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Modern Babel

THE JEW, HIS LAND, AND HIS DESTINY PART II

THE JEW is the outstanding enigma of all time. It has been given to but few races to have made so many enemies and to possess so few well-wishing friends as has the Hebrew, and that too not merely for a few years past or present, but throughout his entire history. And yet, regardless of circumstances, the Hebrew has thrived and made of himself a force to be reckoned with, in whatever place his lot has been cast. Between him and the ancient country of Palestine there exists an unbreakable tie, the permanence and strength of which it would be impossible to exaggerate, and which the future will surely demonstrate. The present and future status of the Jew in the Community of Nations may well furnish the key to the political and economic future of the world. That key wisely used with faith and foresight may under divine guidance unlock -the door to world peace and prosperity for a thousand years to come. Failure to so use it will in the opinion of many wise thinkers do its part in plunging all modern civilization into ruin and chaos, for upon the fate of Palestine hinges that of the whole Middle East, and that in turn is bound to affect the destiny of every great nation on earth.

The Jewish race, while never as numerous or as powerful politically as have been others, and furthermore, one that has been sentenced to exile and dispersion over the face of the globe for two thousand years, has nevertheless through its sheer indomitable will to survive and to preserve its national identity and its ancient customs, left an indelible impress upon all world history, 'one that has never been even approached by any other race of people. Every civilization past and present has been affected by that impress, and has left records showing the powerful influence that Jewish thought and Jewish achievement has had upon its history and upon the history of the world, ever since that day in the remote past when the children of Israel left Egypt under the leadership of Moses to seek a home in the promised land of Canaan. We use the word Jew rather than Hebrew advisedly; though the latter would undoubtedly be the more correct term ethnologically, yet it has been the characteristic traits which have always marked the tribe of Judah and which came to full

flower in the history of the Jews that set their stamp upon the descendants of Heber even before the Patriarch Judah himself was born.

The Jew is as ageless as the everlasting hills. He and his fathers have seen one civilization after another rise, flourish, decay, and pass into oblivion, each having in turn played its little part in the great drama of history and passed from the stage, but he, the Jew, to paraphrase the words of Tennyson's poem of "The Brook," goes on forever. The Egyptian, the Babylonian, the Assyrian, and the Roman has each in his turn overridden him and crushed him into the dust. They have forever passed away in so far as being factors in world affairs is concerned, but the Jew remains timeless and unchanged. His strength is not that of the great metallic image that Daniel saw, whose shining majesty has blinded the eyes of men so that they failed to see its feet of clay, but rather the strength of a great tree that bows to the ground before the winds of adversity only to spring up again, erect as ever when the gale has spent its force and has swept on, its power diminishing as it passes into that of a summer zephyr; this because the roots of that tree have been embedded deep in the ground. The roots of the Jewish tree have ever been safely and tenaciously moored to the divine promises once made to the fathers of the race, and nothing has ever been able to tear them loose from those covenant promises.

For many centuries the Jew has suffered under the sentence of divine displeasure. He has been in fact under double condemnation, for to the curse of the law which he failed to keep has been added, like a boomerang, the reply to his defiant challenge issued at the trial of the innocent, undefiled One, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." That challenge has been answered with terrifying impact upon the fortunes of the Jew throughout the Age that followed. Yet Jehovah in his great goodness has seen fit to temper justice with mercy and has never forsaken his erring children. Though driven from their homeland and expelled from country after country, he has seen to it that as one door closed behind the Jew another would always be opened, to enable him to pass the years of his sojourn in patient waiting until the hour of his deliverance had come. The faithfulness of Jehovah to his children has never been so clearly demonstrated as in the case of the Jew, not only his faithfulness to his ancient promises but also to his righteous and immutable laws.

