The undersigned auditors have examined the books of account of the Pastoral Bible Institute for the year ending April 30, 1943, and have found them correct and in good order.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE W. JEFFREY

LOUIS NEWMAN

NICHOLAS F. NICHOLSON.

Report of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting,, held the first Saturday in June, marked a quarter of a century of our association. We trust that long before the century is complete, or even before the second quarter is well begun, it will be the privilege of all the Lord's little ones,, within and outside our association, to experience the joys of the General Assembly of the saints.

Following the usual devotional service and the election of servants for the meeting, the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting and the report of the Directors for the fiscal year just ended, were read and approved. The latter appears elsewhere in this issue. Our Treasurer, while dwelling upon our blessings, called attention to the certainties of a future that to the human mind could not but appear very uncertain. He mentioned appreciatively the improved financial showing, emphasizing the fact that the funds on hand are a minor asset as compared with the good will of the Lord and the brethren.

The lists of new and of deceased members were next read. The latter brought a note of sadness into the meeting, but we have the assurance that while some are completing their course the Lord will not be without laborers here for whatever work there is to be done. Questions after the meeting indicated that there are still some who do not understand the requirements for membership in the Pastoral Bible Institute. For the benefit of our newly interested readers we state that to become a member, one must be in sympathy with the purpose and object of our ministry, and, as an' evidence of this, be a reader of the "Herald of Christ's Kingdom" and a contributor to the amount of five dollars at any one time to our work.

A season of fellowship followed the casting of ballots for the directors of the Institute for the coming year, the principal business for which these meetings are called. In due time the Tellers returned to announce that in the Lord's providence the Directorate for the coming year would be Brothers J. J. Blackburn, B. Boulter, J. C. Jordan, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and P. E. Thomson.

Following the adjournment of this meeting the new Board assembled, and among other actions taken, appointed for the coming year, J. C. Jordan, chairman; P. E. Thomson, secretary; J. J. Blackburn, vice-chairman; P. L. Read, treasurer. Editorial Committee: H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, P. E. Thomson. Full time Pilgrims: J. J. Blackburn and P. E. Thomson. Part time Pilgrims: J. A. Bell, L. L. Benedict, B. Boulter, J. E. Dawson, F. A. Essler, H. E. Hollister, J. C. Jordan, O. R. Moyle, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, and W. J. Siekman.

The Brooklyn Convention

THE CLASS meeting at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N. Y., report another season of happy and profitable Christian fellowship at their Annual Convention, June 5 and 6, which was held as usual at the Y. M. C. A. Building, 55 Hanson Place.

Notwithstanding gasoline and other travel restrictions, representatives from distant classes were present, while friends from nearby classes, including a few from other Brooklyn fellowships, brought the total attendance to well above a hundred.

The Convention really opened at 6 p.m. when a dinner was served in the Y.M.C.A. dining room to which all in attendance were invited as guests of the local Class. This, which gave opportunity for fellowship before the convention proper, was very much appreciated.

The Convention then opened with an address by Brother J. E. Dawson, who welcomed us in the name of the Lord. This was followed by a "favorite hymn" song service led by Brother B. Boulter. The discourse that evening, given by Brother J. H. Sonntag, was on "The Epistles of Christ" based on 2 Cor. 3:3. With many helpful illustrations Brother Sonntag brought home to us, as we listened, the great importance of that gospel written, not according to Matthew, Mark, Luke or John but "according to you."

"I'd rather see a sermon, than hear one, any day;
I'd rather one would walk with me, than merely tell the way.
The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear;
Good counsel is confusing while example's always clear.
The greatest of all preachers are those who live their creeds; ,
To see good put in action is what everybody needs."

The services next morning began with congregational singing conducted by Brother P. E. Thomson. This was followed by two discourses, contributed by Brothers J. J. Blackburn and P. L. Read. Brother Blackburn's discourse was based on three Scriptures, Luke 9:23, 1 John 2:6, and Rev. 14:4, his subject being "Where He leads me I will follow." His words were heart-searching, but not lacking it encouragement to the truly consecrated. Brother Read's remarks were in exposition of the first few verses of the Epistle of James. The morning sessions closed with the Convention theme song, "It is well with my soul."

"When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul."

Following luncheon the brethren convened for the afternoon sessions. These began with a discourse by Brother J. C. Jordan on "Faith," based on Luke 18:8. Among many other good things he mentioned the "Three R's" of Faith -- Read, Remember, and Rely on the promises of God.

