

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## The Power of His Resurrection

*"The Lord is risen indeed." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." -  
Luke 24:34; Gal. 2:20.*

SINCE THE Scriptures clearly state that Jesus "was raised again for our justification," and since we therefore can have no hope for the present or the future, and cannot enter into the presence of God with our prayers or our sacrifices without righteousness being reckoned to us, we do well to make sure that our faith in the resurrection of our Lord is based on well established evidence. Fortunately for us there was a brother living at the time of that event who has become known as "Doubting Thomas." We have learned how much doubting we can do in the day of walking almost by sight, so it would seem-becoming for us not to think of Brother Thomas under that title so condemnatory to ourselves, but as the one whose outstanding doubting has done much to establish our faith in the resurrection of our Lord.

The fact that Thomas and all the other doubters among his companions, for many if not all were of the same mind, were positively convinced that Jesus had, risen, is the strongest possible corroboration of the claim that our Lord "yet liveth to make intercession for us." If, in advance of the event, the disciples had been certain that the third day would restore their loved One to them, all would have been at the tomb "very early in the morning," "when it was yet dark" that they might not miss one precious moment of that fellowship. (Luke 24:1; John 20:1.) The accounts do tell us of several (Luke 24:10) that were thus on hand "at the rising of the sun" "as it began to dawn" (Mark 16:2; Matt. 28:1); however, they came not to greet a risen Savior, but to embalm a dead body.

If there had been no doubters in that day, and all had- come from the sepulchre announcing that they had seen and talked with the One who had hung on the cross three days before, the public we would have said, and we today would fear, that their eagerness to believe had conjured up a vision of the beloved form and voice. Surely some who recalled the teaching of Jesus when He "began to show unto His disciples how that He must . be killed and

be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21), would have discovered some imaginary grounds for believing the resurrection had taken place.

A few moments with Thomas and his bewildered companions, so like ourselves, should prove of profit to us. But first let us note something that critics might label an error in the records. Using a new number to designate the little band of Apostles now that Judas had gone and no one had yet been appointed to take his bishopric, Luke says that on the evening of the first Sunday the "eleven gathered." (Luke 24:36.) John (John 22:24) relates that "Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them." That of course means that actually there were only ten of the Apostles present. The solution is easily discovered by those who desire to believe the inspired record, and who know of the custom of using numbers as names. An older example of this custom is "the Sanhedrin," the seventy, appointed by Moses. In this case also they met as "the Seventy" even though several of their number were absent.

### **THE NATURAL MIND RECEIVETH NOT**

Doubtless no meeting of the Twelve had ever been filled with such, intense interest as their first gathering after the crucifixion of their Lord. Probably there was much speculation as to the cause and meaning of His submission to death, for they had not yet learned that truth is never discovered by that process. There would be a discussion of the many things their Lord had said to prepare them for that sad event; in fact that meeting could run well into the night without a moment's lagging of interest. But the events of that very day were the points of greatest interest in their discussion, for had not "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Joanna (the wife of Herod's steward), and Salome, and the other women that were with them" (Mark 16:1; Luke 8:3; 24:10) seen two angels at the tomb of Jesus who indirectly and gently chided them for their bringing of spices for the anointing of the dead body: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." (Luke 24:5, 6.) Then "Mary Magdalene had seen the Lord," at first believing Him to be the gardener, and came and told the disciples. "And they, when they had heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, *believed not*. They too were of the doubters. The report of the women seemed to them as idle tales and they believed them not (John 20:16; Luke 24:10) though doubtless the women had repeated to them, and perhaps more than once, the words of the angel, "Remember how He' spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

In the midst of their discussion of all these things, there was a knock at the closed door and two excited brothers were admitted, Cleopas and his companion, who had gone to the little town of Emmaus earlier in the day, and who had returned to Jerusalem since the hour of the evening meal. Apparently the "Eleven" succeeded in telling their story first, but in true oriental fashion entirely ignored the women who had seen the risen Lord: "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon." They "believed not" the story of the sisters, "but now they had the testimony of an Apostle and could say, "He is *really* risen." However precious those moments with the risen Lord were to the repentant Mary Magdalene and broken-hearted Peter, with his unfaithfulness vividly fresh in mind, their brevity must have been the occasion of considerable wonderment as the tale of the two from Emmaus unfolded itself. We do not know how many of the seven and a half, or twenty miles (which latter all the early Christian writers say it was), they walked to that village with the Stranger. When He appeared, to allay their fears He accosted them with the usual Eastern salutation: "Peace be with you."

There is a strange custom among the Easterners, as there seems always to have been, of accepting without hesitation this salutation as a guarantee of their safety, however fierce looking the

stranger may be that accosts them with it, and though they know their danger of being robbed or even murdered by any stranger. So, following the usual custom, our two brothers gladly took advantage of the added safety this noble appearing Stranger afforded them. He soon inquired as to the cause of their sadness. They expressed astonishment that He would not have surmised it. Surely He was a stranger in Israel. Briefly they related the perfidy of the chief priests and rulers in delivering Jesus to be crucified, of their blighted hopes regarding the restoration of Israel to prominence, and of "certain women ... which were early at the sepulchre" and claimed to have seen angels who said Jesus was alive. While relating these incidents, they were proving their lack of faith by hastening their steps far from the place where they should have made every sacrifice to be, the place where Jesus' promise to return on the third day would most probably be fulfilled. Perhaps there was a little consciousness of guilt, for the three days was one point mentioned to "the Stranger."

### **A TEACHER WHO SURPASSED JESUS OF NAZARETH**

The conversation that followed revealed this Stranger, through whom much of the veil that obscured the teachings of their sacred writings had been removed, as an even more wonderful teacher than their Lord. His first words were a reproof: "O thoughtless ones [Rotherham], and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us: for it is 'toward evening, and the day is far spent. And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures. And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." (Luke 24:25-33.) Evidently our Lord was more of a formalist than some of His followers, since "He was known of them in the breaking of bread," probably using some form of blessing the bread which they had heard from His lips frequently.