Furthermore, the fulfillment of the declaration once made to Abram, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3) has been a marked one. Every country that has afforded the Jew a refuge has benefited by his genius, and has prospered during his stay. Spain, Great Britain, Germany, and Morocco are examples of this truth, as was Egypt centuries before them, in being made the beneficiary of the wise administration of Joseph. During the years of his exaltation to power, Egypt became the greatest creditor nation on earth and the food supplier of all other nations. While his descendants have never as a race been popular with their Gentile neighbors, nevertheless many individual Hebrews have been admired and even loved in the countries of their adoption. Spain, under the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, both favorable to the Jews, reached the highest peak of its national destiny during the years when the Jew was prominent in Spanish affairs. When, in response to the urgings of the fanatical Papal inquisitors, the Jew was persecuted and finally expelled from Spain, the sun of that country began at that moment to set. The decline in Spanish power has been rapid and without break since that expulsion, until Spain has become today one of the poorest and weakest of all European countries. The same story has been repeated time and again wherever the Jew has gone.

During the last and most terrible, in many respects, of all wars, the Jews suffered perhaps more intensely than did any other people. Hitler's criminal persecutions destroyed what was probably the wealthiest, best established, and more nearly assimilated of any European Jewish community, namely, the German. After stripping them of all wealth, and driving them from their land which

for centuries had been their home, and whose literature, music, and science had been enriched by Jewish genius, his long arm still stretched out over his marching armies to catch up with them in every European country to which they had fled until they were caught in the trap between two fronts, there to be ruthlessly exterminated. This relentless hunting down- of a helpless people whose only crime had been racial identity, is one of the darkest phases of a war that has abounded in revolting incidents. Denunciations condemning the monstrous crime were hurled at its perpetrator from the pulpits of every denomination in Christendom, as well as by the press -of every civilized country, but all to no purpose; the extermination still went. on, up to the very day that the armies of Germany surrendered.

In view then of the cruel and unprovoked attack upon these people, it would have seemed to be the most obvious and just of courses to be taken by that conference of Allied Powers which had met for the purpose of securing, future world peace, to have placed the rehabilitation of what was left of European Jewry as the first and most urgent of all tasks to be undertaken by those who had put an end to the persecutions. Yet the truth as it emerges in all its naked shamefulness is, that although a full year has passed since the surrender of Nazi Germany, many of the helpless refugees are still herded together in various war camps while others drift aimlessly about the European Continent dependant for food and shelter upon the poor arrangements that, UN has been able to make for them. Not one country has been willing to provide even a temporary asylum for them. They are simply a group of unfortunates, shunned and unwanted by any of the so-called Christian countries. Yet the peoples of most of these countries proclaim their allegiance to the greatest of all Jews, He who once declared that "Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Small wonder it .is then that the Zionists of the world have been clamoring with all their might for the admission of some of these homeless ones into the only country in all the world to which they may be said to have a just and legal right of entry, and to which they feel bound by every traditional and sentimental tie, the land that was the scene of their former glory and which was ever the beloved homeland of their fathers, their beloved Canaan, or as it is now called, Palestine.

In every other land in which the Jew has settled he has been regarded as an intruder, an alien, one who has always stubbornly refused to become at heart really merged into the citizenry of the country in which he dwelt. In the United States, Germany, and in parts of the British Commonwealth, he has come closer to the condition of complete assimilation into the body politic than he has in any other place, but even in these countries he has always managed to retain a large degree of his national or racial identity as a Jew, and can no more be made to merge with any other racial group than can oil and water be made to mix. It may possibly be that herein lies the chief reason for the universal unpopularity of the Jew. Among the members of the human species, the individual who refuses to conform to the manners and customs of the majority must expect to be singled out for dislike and distrust. In fact the principle holds good throughout all nature. Every species of both plant and animal seems to resent a variant, one who stands aloof from the herd, and the Hebrew has always been an individualist of the most pronounced type; hence his almost universal unpopularity. Had any other race of people been subjected over the centuries to the experiences through which the Jew has passed, it would either have lost its racial identity entirely or would have become so changed ethnologically through environment or through intermarriage with its neighbors, that its modern representatives would be entirely different from their ancestors. But the Jew remains the same in his essential characteristics, whether he is making bricks for Pharaoh or conducting a motion picture industry in America. In all his salient features he remains the same kind of person throughout the ages, and his racial peculiarities are no more changed with the passage of time than does the leopard change his spots.