After Brother Jordan's discourse the friends engaged in a Praise, Prayer, and Testimony Meeting, led by, Brother J. R. Hughes. The keynote of this meeting was the familiar text, Rom. 8:28. Many of the friends took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded them of telling "what great things the Lord hath done for me." Several numbers of special music were given during this happy hour.

At this time also were read several messages received in the form of telegrams and letters from absent friends, one from Richmond, Va., another from Newport, Del., one from a brother serving in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Army, and one even from far-off Australia. These remembrances were gladly received and heartily reciprocated by the conventioners, who did not fail in their united prayers to remember the message-senders, and indeed, all the brethren everywhere, especially those in the war-zones and in other circumstances of special trial and affliction. Be strong, brethren, stablish your hearts, the Lord is near, the end of all things is at hand. A little while, and we shall see His face.

The next speaker, Brother W. J. Siekman, although well-known in the Middle West, had not addressed a Brooklyn convention previously. He took occasion, therefore, to state his own position and the principles by which he sought to be guided in his ministry, particularly in reference to the separations which continue amongst the Lord's professing people. His subject, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" contained a question, he freely confessed, the answer to which, in its personal application to himself, he did not always readily find; he had, however, a satisfying, guiding principle to follow for those who differed with him, and who separated themselves from him, he endeavored to maintain an attitude of *love*. Just before addressing the Convention Brother Siekman had served the local Polish friends, much to their spiritual profit, judging by the reports which reached us.

Brother Siekman's discourse brought the afternoon sessions to a close, when we adjourned for the evening meal and table conversation. The effect of food rationing was, of course, in evidence, but there was enough for all, and no rationing whatever on the exchange of fellowship in those things which are closest to our hearts -- the spiritual welfare of each other; Christ, and the Kingdom soon to be established under His rule.

In the evening we gathered once more for a further season of spiritual refreshment. First came a song service, interspersed with several numbers of special music, then a discourse, this time by Brother F. A. Essler on the subject, "Christian fellowship." Brother Essler's remarks were based on the well-known passage, 1 John 1:3, "Truly our fellowship, is with the Father and with His Son 'Jesus Christ,'" words which never fail to awaken a sense of gratitude in the consecrated believer's heart. At the conclusion of Brother Essler's discourse, Brother Thomson, who had shared with Brother Dawson the chairmanship of the convention, offered a few closing remarks.

It is never easy for Christian friends to part, and as on many another similar occasion, the conventioners were loath to do so. However, like all conventions, even this "best one yet" came to an end. We sang "Blest be the tie that binds" and "God be with you till we meet again" and dispersed, feeling in our hearts, and doubtless in the case of some, saying with our lips, "It was good to be there."

-P. L. Read.

"Our Glorious Hope"

"Eternal light! Eternal light!
How pure the soul must be,
When placed within Thy searching sight,
It shrinks not, but with calm delight
Can live and look on Thee!

"The spirits that surround Thy throne
May bear that burning bliss,
But that is surely theirs alone
Since they have never, never known
A fallen world like this,

"There is a way for man to rise
To that sublime abode --
An offering and a sacrifice,
A Holy Spirit's energies,
An Advocate with God.

"These, these prepare us for the sight
Of holiness above;
The sons of ignorance and night
May dwell in the Eternal Light
Through the Eternal Love."

"As Always, So Now"

PART III - "TO DIE IS GAIN"

"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death." - Phil. 1:20.

IS no light thing to be brought face to face with IT the prospect of an early death. Repellant as it is, at all times, it would become much more so when death would be caused by violence. It requires cool, sober courage to face this last issue of life, and meet it unflinchingly. Some there are whose lives have been disappointments, who seek death as the way out of their troubles. The suicide's end is *generally* attributed to mental unbalance, or is accounted the coward's way out. It is not considered natural to take one's own life, for generally speaking man longs to live, and resigns himself to die only when he must. Most often it is faced from the standpoint of necessity.

Paul had reached a juncture in his life when he must choose death rather than disobey the voice of his conscience. At least he had to face that possibility. The supreme Roman Court was not noted for its impartial decisions. The Imperial judge was a man of loose morals, and licentious habits, and dispensed verdicts according to his moods. Judgment could be bought at its price, or obtained by the influence of friendly courtiers and favorites. And though Paul had a righteous cause, it did not follow that evenhanded justice would be done. If then, God should permit a miscarriage of justice to take place, and the verdict should go against him, not even death could rob him of victory. Indeed "to die" would be "gain." "Gain" means the "profit" or "increase" which comes from trade. Hence even death should yield him "profit" and bring "increase."