As the two were recounting these things, suddenly all were startled to see Jesus standing in their midst with strange, new powers to which doors that were shut "for fear of the Jews" offered no hindrance. Again, His greeting was, "Peace be unto you." "But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit," not yet having entered into their inheritance of Jesus' final legacy: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." (John 14:27.) Our Master knew what trifles could deprive them, and us, of that, precious peace. To allay their fears by convincing them that they were not seeing a spirit, which human beings cannot see, and because they did not yet know that He had been "put to death flesh, but made alive in the spirit," He showed them His hands and His feet and said. "Handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have." (Luke 24:39, 40.) As further evidence that what they were seeing was flesh and blood, He ate in their presence, and then before parting from them, breathed on the Apostles the power of forgiving sins through the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord was not teaching His disciples what they were to anticipate seeing in glory, but that He was alive. They were not yet spirit begotten and they must be taught through their natural senses, When they were spirit begotten, they could understand that "now the Lord is that spirit," and could "come and go like the wind." In the same way, "It Both not yet appear what we shall be [for all the natural man can see when he looks at us now is a fleshly body], but we know that when He shall appear [to us in His spirit body as He appeared to one who was "as though born out of due

season"], we shall be like Him [having laid aside our fleshly bodies in death], *for* [that is, this proves it] we shall see Him as He is [not as He was, nor as we were before our change]." - 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 3:17; 1 John 3:2.

The various accounts do not tell us how many times Thomas during the week that followed heard of "the best meeting we have ever had" and of how the Lord had appeared to them and of the discussion that had followed as the two brothers from Emmaus told all He had unfolded of the Scriptures concerning Himself. Thomas seems to have made the same reply to every one: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails [the evidence that satisfied the disciples], and [additionally] put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe I'o some this might seem to be an example of extreme unbelief, and unwillingness to receive the testimony of the Ten as to the experiences through which they had passed. Yet to other minds it would not seem so strange. Some of us would find it difficult to believe from any lips that a person whom we had three days before seen dead and laid in the tomb had manifested by his presence to others that he was again alive; and especially hard would it be to believe that he had appeared when the doors were shut, and had disappeared, the doors still being shut.\* We rather fear that had we been in St. Thomas' place we would have been inclined to say, 'Show us how that could be.' We would have experienced the same difficulty, and would likely have said, 'You think you saw something; you believe you are telling the truth, but we think that you have been deceived.'" - R5625, Feb. 1, 1915.

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\*This same expression is used regarding the temple doors when closed at night, and of course they were locked for the safe keeping of its treasures. In classic literature this expression is used regarding prison doors.

### **PROOF NECESSARY TO BELIEF**

It is the contention of the Lord's people that they must demand proof for everything they believe. On this basis some would say that Thomas was the one that was right and the others to be blamed for credulity. Thomas was right in asking for proof, but not right in asking for his proof. Nor is he to be commended for setting his judgment above that of his fellow Apostles without an impartial consideration of their grounds for belief. A week later the brethren came together again, "and Thomas with them." (John 20:26.) Of this meeting we are told little except that "the doors being shut, Jesus stood in the midst"; and, the natural mind would say: What consternation must have filled the heart of Thomas as he thought of that week of doubting; and how the brethren must have trembled for him in anticipation of the condemnation that must now be his by the One into whose hands the Father had now committed all judgment. More likely there was no time for such thoughts to be formed. Rather love and repentance would be uppermost as Jesus' gaze was turned full upon him. There followed no long discourse or doctrinal discussion such as might have come from some disciples; but merely, "Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing." Then what a privilege was given our Brother Thomas! He was permitted to be the first one to confess his faith in his risen Lord with the words: "My Lord and my God." Do we ask what miracle had brought him to believe on the same proof the others had given for their belief? For there is no evidence he moved a finger to touch the wounds. We think we know the answer: It seems to have been the same miracle that has been worked for every doubter since that day. Jesus by repeating his very words expressing doubt, and thus telling him that He had been present to hear those words and read his heart all that week, humbled him; by His loving, tacit forgiveness He won from him allegiance beyond anything given before. The One who had been his Lord he was now ready to recognize as the One to whom had been given all power in heaven and in earth, his God, the One to whom his allegiance was irrevocably given.

We know too little of the temperament of Thomas to surmise with assurance as to the cause of his difficulty. On a previous occasion when Jesus had insisted on going into a danger zone, Thomas had insisted on going along to "die with Him." Perhaps this was boastfulness; but we prefer to believe that loving loyalty and devotion led him to make that remark. He may have reasoned: What use would there be of my living on if the One in whom are bound up all my hopes is gone? May it not have been that same sentiment which kept him from the meeting on that first Sunday night? Whatever the answer there was one redeeming quality that carried him through to victory - he could not for long deprive himself of fellowship. When the second Sunday arrived, he was there with his fellows; love was too strong to stand a longer separation. From that meeting he went forth a faithful witness that the Lord was risen indeed. This was not because he had seen wound prints, but because He had seen love and forgiveness in Jesus' eyes and heard compassion in His tone.

The Apostles were to be special witnesses to the resurrection, and so when Judas' place was to be filled this was a qualification required of his successor. To this end Saul of Tarsus had one fleeting glimpse of the Lord; but he saw not wound prints and flesh and bones, things that spirit beings do not have; but there shone upon him a light "above the brightness of the sun at noonday." This is a suggestion of the revelation to be shared by all who are born into the heavenly Kingdom. To have that vision in the flesh, Paul had to be "as one born out of due season."

Our Lord is risen indeed, and our present vision of Him can be brighter than the light of heaven's orb at midday, and brighter than the shining of the Millennial sun at its meridian, if some veil does not intervene. Though perhaps each saint must confess that there has been much of pride, much of doubting, much of self-seeking, ours can be a most effective witness to the glory and the power of the risen Lord-His power manifested in the transformation worked in lives transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; His glory shining, though dimly, from hearts entirely devoted to Him, lights in the world.

May we doubters learn to prove to a doubting world that "He is risen indeed." Does not the death and resurrection of our Lord give us a picture of what must be in progress in the life of every Christian day by day. Dead with Christ, and risen with Christ! How perfectly is this shown forth in the ordinance of baptism. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. (Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12.) Our life is bound up, and our union with Him is, in His death and resurrection. We look back upon that solemn moment when we were immersed beneath the water and then raised again from the parted wave, thereby declaring our conformity to His death and our fellowship in His resurrection. First the burial-death-in order to a resurrection to "walk in newness of life." As one has expressed it: "We sign the death warrant to our natural man" - the flesh. Death not only to sin, but death "with Him," who "knew no sin." This means crucifying and putting off the old man, with all its human aspirations. There can be no entrance into the "power of His resurrection" except through conformity to His death.

The buried form is raised up again from the water in the likeness of Christ's resurrection. No sooner are we "buried with Him in baptism" than we have the word, "Now is Christ risen from the dead," and "wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead." "Blessed is He who, now looking into the grave where he was buried with Christ, sees what God sees, what the angels see, the winding sheet of Adam's curse

put off from him and folded up forever, and the linen clothes of a legal righteousness laid by themselves. And thrice blessed is he who hears concerning himself the glad announcement, 'He is not here, but is risen,' and so is enabled to go forth in the joy of the resurrection, to 'walk in newness of life.' . . . So closely does the symbol thus press upon the reality, that Paul in that bold 'Know ye not,' seems to appeal to the believer's baptism as the *experience* of his Lord's death and resurrection" - our covenant to die daily to all fleshly desires and to walk in newness of life by abiding in Christ. Shall we not most earnestly seek to illustrate the beauty of this death symbol by reflecting it in a consecrated and self-denying life.

## LIFE THROUGH DEATH

While it may be clear how we may be "conformed to His death," the question may remain, How may we even *now* "know the power of His resurrection"? "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" is the dying process; "Ye are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," is the corresponding "living," resurrection process. On the one hand there is the "dying daily" of the, flesh; on the other, the inward man is being "renewed day by day." And just so "the cross and the resurrection extend their influence and exert their power over the Christian's entire earthly history."

There is therefore a twofold work in progress in the life of the Christian, a constant battle between the flesh and the spirit. We do not, however, depend upon our own resources for the victory, for the Lord is our refuge and strength. It is not a matter of merely improving the old man, but there is a development of a "new creature." St. Paul says, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." There are now two natures-the one from Adam, and the other derived from Christ -- begotten of His spirit. And these two dwelling together are constantly at war! and thus we see that the development of the Christian lies in two directions: the subjecting, repressing, and mortifying of the natural man; the nourishing, developing, and renewing of the spiritual. The mortifying of the flesh, the daily subduing of its affections and desires, the bringing of the whole body under the dominion of the cross is vital to the believer's growth in holiness. Not only 'by denying the Lord, but by "minding earthly things," living for them instead of being dead to them, can we become "enemies of the cross of Christ." If the disciple accepts joyfully the dispensations and providences of God, and thus takes up the cross instead of enduring it like Simon the Cyrenean by compulsion, he has become an offerer instead of a victim, experiencing in his own body the sufferings of his Lord, whereby he is perfected. Our salvation is not only *from* death, but *through* death. "He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

Were this crucial test of discipleship, the willing surrender of self in all its forms, its will, its pleasures, its righteousness, insisted on by all who name the name of Christ, we fear it would be found that the offense of the cross had not yet ceased. Yet, on the other hand, if all who are Christ's gave evidence of the holy triumph there is in giving up all to Him; the deep joy in being partakers of His sufferings, the blessed life that comes through daily death in Him, how powerfully would the, glory of the cross be vindicated. No one has ever yet found self-gratification compatible with strong spiritual growth. "Fleshly desires war against the soul." Never will they be allies.

But as we have intimated, there is the exact counterpart of this "death" process in the Christian life; namely, that abiding in Christ, and that growing up in all things into Him which is the end and object of our withdrawing from self and this mortifying in all things of our members which are on the earth. No amount or kind of self-denial can make one holier unless 'this be the means of bringing him into more intimate fellowship with Christ. Every retreat from the life of the flesh must be followed by a deeper entering into the life of the Spirit. "Selfdenial, is, according to its degree, a parting company with Adam that we may not walk after the flesh; but prayer and faith and love and obedience must accompany, as the means of joining ourselves more entirely to Christ, and of abiding in Him, that we may 'so walk even as He walked.' The life of God must be daily replacing within the soul what death has taken away, filling each void made by self-denial with some positive blessing, and causing every spot from which a natural affection has been uprooted, to spring up with some divine affection."

"This is life eternal that they might know Thee." And we know Him by daily acquainting ourselves with Him through faith and prayer, through a diligent searching of the Scriptures,

through a constant walking in the Spirit. Every duty of the Christian has a direct relation to this result. By a devout contemplation of the character of Christ, His image is insensibly reproduced in the life of the believer. By communion one enters into fellowship with Christ, by meditation he enters into conformity to Him -- "His life constantly imparted, and His character constantly reflected." "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." We do not wait till we have perfected self-denial before we begin our growth into Christ. The two processes must ever be going on together. How significant St. Paul's repeated admonition: "Put ye off" and "Put ye on." "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man." This is the ideal, and the whole course of the Christian life must consist in the transferring of this ideal into the actual-progressive sanctification. When we awake in the morning of our resurrection, our putting off and putting on will be consummated; we will then have been fully conformed to His death, and know in its fulness the "power of His resurrection," even "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality."

- P. E. Thomson.

## "Let Us Go On"

*"Therefore, leaving the first principles, . . . let us go on." -Heb. 6:1.*

Some of us stay at the cross,  
Some of us wait at the tomb,  
Quickened and raised together with Christ  
Yet lingering still in its gloom;  
Some of us bide at the Passover feast  
With Pentecost all unknown --  
The triumphs of grace in the heavenly place  
That our Lord has made our own.

If the Christ who died had stopped at the cross  
His work had been incomplete,  
If the Christ who was buried "had stayed in the tomb  
He had only known defeat;  
But the way of the Cross never stops at the Cross,  
And the way of the Tomb leads on  
To victorious grace in the heavenly place  
Where the risen Lord has gone.

So, let us go on with our Lord  
'To the fulness of God He has brought,  
Unsearchable riches of glory and good  
Exceeding our innermost thought;  
Let us grow up into Christ,  
Claiming His life and its powers --  
The triumphs of grace in the heavenly place  
That our conquering Lord has made ours.

- Annie Johnson Flint.

## Rest in the Lord

"For we which have believed do enter into rest." - Heb. 4:3.

IN THE fourth chapter, St. Paul outlines to the Hebrews that the Jewish rest days and years pointed forward to the Christian's rest in God. Natural Israel had a seventh day of rest for man and beast; a seventh year of rest for the land; the forty-ninth year was a specially marked year of rest; and the fiftieth -- the jubilee year -- was also a Sabbath or rest year. The forty-ninth year was typical of the Millennium, which is the seventh one-thousand-year period of the seventh thousand-year-day of the Creative week.

The jubilee, which of course followed the forty ninth year, was the time of beginning again. Each family went back to the old homestead that had been apportioned to it when Israel entered the promised land. If misfortune, improvidence, or sickness had caused the sale of the land, it was returned in fee simple to the original possessors, debts were cancelled, and truly Israel began living over again. This fiftieth jubilee year typified the Grand jubilee period following the Millennial reign of Jesus. Above, we said that the Jew had these rest periods, but history shows that actually very few of the Sabbaths were kept in accord with the Law's requirements.