TO DIE IS GAIN

It is interesting to note that Paul does not say "to sleep is gain," or "to rest is gain," or even "to be beyond suffering is gain"! Paul: fully understood the distinction between "sleeping" and "dying," and makes proper use of that knowledge in its appropriate place. In that estate, when the earthly conflict is over, and the "weary are at rest," there is no "gain" no acquisition-no increase at all. There it is rest and sleep; it is the unbroken hush of slumber "until the day dawns and the shadows flee away," during which time all life's gains and increase are committed into the care of the Lord Jesus till the hour of awakening.

Paul knew that Jesus would be able to keep all his "gains"-all that he had "committed unto Him against that day." It was "to die" that would bring the "gain." For none but the "called and chosen and faithful" follower of the Lamb could this be true; and for them it is true, only if their "faith fail not." Paul anticipated this "gain," because "now," "as always" he prayed (and backed his prayer with firm resolve) that Christ should be magnified in him, come what may. He must be faithful unto death to win its increase. To shirk the issue, or waver from his steadfastness would deprive him of that "gain."

His own lips and pen had taught the Christian Church that baptism into Christ was in very truth a baptism into death, and this, while primarily a death of the surrendered will, also required the full consumption of the bodily powers. Paul knew and realized that the grip of that dread thing (which to others was the king of terrors) would bring to him the last contribution of that Christlike character, that holy treasure which he had set his heart upon to apprehend. In the very travail of death as he

crossed the borderland from this to that, the intense desire, and the resolute determination to magnify Christ, aided by the grace sufficient for his need, would acquire for him all that he had lacked to make up his full "apprehending." Thus the closing scene of his "living sacrifice" as the king of terrors smote home his last blow, should not only have no terrors for him, but bear him triumphantly to the "goal" of his most ardent desires, and present him with a completed account wherein every entry in the Book of Life was to his credit, with no single lack outstanding as deficit against him. The things he had followed after, which had not to that moment been -"apprehended," would then and there in that moment of supreme faithfulness come into his grasp; for there, the last addition to his heavenly wealth would be won, making his treasure, laid up in heaven, full and complete. All that had hitherto been lacking in Christlikeness up to that auspicious moment, should then be acquired and gathered up, for all eternity; and death doing its dread worst, in its hour of seeming triumph, would present -him with the occasion of his greatest and final victory. If, therefore "to die" should bring him "gain," and cause him to know the grace of his beloved Lord as never before, why then should Paul fear death, come when and how it may?

In all this meditation, we have tried to view this matter as Paul would view it, and as every faithful martyr since that day would experience it in his "passing." Believing as we most ardently do, that we have come, in this our day, to the time when "we shall not all sleep," and that the faithful follower of the Lord, as he reaches the last moment of his earthly pilgrimage is "changed" in that moment, "in the twinkling of an eye," we think we might each one profit by keeping that final moment in view. We may or may not end our days as our Brother Paul did by a violent exit, but notwithstanding, it will require not only faithfulness "until death" but faithfulness "unto death. Should our Father see fit to allow the flames of persecution to envelop us, while taking no steps on our behalf to mitigate their severity, at no stage before death is reached may we draw back. "Unto death" does not mean until a long life is finished in quietness and peace, but until any experience, however crucial, unchecked and unmitigated by God, shall have done its work.

Keeping that moment ever, in view, our days will then seem too precious to fritter away in anything save the intensest service to the Lord, and then, as its concluding work, the final moment will not only bring us "gain," but will usher us into the presence of the "King in His beauty." We shall anticipate that unalloyed joy in proportion as we are seeking here and now "to know Him, and the power of His Resurrection." The half-hearted or uncertain follower, nursing too many cares of this world, might not feel "I at home" in the presence of the Lord. To them the final moment may not be one of inexpressible delight; but for those who can truly say, as in the sight of God, that their hope "as always, so now" -- whenever that "so now" shall be-is that Christ shall be magnified in them, whether by life or death. To these, as to Paul, the very pangs of death shall bring great gain. Surely there could be nothing improper in focusing our minds from time to time on that prime moment which our fellow's will describe as death, but which for us will be an experience of rapture.