One would think that the Jew, promised that God would look out for him, and told that, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth," would have been glad to let God work out His purposes in Judah. One would think that after they had slipped away from Him, only a little reminder by way of chastisement would be needed to bring them back into cooperation with God, to the restful condition of trusting in and obeying Him. Each of us; no doubt has marveled that the Jews were so stiff-necked as not to heed the Prophets; and after the repeated punishments in the form of captivities, plagues, crop failures, and troubles untold, not to heed Jesus, sent to them by the Heavenly Father. Evidently, similar thoughts were going through Jesus' mind when He spoke the parable of the householder. (Matt. 21:33-41.) The immediate meaning of course was, that Israel was the vineyard, set up with great demonstrations of divine power in Canaan. The former inhabitants were dispossessed and nothing left undone to enable Israel to keep the Law, to faithfully perform the typical sacrifices, and other features of the ceremonial law, and to bring forth the fruits of Rest in God. But those who sat in Moses' seat in charge of Israel, used their positions for their own gain and aggrandizement. They it was who persecuted Jeremiah, and it was they who killed Jesus by their conspiracies.

The Jew was not content to be a small nation ruled over by prophets, but demanded a king. The Jew could not bring himself to let the land lie idle each seventh year. Their greed would not let them pay the tithe or tenth of their increase to God. The sacrifices of the temple were wasteful. To have to give back the land and cancel all accounts receivable each fiftieth year was too much for the Jew's acquisitiveness; they just could not do it.

So when Jesus came 'preaching, Keep the Law, repent of your sins, submit to the Romans for "My Kingdom is not of this world," that His followers should not fight, it was too much for the proud, hypocritical, ambitious Scribes and Pharisees. They noted how the common people received Jesus gladly, and they thought, "If He continues, He will completely stop our plans," so they just had to kill Jesus. For they did not want to Rest in God. They wanted to rebel against the Roman yoke. They wanted a Messiah that would make of them a great nation and give them positions of importance in the Kingdom. So they killed the Lord of Glory, and God cast them off.

Even today the trouble is on Israel just as the Jews of Jesus' day said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

St. Paul says in the fourth chapter, "Some must enter into God's Rest," and since the Jews would not, "then we which have believed do enter into rest." In Genesis 2:2, 3, it is recorded that after the creation of the earth, the animals, and finally Adam and Eve, God rested from all His work which He had created and made. Brother Russell in Scripture Studies Vol. VI, Chapter I, has shown good reason to believe that the first six days of the Creative Week were each seven thousand years long, and that the seventh is also seven thousand years in duration. This seventh day started after the creation of Adam and Eve, and will continue until the end of the Millennial reign of Christ. God has been resting "from all His works" during the reign of sin and death. This, therefore, is the "Rest of God" to which the saints are invited.

In Romans, chapter eleven, St. Paul says that if the natural tame olive branches-the Jews-were broken off through unbelief, it would also be easy for the wild olive branches-the Gentiles (who were grafted in to take the place of the cast-off Jew) to be broken off. Again in Hebrews, the fourth chapter, verse eleven (Heb. 4:11), he says: "Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." God's rest has not been a rest of inactivity, and neither is our rest in God to be a lazy man's rest. It takes vigilance, careful planning and agonizing labor to enter into God's rest. It is not easy and effortless for the Christian to deny himself, to stop doing his own work, destroy his natural ambitions, and instead to work the works of Him that called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

And Satan is always at hand to aid and abet our flesh and the world in ensnaring us into denial of our consecration. In all things, the Jew was an ensample -- a type. In his falling away, his unbelief, his wilfulness, he typed the Gospel Church. Even in the casting away of the Jewish nation they are typical of the casting off of the Nominal Church. - 1 Cor. 10:1-14.

Here we stand in 1940, [written in that year] in a world that is on fire; the winds of war are breaking up what remains of the Gentile beastly governments. When wars have weakened the old governments, the earthquakes finish the work, and social revolutionary governments replace the antitypical Ahab and Jezebel governments; but the revolutionary governments are unstable, and, already we see evidence of the swift approach of the fire of anarchy. Men's hearts are "failing them for fear and for looking after those things coming on the earth," even as with those at our Lord's first advent. The still small voice of Millennial peace, happiness, and good will to men, has not yet been heard. (Luke 21:26; 1 Kings 19:11-13.) And in the Church is mirrored the same hectic conditions as prevail in the world. Are the sparks of the worldly conflagration falling in our backyards? Are we being forced into quarrelsomeness toward one another by worldly mindedness, and are these conditions causing us to lose our Rest in the Lord? If so, let us heed Psa. 116:7: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."

Today we hear in the Church demands for more and greater works. Is this our inheritance of Jewish longings for power and bigness? Have we forgotten Jesus' words, "Fear not *little* flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give *you* the Kingdom."

During the earlier days of the Gospel Age, there were cathedrals, and alliances with earthly governments to impress the world, and feed the vanity of the false husbandmen of the Gospel Vineyard. They even invented the Hell of torment and did away with the Millennial opportunity for life, to force more people into their false church organizations. Organizations that endeavor "to draw away disciples after themselves" generally resort to accusation, insinuation and inuendo,

in claiming that all but they are leaving the Truth. At first, cautiously, by implication, but later, emboldened by success in deception, and flattered by the adulation of their followers, these dictator and self-constituted judges and heads over the Lord's people openly proclaim themselves the *one* channel. (Acts 20:28-35.) This channel deception is very old. The Papacy started it with its doctrine that the Pope is the Vicegerent of Christ. Likewise these later claimants to being the One channel of purity of doctrine, overlook that Jesus said, "I am the way, the Truth and the Life." *He is the* channel.

A Turk relates, that when young, he became so interested in the worship of Allah that he frequently arose at night to read the Koran and meditate on heavenly things. One night, his father seeing the light, asked what he was doing at that late hour. "O," said the son, "See I read the Koran and think of Allah and the Prophet, while your other sons are so careless and worldly that they sleep." The father replied, "I would rather son, that you sleep, than that you awake and speak evil of your brethren."

Friends, we may loan or sell books, play phonographs, distribute thousands of tracts and preach glowing sermons, but if we are not "Resting in the Lord" and doing all as unto *Him*, our work is in vain. We may go to five meetings a week, but if these activities only cause us to become self righteous, to "mark" our brethren, to point the finger of scorn at others, it is a pitiful waste of time.

We need no *feverish excitement* of work. Let us do with our might what our hands find to do, but still *rest in faith*. If all the servants are not sealed in their foreheads, the winds of trouble will be held back until this has been accomplished. (Rev. 7:1-4.) As New Creatures we have ceased from our works as God did from His. The Church is not *our* church or *yours*, nor *any one's* but God's. This preaching of the Gospel is God's work. So we should lay down our lives for the brethren, and leave the results with God. We should "preach the word. Be instant in season and out of season," and yet be in that peaceful, restful, and hopeful attitude of *heart -- resting* in faith.