We have, however, no thought akin to the sentimentalism of the orthodox evangelist, who warns his unrepentant hearer that life is brief, and bids him think upon his prospects after death. No morbid thought can possibly be associated with an overcomer's death -- for to him 'the last moment of earthly strife is the moment of his crowning victory, and as the scenes of earth recede, the gates of life swing open for him to enter into the presence of the King. But he that knows that he has not yet apprehended all that for which he has been apprehended, will not forget that when he passes out at the nether gate, his opportunities for "apprehending" terminate with the swing of that gate.

God grant us all to look calmly and soberly to that moment of triumph when death shall bring us gain, and make our treasure *complete*. - *Contributed*.

Your Conversation

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ." - Phil. 1:27.

The word "conversation" does not merely mean our talk and converse, but the whole course of our life and behavior in the world. The Greek word signifies the actions and the privileges of citizenship: and thus we are commanded to let our actions, as citizens of the New Jerusalem, be such as becometh the Gospel of Christ. What sort of conversation is this? In the first place, *the Gospel is very simple*. So Christians should be simple and plain in their habits. There should be about our manner, our speech, our dress, -our whole behavior, that simplicity which is the very soul of beauty. The Gospel is *pre-eminently true*. It is gold without dross; and the Christian's life will be lustreless and valueless without the jewel of truth. The Gospel is a very *fearless Gospel*. It boldly proclaims the truth, whether men like it or not: we must be equally faithful and unflinching. But the Gospel is also *very gentle*. Mark this spirit in its Founder: "A bruised reed He will not break." Let us seek to win others by the gentleness of our words and acts. The Gospel is *very loving*. It is the message of the God of love to a lost and fallen race. Christ's last command to His disciples was, "Love one another." O for more real, hearty union and love to all the saints; for more tender compassion towards the souls of the worst and vilest of men! We must not forget that the Gospel of Christ is *holy*. It never excuses sin: it pardons it, but only through an atonement. If our life is to resemble the Gospel, we must shun, not merely the grosser vices, but everything that would hinder our perfect conformity to Christ. For His sake, for our own sakes, and for the sake of others, we must strive day by day to let our conversation be more in accordance with His Gospel. - *Selected*.

"Why Speakest Thou unto Them in Parables?"

"I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old." - Matt. 13:10; Psa. 78:2.

ONE OF our readers writes us as follows:

"Dear Brethren:

"Here is a question that comes up at our meetings now and then on which we are not all agreed, and we would appreciate your answer to this question, which may also be helpful to others who would like the matter clarified: Did our Lord speak in parables to *teach* the multitudes, or did He speak in parables so *that they might not understand?* - Matt. 13:1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 34-36; Mark 4:1, 2, 11, 12, 30, 33, 34; Luke 8:4."

This question is a most interesting one and has been the subject of reverent study on the part of many able Bible scholars. Their conclusions, however, have not been identical, some believing that the purpose of our Lord in employing the parabolic method in His teaching was *to reveal the truth*, while others have been convinced that His purpose was *to conceal* it. In view of these differences of opinion we can scarcely hope to "settle" the question. However, we trust the following discussion may contribute in part to its solution and prove to be not without some profit to our readers.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

In the first place, whatever truth there may be in the view that some parables were meant to *conceal* the truth rather than to *reveal* it, it seems "clear that this position is untenable if maintained as applicable to all the parables. How, for example, can any one suppose that in the parable of the Good Samaritan, by which our Lord so strikingly illustrated the true meaning of the command to love one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18, 34), His purpose was to conceal that meaning? Certainly His meaning was not concealed from that "certain lawyer" who had sought to put Jesus to the test, for when, at the conclusion, our Lord put to him the question, "Which, now, of these three, thinkest thou, wast neighbor unto him that fell amongst the thieves?" he correctly replied, "He that showed mercy on him." - Luke 10:25, 36 37

Many expositors have noted another, a second, meaning to this parable. Taking it not merely as typical or by way of an example, they regard it also as prophetic or historical of Christ Himself, as the Good Samaritan, rescuing humanity from the misery of sin and death.

Against this view it is sufficient to remark that neither the wording of the narrative nor the context in which it stands gives the slightest justification for the notion of such a double meaning.

On the other hand it must, of course, be acknowledged to be quite within the limits of a legitimate application of the narrative to point out how, in the person of the Samaritan, Jesus not merely pictured a striking example of true fulfillment of the command to love one's neighbor, but also, in *His own person*, gave us a corresponding example in act, when He, the Son of God, became neighbor to us men, by the pitying; self-sacrificing love with which He came to relieve our wretchedness. But it is obvious that such a thought has its powerful influence only when it is received as an independent application of the parable, instead of being made part and parcel of the parable itself as a supposed deeper, hidden meaning.