Rest implies dependence. When we rest physically, we relax all our muscles and rely upon something or some one. Standing erect illustrates self-sufficiency and the opposite of rest. Standing is accomplished by sets of muscles pulling the bony frame-work of the body. One set in the frontal portion pulls the body forward. Opposed to this, another set of muscles in the posterior portion pulls the bony structure backward. By the tension of the two the body is from within balanced from -front to back. Similar muscles on the right and left side keep the body from falling sidewise from the erect. A portion of the brain is devoted to keeping us in balance, and so perfect is the organism, that no thought is required. We usually lie horizontally when we rest. We depend on a bed, spring, and mattress to keep us from falling. So it is with the Christian, we must depend upon God to fight our battles: to work His great work in us: to bring order out of chaos in the world and in the Church.

### **HOLDING FAST THE CONFIDENCE AND REJOICING OF THE HOPE**

When the children of Ammon, Moab and Mt. Seir, allied themselves and invaded Judah (2 Chron. 20), Jahaziel, a Levite, received this message from God's spirit to Jehoshaphat: "Do not be afraid or dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow you will find the invader by the Cliff of Ziz, at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. You shall not need to fight, set yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord with you." Here was one case where the leaders of Israel really entered into God's rest. Jehoshaphat believed the message and organized the people into great choral groups to march before the army, singing and praising as they went.

Modern military leaders know the inspiring effect upon their men, and the terrifying effect upon the enemy of a singing army. Possibly, the Jews were above the clouds in the hills, and the invaders, coming up the side of the Cliff of Ziz, through a fog. Imagine hearing a great company of men while marching sing a stirring song, such as "Mine eyes can see the glory of the Presence of the Lord; He is trampling out the winepress where His grapes of wrath are stored." And the hills take up the echoes and reverberate the thunder of the intonations. Judah's arrogance in thrusting aside all idea of concealment and surprise; their utter disregard of carefulness in not waiting behind intrenchments, walls, or rivers for the invaders to attack-this apparent lack of strategy may have been the more subtle as it probably portended to the invaders a confidence which struck terror to the hords of Israel's enemies and disorganized them.

Regardless of what natural means may have been used, the account merely says, "And when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments against Ammon, Moab and Mt. Seir, and they were smitten." Then is described how the three allied armies turned on each other and destroyed themselves. The end of the account is, "So the Kingdom of Jehoshaphat had repose and God gave him Rest all round about." Jehoshaphat had to go out to meet the enemy. Judah had to exercise faith and trust in God. If they had stayed in Jerusalem, no ambushments would have smitten the invaders. If they had not sung, the enemy would not have fought one another in their confusion. So we must step out on God's promises and labor to enter into His rest, if we would have God fight our battles.

Friends, let us "begin to sing and praise" and let the Lord fight our battles for us, while we Rest in Faith.

B. F. Hollister.

## Comforters of the Brethren

*"What is that in thine hand?" - Exodus 4:2.*

THIS QUESTION, we remember, was asked of Moses as he stood before the Lord after having been commissioned to deliver his brethren from their bondage in Egypt. Viewing the task given him, Moses confessed himself impotent to undertake it, being, as he thought, wholly without ability or equipment for the task. Then it was that God drew his attention to the rod he held in his hand, revealing that his rod was all he needed since he was going 'forth under God's command. What he had in his hand, if used as God directed, would accomplish the defeat of Pharaoh's might and enable Moses to liberate his burdened brethren. As he used that rod in this way what great things were brought to pass thereby. What great things God can do with any simple instrument given over to His hand for use! With his rod Moses performed his miracles before the arrogant ruler of Egypt; when he lifted it over the waters of the Red Sea a pathway was made for the fleeing hosts of Israel; and at the rock it brought forth a refreshing stream to quench their thirst.

At a later time we have the rod of Aaron introduced, which we may use also to illustrate some important lessons always timely for us. It was used to demonstrate God's approval of Aaron as high priest, and stamp his service with the divine blessing. When it had served its purpose, it was placed with other things in the ark of the Most Holy to be a perpetual memorial of God's beneficent overruling. Just simple rods these were until God called them into use, but how great their service became when employed according to His word.

But this same question comes to us also. God continues to ask of us, "What is that in thine hand?" as we stand before Him and remember that we too are called to serve His cause and people however feeble our ability may seem to us. To us the word is clearly spoken, "It is required of stewards, that a man be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2.) We are to remember also that all present opportunities are important, for "the night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4.) And the implications in yet another text should not be missed. It is "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might." (Eccl. 9:10.) There are no vacations in the Lord's service for those who recognize the force of these Scriptures, neither need there be any idle hands so long as strength remains in the hands to act, or in the heart to pray for one another. The word is, "Be instant in season, and out of season." But so often the question is asked, "What can I do? Where is there a place for me in the Lord's service? I can not go forth to preach the good word as others are privileged to do. Life for me is hedged about with so many hindrances limiting both time and means, what, therefore, can I do but stand unable to take a place among those who serve in worth-while ways?

Too often this attitude illustrates a serious misunderstanding; a real failure to properly interpret those words, "Do with thy might what thy hands find to do." Correctly interpreted, these words must mean that a search is made for something to do. They cannot mean a listless sitting down bemoaning an enforced idleness, waiting for something to be thrust into empty hands. The Word is, "He that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Luke 11:10.) Those who look around in sincerity for a corner to brighten will usually find that corner just where they are. If we are ready to be used in that which seems least, using faithfully what is already in our hands, a way will be shown in which we may have our place in a general service, and certainly a place in lending helping hands to others with us along life's upward, and oftentimes difficult way. If thus ready to be used, our little rods, like those of Moses and Aaron, will reveal how God can be glorified in our humble service, and make the instruments used bud and blossom and bear fruit in a perpetual memorial, of His grace. Kind words can never die; unselfish service is recorded in

heaven, and the words of Jesus are still wonderfully, so blessedly true. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." - Matt. 25:40.

Let us, then, give faithful heed to the question God may be asking some of us right now, "What is that in thine hand?" Surely we want to be of those to whom our Master can say, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." (Matt. 25:21.) In line with this commendation it is seen how frequently the Scriptures reveal that the greatest of privileges can be easily overlooked. It was so when Mary poured out her fragrant ointment upon her Lord, while that great act of love seemed so secondary to what others considered much more important, for "there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made." (Mark 14:4.) Such opportunities at hand, but neglected, are yet to be brought home to some with a startling reality when they hear the words of condemnation, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me." - Matt. 25:45.