All the parables may be broadly classified either as

(1) typical (those in which the truth pictured is by means of exhibiting a concrete example), or (2) symbolic (in which the pictorial representation of the truth taught is by means of symbols) .

The parable of the Good Samaritan is the first of the typical parables. Its purpose, we have seen, is to reveal, not to conceal, the truth. The same intention will be found in all the other typical parables of our Lord.

SYMBOLIC PARABLES SPOKEN TO THE DISCIPLES

Turning now to the symbolic parables which actually clothe the truths taught in a figurative dress, so that, along with the purpose of *illustration* (present in all parables) an intention of concealment is also *possible*, there are a number in which, as a matter of fact no intention of concealment is present, but only the purpose of illustration. Such is the case with all the symbolic parables which Jesus uttered, not before a mixed group of hearers, but before the narrower circle' of His disciples, as for example, that of the Treasure hidden in the Field, the Pearl of great Price, and the Fishing Net. - Matt. 13:44; 45, 46; 47-50.

In these parables symbols are employed which *might* (on occasion) serve to conceal; but this intention cannot be present, as none of the "multitude" are in the audience. 'The hearers are all His disciples to whom the purpose of concealment could not apply. Moreover when, on concluding these parables Jesus asked them, "Have ye understood all these things? they said unto Him, Yea, Lord." Evidently His purpose had been to reveal, not to conceal; a purpose, moreover, which had been achieved.

SYMBOLIC PARABLES SPOKEN TO HIS OPPONENTS

We have shown that our Lord's purpose in typical parables can be only that of revealing. We have also noted that when spoken to His disciples only, apart from the multitude, even the symbolic parables were not spoken with the intent to conceal. Let us next examine a sample of His symbolic parables addressed not to His disciples, but to His opponents. 'To them it was that He spake the parable of the wicked husbandmen who ill-treated every servant the householder sent them and finally killed his son. Was this parable intended to obscure His message to them? Was it not rather to strike at their conscience and awaken them, if possible, to their sinful condition? According to the record "When the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, *they perceived that He spake of them.*" (Matt. 21:45.) Evidently His meaning was not obscure to them.

SYMBOLIC PARABLES OFTEN EXPLAINED

Again, in many symbolic parables the figurative veil is so transparent, or it is so directly drawn aside by an added explanatory statement that for this reason there can be no question of an intent to conceal anything by them. An example of the latter may be found in the parable of the Importunate Friend, where the meaning of the parable is expressly given, and where, for that reason, an intent to conceal cannot be supposed. (Luke 11:5-10.) As a sample of the former we may take the case of the Prodigal Son. Surely this parable does not hide from us the love of our Father who is in heaven! Rather it discloses that love with a pathos and a power so divine that, beyond all other forms of speech, it is calculated to touch and melt our hearts. - Luke 15:11-32.

A DIFFICULT TEXT

Thus far in our discussion we have found nothing to support the view that a purpose to conceal was present in the parables considered, but in every case have noted only an intention to reveal. However, we have yet to examine what has long been recognized as one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament. It is our Lord's reply to the question, "Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?" According to St. Mark He replied: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables; that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." - Mark 4:11, 12.

St. Luke reports our Lord's answer in briefer, yet almost identical terms: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." - Luke 8:10.

Now, if we take these words as they stand, and read them in a plain, honest, way, they teach us that, in speaking to the multitude as distinguished from His disciples, the Lord selected the parabolic form of instruction, not only to conceal the truth from them, *but* for the further purpose of preventing them from turning from their sins and receiving forgiveness.

We have already noted that, in the case of some, though not all of the symbolic parables, there *might* be an intention to conceal, as well as to reveal. However, we could not accept the additional thought which seems to be contained in both St. Mark's and St. Luke's report of our Lord's answer. On the contrary we know that He came to call sinners to repentance, not to frustrate that repentance.

Had we only St. Mark's and St. Luke's condensed reports we would be puzzled to understand the meaning of our Lord fortunately, however, St. Matthew's account is more complete. *see us at length* what Jesus said when His disciples asked Him if He spake to the multitude- in parables. He says it was "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables, because [not "in order that" but "because"] they seeing, see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed: lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." - Matt. 13:10-15.

Here, in St. Matthew's fuller account, the difficulty suggested by the more condensed report of St. Mark and St. Luke is removed. For here it appears that it *is the people* who have closed their eyes, not Christ who has closed them; 'it is *they who will not perceive* and understand, because they do not want to be converted and healed.

Nor need any suppose that Matthew's account can be accepted only by rejecting those of Mark and Luke. If we carefully compare the three reports, we find that the reports by Mark and Luke do not misrepresent but merely condense the answer of our Lord which Matthew reports in full. Matthew's six verses are compressed into two verses by Mark and into only one by Luke. In Matthew's fuller account it may be seen that there is authority for every word in the briefer reports, and that there is no real conflict between them.

ISAIAH'S VISION

To fully understand our Lord's words we must go back to the prophecy of Isaiah to which He refers. That prophecy is found in Isaiah's sixth chapter, which we considered in some detail in this Journal in the issue of September, 1940.* There we said in part:

"Many have supposed that Isaiah was himself so to preach that the people's hearts would become hardened as a result; that he should deliberately seek to close their eyes and stop their ears so that they would be unable to see God's gracious character and purposes and could listen, no longer to His voice of compassion and tenderness. Some have gone even further than this. By an extension of this selfsame doctrine beyond the confines of the one nation of Israel to the whole world of mankind, they have even charged God Himself with inflicting what they term a 'judicial blindness' upon the great mass of our race which left them no chance of repentance-no hope of salvation. Such a gospel (?) we could not but reject, no matter whence it came, so utterly is it opposed to all we have learned of the character and Word of God.

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"But what do these remarkable words signify? What is the meaning of the message Isaiah is commissioned to proclaim? We answer: God saw that their own stubborn and rebellious attitude had at last brought them into a condition in which they would no longer be able to return to God. Once they had had the capacity to listen and repent, and as God, in mercy and kindness, had dealt with them, rewarding them for right-doing and chastising them for wrong, they had been able to profit by His instructions.' But now they had lost that capacity. They had been so persistent in their backslidings; they had been so rebellious in heart; they had so resisted the pleadings, the warnings, the invitations of His grace; they had so hardened themselves against Him, that they had brought themselves into a state in which they would be insensible to any further influence by which God might seek to cleanse and reclaim them. . . . Through long and continued neglect of their God-given powers of right-thinking and right-doing, these powers have become atrophied, they cannot now function." - *"Herald," September 1940, pages 134, 135.*

Exactly the same conditions obtained at the time of our Lord's first advent, and accordingly, He (at times) addressed the people in special symbolic parables. To whom did He really speak when He addressed a mixed audience? To whom has the Gospel ever been spoken by His faithful messengers since? And with what intent? Surely it was and even now is preached, not to hinder any, God forbid, but certainly with no thought of converting every hearer -- merely to reach those who have hearing ears. "Who hath ears to hear, let *him* hear," saith our Lord. (Matt. 13:9.) "Whosoever hath [already improved - what light, grace, opportunities, have come his way] shall have them increased." Yet, while speaking (in the presence of others) to those with hearing ears, our Lord is careful to so speak that those whose ears are dull of hearing shall not be aroused to still greater prejudice, as they would be if the truth were spoken plainly. Hence He veils the Kingdom message that they shall not have their bitter enmity made more bitter. He puts His teaching in a form in which it can be apprehended by such as are willing to do the will of His Father (and by these only as they themselves prove more and more worthy of it and continue therein) but which would hide it from those whose persistent disobedience to known truth has deprived them of spiritual insight, and who are therefore in a condition in which they could derive no profit from a plainly stated message, and who might (strange perversity of fallen human nature) be still more hardened by it, if it were permitted to reach them.

CONCLUSION

We conclude, then, that in all of the typical and in most of the symbolic' parables there is clearly no intent to conceal but only to reveal. However, we have seen also that in special circumstances, speaking before a mixed audience, Jesus did choose the; parabolic form of teaching, not to hinder from repentance, any so disposed, but for the double purpose of concealing from unreceptive and impenitent hearts those disclosures concerning the Kingdom of heaven which were suited only to receptive and earnest hearers. In this He did but act in accordance with His own wise saying: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." (Matt. 7:6.) These special cases, however, are the exception, rather than the rule-the rule being prophetically stated by Asaph, of the Messiah who was to come, in the text stated at the head of this article, a free translation of which reads: "I will open my mouth in parables, that I may utter [not that I may conceal] things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." - Psa. 78:2.

- P. L. Read.