The context of this statement reveals that those addressed experienced a real surprise. How, they would ask, could the Lord be so near to us, needing our help and we saw Him not? This is the point we need to remember lest we too miss the disguises in which our Lord may be near to us, testing our alertness to serve Him. Even now while we discuss the presence of the Lord in these Age-ending times, let us not forget that He is unmistakably present in His "little ones" yet to be found in the earth. Therefore above all other present hour privileges afforded us, none can compare with a service by which we are helping others to bear their burdens, supporting the weak, and comforting those who mourn. "Comforters of the brethren" are none too numerous, and yet what a rating such service is given by the great Shepherd of the fold. The law and love of Christ demand that we be alert to "support the weak, and not to please ourselves" -- pleasing ourselves perhaps in being more ready to attach ourselves and our service to those who need us the least. Bearing one another's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ is the surest way of gaining His approval, and herein is the best evidence that we have caught His Spirit of loving solicitude for others.

There is a word which includes all of us however we may be circumstanced, aside from illness or other insurmountable conditions, and that word is, "By this we have known love, because He laid down His life on our behalf; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." - 1 John 3:16-Diaglott.

As to how this may be done by others, a personal experience may illustrate. A line of service can be recommended paying very large dividends on a little investment of time and talent. The character of this service is suggested in, the following lines:

. . . "Had I but heard  
One breath of applause, one cheering word --  
One cry of 'Courage!' amid the strife,  
So weighted for me with death or life --  
How would it have nerved my soul to strain  
Through the whirl of the coming surge again."

We cannot know all the burdens borne by others, but we may be sure that each heart knows its own bitterness, and none are so strong as to be above the need of a brother's helping hand. This seems particularly true today! It has always been so, and unselfish service has been the exceptional thing. Ponder those words of Paul as he writes to his Philippian brethren about sending Timothy to them in his own stead, "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally

care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." (Phil. 2:20,21.) To be such as Timothy in this unselfish devotion to others is surely a desirable thing in our own day and hour. Are we then of those who can forget personal interests, conveniences, exclusive circles, preferred terms and usages, pitch our tent by the side of the upward road and be a friend to all? If so, how may we do this? Let us think of one very beautiful way. Some there are who have passed the time of life in which strength was theirs to come and go finding fellowship with kindred minds. Some others are isolated and lonely in their separation, being far from those with whom they would love to talk over the things of the Lord so dear to their own hearts. We can think of some on beds of sickness, striving to bear with patience the illness by which their days are made one long test of patient endurance. Do we not know some of these dear ones, and are we not in duty bound to think of them in some practical and sympathetic way? In laying down our life for the brethren should these not be considered a first and very special obligation? To those who would inquire how to do this we will say, Write them a letter, beginning like the Apostle Paul's with a cheering message of salutation and ending with a benediction like his, and rest assured God will use that service as a part of His unfailing watchcare over one of His little ones.

Does some one say, "That is all very well for some who can write in such a manner, but as for me, I cannot compose a letter conveying the helpfulness troubled hearts may need." Yes, but remember that rod in the hand of Moses, and what God did by it. Remember, too, the question comes to us all, "What is that in thine hand?" What reverent heart can meditate on God's Word from day to day without having "some new rich gem appear"? Pass it on, it helped you, and may help another. Its expression will deepen the good impression on your own heart, and extend its influence into another heart. A little bit of verse comes your way and its words sing a sweet refrain into your own heart, or perhaps it lifts your thoughts to God in prayer. Pass it on! The mail can carry it across the miles to another, and for all you know God may have chosen you as His angel messenger to lift a burden from the mind of one for whom He cares. The supply of such little gems of thought is unlimited. Such things can speak truths we need -to remember. Gather them along your way as you study, note them in your general reading, have them in readiness for passing on, and thus by using what is at hand some soul may be nerved to pass victoriously "through the coming surge again."

Think, then, of the invalids, and the aged who can no longer go up to the house of the Lord as in other days. Remember that sometimes life's circumstances can make the last weary miles seem exceedingly long and hard. To you and to me let them be Jesus going over that last hard hump in the road, and what would we not do for Him? Oh, what joy can come as we use that which is in our hand in such ways as this, then know that our Lord is saying, "Ye did it unto Me."

Our day of such service is nearly over if we are interpreting the signs aright. This day of greatest privilege has also its greatest measure of subtle deceptions. The danger of "majoring on the minors" is a very real one. The seeming great may easily be take-n for the really great. The need *is great* for a clear understanding of what is now most important in the sight of our Lord and Master. "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Let us in coming days keep the full import of this gem from the pen of the Apostle Paul before our mind, and prove that we have truly passed from death unto life by our love for and deep interest in the brethren. It is important that we remember that we cannot make our own calling sure unless we help our brother make his election certain. Those words of Joseph to his brethren long ago may now be thought of as being on the lips of Him whom Joseph so beautifully portrayed, saying to us as Joseph said regarding a brother left behind, "Ye shall not see My face except your brother be with you." Let us not neglect one such whom we may help today. May we, during the year before us, seek to excell in being sons of consolation, true comforters of the brethren.

- J. J. Blackburn

## The Crisis of the World

*"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." - John 12:31, 32.*

OUR READERS will recall that in the September and October issues of this journal we considered a passage in the twelfth chapter of St. John's Gospel, wherein the final crisis hour of our Lord is vividly portrayed. In this and the succeeding issue we propose to consider that passage further. In the previous issues our subject was "The Crisis of the Christ," our attention being directed, more especially, to the manner in which **He** met that crisis, as reflected in His prayer: "Father, glorify Thy name." Here we desire to notice more particularly that portion of the passage in which our Lord is led to speak of "The Crisis of the World." In this connection we shall hope also to inquire somewhat into the remarkable prediction with which the passage closes. Our text, then, will consist of verses 31 and 32: "Now is the judgment of this world" (or, more literally, "Now is a crisis of this world"), "now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." - John 12:31, 32. Am. R. V.

In our previous meditations we discussed, among other things, the probable purpose of the visit of these Greeks who "would see Jesus," concluding that they had come "to announce their adhesion to His cause, and even, if tradition may be trusted, to invite Him to abandon the ungrateful Jews, and to go with them to some foreign court, in which they were authorized to assure Him of an honorable reception." We noted, too, that, on seeing these Gentiles approach Him in the attitude of faith and reverence, our Lord "turned to His disciples, and exclaimed, with a tone of serious yet joyful satisfaction, 'The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified!' for in the homage of these Greeks, He found a prediction of the obedience unto life eternal of the whole Gentile world," in due time.

"That He knew how He was to be glorified, on what terms He was to draw all men unto Himself, is evident from the fact that He instantly began to speak to His new disciples of the grain of wheat which must *die* if it is to bring forth fruit, to teach them that no man can save his life, except by losing it, and to invite them to follow Him in the path of self-sacrifice if they would be glorified together with Him."

We saw, too, that "for a moment His soul was 'troubled,' that is, agitated and confused by the suggestion which the Greeks had thrown out; and for a moment He pauses to consider whether He might save the world without loading it with the guilt of His death, whether by turning to the Gentiles, and teaching and saving *them*, He might not secure the salvation of the world. '*What shall I say?*' He cries. '*Shall I say, Father, save Me from this hour*, from this dark fate: No, I cannot say that. It was to bear this fate that I have come to this hour. I can only say, *Father, glorify Thy Name*, reveal Thy character, especially Thy character as a Father; let it be seen in a form so illustrious and convincing that all may know and believe that Thou art their Father; -- know and believe that Thy love shrinks from no sacrifice by which their welfare may be secured.'"

This, we endeavored to show, is the true meaning of our Lord's *prayer* in this crisis hour of His, and moreover that it implies the true ideal of prayer for us to copy. "It teaches us both how to pray and what to ask for, if we would pray as we ought. When *our souls* are troubled, and we are tempted to say: 'Father, save us from this hour, save us from the risks, pains, losses, burdens,

strokes we fear,' however natural, however pardonable such a prayer may be, we should remember -- if we are to be true followers of Christ, we *must* remember-that there is *a* far nobler and higher prayer than this, and strive to cry from the heart, 'Father, glorify *Thy* Name; Father we accept any risk, any pain, any loss, any burden, any stroke, by which *Thy* Name, Thy character, Thy love, may be illustrated, by which Thy truth may be brought home to our fellows or ourselves, and the borders of Thy Kingdom may be advanced, even as our Master embraced the cross, and freely devoted Himself to death for us all.'"

### **A VOICE FROM HEAVEN REPLIES'**

This, then, was the burden of our Lord's prayer at the supreme crisis of His history. And to that prayer a Voice from heaven replied. That the occasion was worthy of that miraculous answer is evident, the moment we remember what it was. "At each previous crisis of our Lord's history, when He had solemnly devoted Himself to the work His Father had given Him to do, the voice of God had been heard accepting and approving His self-consecration:-at His Baptism, when He consciously dedicated Himself to fulfilling the righteous and loving will of God; at His Transfiguration, when He devoted Himself to 'the exodus He was to accomplish at Jerusalem,' the death by which He was to glorify God, the sacrifice by which He was to finish His work. And now, once more, when, with the cross full in view, He freely embraces the cross; when He refuses to pray: 'Father, save Me from this hour;' when His only cry is, 'Father, glorify Thy Name, reveal Thy character, manifest Thy fatherly and redeeming love,' the great Voice from heaven responds to His renewed act of self devotion with the assurance: 'I both have glorified it, and will glorify it again.'

"When should we expect to hear the voice of God if not at such supreme moments as these? And yet, as Jesus Himself assures us, whether the Voice said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him,' or, 'I both have glorified My name and will glorify it again,' it came, not for His sake, but for the sake of them that stood by. *He* needed no miracle to assure Him of the Father's love. *He knew* that the Father heard Him always. Miracles are a condescension to human needs, and to human infirmities, in which He did not share. They were given to teach and assure His disciples; not to teach and assure Him. They are recorded for *our* instruction, not for His honor. They are not meant even for those who can believe without seeing, but for those who must see before they can believe.

"And this miracle had a very special warrant and justification. It was wrought mainly for the sake of some new disciples -- to confirm the faith of certain Greeks who had come to Him. His words, the words reported in the immediate context, contain, as we have seen, His Gospel to the Gentiles, an epitome of the whole substance of the teaching which, in larger and more various forms, He had already given to the Jews. Was it not appropriate that this brief Gospel to the Gentiles should be confirmed by a sign from heaven? that, so to speak, these Greeks, and the Gospel to these Greeks, should have a miracle all to themselves? Can you not understand how profoundly they would be impressed by an audible response to the prayer of Jesus, by a great Voice sounding out of heaven? how their faith would be ratified and strengthened by it? how they would talk of it when they got home and allege it as a proof that they had not followed cunningly devised fables in bowing down before the power and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ? how they would affirm that they had been eye-witnesses of His majesty, when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and had heard the Voice that came out of heaven while they were with Him in the holy temple?"

## **JESUS ECHOES AND INTERPRETS His FATHER'S VOICE**

In that voice, however, some who stood by "heard nothing but a clap of thunder; while others heard a voice indeed, and a voice loud, and clear, and sweet as that of an angel, but knew not whence it came, nor what it said. Jesus knew, however, and in our text He both echoes and interprets that Divine utterance. He knew that the Father *had* already glorified His name, for He says: 'Now is there a judgment of this world.' And He knew that the Father *would* glorify it again, for He says: 'The prince of the world *shall be* cast out.'"

We say that these words of Jesus echo and interpret the words of His Father. But perhaps their connection is not quite clear to you, and you may be asking: In what way do they do so? What is the connection between the Father's words: "I have already glorified My name," and the words of Jesus: "Now is a judgment of this world"? And further, What is the connection between the Father's words, "I will glorify My name again," and the words of Jesus: "The prince of this world shall be cast out"?

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

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

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

## THE CRISIS OF THE WORLD

And first, then, as to the judgment of this world. We have already pointed out that the literal meaning here is *crisis*, a crisis through which the world was then, and for that matter still is passing. And from what has already been said, it must surely be apparent to all, that when our Lord speaks of Himself, or of the glorification of Himself by the death of the cross, as a crisis of the world, He cannot mean less than this, "that the attitude which men take to Him, or to the death in which He most of all reveals the fatherly, redeeming love of God, determines what their character is, and must ultimately determine what their conditions shall be. If they recognize His goodness, if they respond to the love which He reveals, they prove themselves capable of eternal life; while if they do not, they pronounce themselves unworthy of eternal life, and, for the present, at least, incapable of it."

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

It is no mere matter of theory, brethren, of which we now speak, nor is it a matter which concerns only the world, not the Church, but it is a truth "which enters into and determines the whole current and bent of our practical life in the most decisive way. If we acknowledge that in Christ we find the highest revelation of the name, or character of God; or even if we do less than this, if we do but acknowledge that in Christ we find the highest *human* wisdom, the best *human* goodness, and a love so disinterested, so wide and deep, so unfathomable and unchangeable that it might well be, called Divine -- if we acknowledge this, and yet, when the decisive test is applied to our characters we make no response to it; if His wisdom does not command our admiration, and shape our conduct; if His goodness does not elicit our love; if His purity does not call forth our homage, we are judged and condemned, self-judged, and self-condemned. To do nothing is, in such a case, to do all. It is to show that there is nothing in us which answers and corresponds to the solemn and moving spectacle which has been unfolded before us. If we will not have *this* Man to reign over us, it can be only because we do not want to be ruled by the Wisest and the Best, nor even by that which is wisest and best in our own nature. A crisis has come to us, a judgment, and we, alas, have been tried and found wanting.

## CHOOSE YE TODAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE

"It matters comparatively little what it is that we suffer to influence our decision. If we are so plunged in the pursuit of gain and self-indulgence that we do not attend as we should, to the revelation of the Divine grace and love in the glorification of the Son of Man, we are judged, we have both judged and condemned ourselves. If we are so occupied in the pursuits, innocent, lawful or even praiseworthy in themselves, so absorbed in laudable studies or in the culture and enjoyment of our domestic affairs, or in our devotion to the conduct of our many interests and affairs that we have no leisure or heart for the love and service of the Son of Man, still we are judged; we have judged and condemned ourselves. Religion itself, or what we take for religion may be our hindrance. On the one hand, we may be so preoccupied with the doctrines, or the controversies, or the outward service of the Church, as to miss Christ Himself, and the power of His life, and the obedience of His will; and on the other hand we may be so pre-occupied with questions of evidence, with doubts and answers to doubt, with the scientific and logical side of religion, as to have never listened with the heart to the simple message of righteousness and love, which Christ came to deliver, and which, if we did but listen to it, would at once commend itself to our hearts. But in either case, in every case, we are judged by our rejection of Him, or by our indifference to *Himself -- judged, self-condemned*. The hour has come in which *we* should have glorified the Son of Man, and we did not know that the hour had struck, and that the Kingdom of heaven had come nigh unto us. In the time of *our* visitation *we* did not accept the things of our peace."

## A WORD OF EXHORTATION

Oh! brethren, before God we charge you, even as we charge ourselves, that you look to yourselves, that you lose not a full reward. For this text, while it speaks of a judgment, a crisis, of the *world* is of vital concern also to the *Church*. Sometimes, it is true, we distinguish the Church from the world. And we do so properly. The Scriptures make this distinction, and it is therefore proper that we should do so. But no such distinction is made in this text, except, indeed, that a judgment, a crisis, which embraces, or will yet embrace, the whole world, must necessarily begin, as an inspired writer tells us, at the house of God.

And if there should be any one whose eye, perchance, should fall on this page, who feels that his or her life is not all that it should be, who perhaps has never yet made a whole-hearted consecration to God, or who, having done so, is yet conscious that having made the vow of consecration, he or she has been lax in its performance, and is wondering, with the Adversary at his or her elbow, whether or not it is now too late, let us say, with all the earnestness and power of which we are capable, that it is not too late-yet. But let us also say, that to such an one it is quite evident a crisis has come. And it behooves that one to call upon God, with all that is within him, to help him meet it aright.

"Every coming of Christ to our conscience, through His Word, and Spirit, is a judgment, a crisis, one of many. *This* is as truly an acceptable time, a day of salvation, as any that has gone before it. And if we now admit Christ to be Wisest and Best, and therefore the true judge and Ruler of men; if, in His death on the tree, we find a supreme proof of the fact that God is our Father, and loves us well enough to make any sacrifice in order to redeem us out of the hand of our iniquities, if we commit ourselves to Him in faith and love and obedience, this hour of judgment, this crisis hour, will prove an hour of salvation to us." For let it be carefully noted, this crisis "is not at all what those who think of judgment only in its severer aspect would have anticipated. Christ does not say: 'Now is a judgment or crisis of this world; now shall the world be *condemned*.' On the contrary, He virtually says: 'Now is a judgment of this world, now shall the world be *saved*.' For the judgment is to issue in the expulsion of the usurping prince of this world, and the enthronement of its true Prince. The one is to be 'cast out'; the other is to be 'lifted up,' that He may draw all men unto Himself." But we must leave the consideration of this glorious prediction until our next issue.

- P. L. Read.

## Encouraging Messages

Dearly Beloved Brethren:

I often write you of my afflictions, not that I complain about them, knowing they must come, but being so isolated from all the Lord's brethren, and feeling the need of help and comfort, I think of you as being real friends in time of need and stress. .

Now I need your fervent prayers more than I have ever needed anything, because I have just lost my husband. He died last week, and I am all alone in the world except for my sister who lives with her children far from me. Although my husband never accepted the truth as we know it, he had Faith in God, and called on Him for help in his sickness.

Although neighbors have been helpful, they cannot help enough to take away my grief and sorrow, and am left alone with my Lord and God, whose precious promises I claim and try to bring to mind constantly to keep my heart from breaking.

I received my "Herald" just after my husband's death, and there was the most comfort I had been given, in that wonderful poem, "I understand." I said, Lord, this was written for me, and Thy brethren' have sent it just at the moment I needed it most. I thanked our heavenly Father for reminding me so quickly of the suffering of Another, who died that our sufferings might be over when He delivers us from all sorrow.

How glad I will be to get a letter soon to tell me you also "understand."

In His Name,  
Mrs. S. R. -- Ill.

Dear Brethren:

Greetings!

It is many years now since you so very kindly commenced sending me the Journal and I feel now that at least I ought to send you my grateful thanks.

I am grateful to the Heavenly Father for His many blessings and chastisements of the last 30 years. As I put my mind back, retrospectively over this period of time, my "truth time," I am conscious of how little I have accomplished. But I realize He is my all-sufficiency and as such I rest content.

Would you please continue sending me the Journal on the same terms as previously. I am not going to weary you with the reasons why I am compelled to do this, but it is my *privilege* to be one of the "Lord's poor," and how many lessons one learns from that.

I pray that the Journal may be blessed and used, as also its authors all in His service. 'The time is drawing short now, and the Lord's people are waiting, all in His Grace.

Thanking you for all your ministrations, I am  
Yours in Him,  
V. S. - Eng.

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"How sweet to know that I am Thine,  
All Thine!  
How sweet to know that Thou art mine,  
Yes, mine!  
Not tremblingly I go, afraid,  
Not fearful, hesitant, dismayed,  
But firmly on my refuge stayed,  
I go."