The story of the unpopularity of the Hebrew with his Gentile neighbors has been repeated over and over again from the days of the Patriarchs all down to the present time. To the Egyptian he was an abomination, one with whom the Egyptian refused to, break bread. (Gen. 43:32.) In the eyes of the Chaldeans, the Hebrews were troublesome people, who had to be carefully watched lest they form an alliance with Egypt and dispute the Babylonian sovereignty over the plains of Mesopotamia. The Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, resolved to make sure that the small Jewish State which lay near the western borders of his kingdom and of whose enmity he was well aware, should never have the opportunity to open the way to the passage of any Egyptian army bent upon the invasion of his domain. Realizing that the Jews' implacable hostility seemed in some way to be connected with the worship of Jehovah as the one and only true God, he invaded Judea, destroyed the temple at Jerusalem, the hub and center of Jewish worship, and broke down the walls of their capital city. Then taking the same brutal course that Hitler was to take three thousand years afterwards, he transported what was in effect the whole population of the small nation, to Babylonia, imagining that once separated from their temple and their holy city, the Jews would become merged with his own people through intermarriage and thus become welded into one nation and form an impassable barrier to all Egyptian aggression. The mistake he made is a matter of both sacred and secular historical record.

But if Babylon was the Nazi Germany of the seventh century B. C., and their kings used the same methods of crushing all opposition, the policy of the Medo-Persian kings who followed bore a strong resemblance in their methods to those used by the modern British in their scheme of dealing with subject races. The Persian king, Cyrus, and his successors considered it far wiser to grant a large degree of freedom to the Jews, permitting those who wished, to return to Judea and even assisting them in the rebuilding of their ruined temple and capital city. In this manner they hoped to cement the loyalty of the Jews to the empire. However, -the ever present Jewish insistence upon their separateness from all other peoples again became manifest in the records of those times, as shown in Nehemiah's refusal to allow any of the Samaritans to have any share in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. (Neh. 2:20.) Again, in the Book of Esther, the reader may find evidences of the never failing dislike of the Jews wherever they are found, in the words recorded in Esther 2:10 of that book, where we read that Esther had been instructed by her uncle, Mordecai, not to reveal the truth concerning her race and lineage. The implication, is plain. The Jews were an unpopular, disliked people, and it was feared by Mordecai that the discovery of Esther's nationality would have jeopardized her prospects of success in gaining the King's favor.

The complaint made by Haman, the enemy of Mordecai and the Jews, has a familiar ring in our ears, in that it so closely resembles the charges against the Jew with which he has become so familiar during his long career. Here are the words as recorded in Esther 3:8: "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people. ... Their laws are diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws." It is evident that anti-Semitism is one of the oldest diseases from which the Gentile world has suffered.

However, it would profit us little, in trying to understand the Jew, to trace the evidences of his unpopularity down through the years. The story has not varied- essentially from Pharaoh's time to the present and need not be dwelt upon here; for as most of us know, the Jewish race is regarded today by its Gentile neighbors much as the fathers of the race were thousands of years ago. They are and always have been, as a race, disliked and have held aloof from their non-Jewish contemporaries, although many individual Jews have been admired and even loved by their Gentile neighbors. The Jew usually labors under many handicaps and is in some countries confined to Ghettos; yet the protecting care of Jehovah over him even during his period of disfavor is shown in the fact that he has so frequently succeeded in overcoming all obstacles and rising to the pinnacle of success regardless of all odds against him. It is of more importance to try

to understand the reason for his general unpopularity with so many different kinds of people at so many different periods, people who are unlike each other save in one respect, namely, their common dislike for the children of Jacob.

The reasons given for this dislike are many and varied, ranging from complaints concerning the Jew's sharp business practices, all the way down the list to the trumped up charges of the Russian and Polish peasantry to the effect that the Jews were accustomed to use Christian children as human sacrifices in their religious rites. These charges have been shown to be baseless so often, that it is unnecessary to reply to them here. Yet the outrageous lie is still being believed by many of the more ignorant and prejudiced among the enemies of the race. Perhaps the frankest admission of the truth ever made was that of the Philistinian king Abimelech of Gerar, who confessed to Isaac, one of the fathers of the race, "Go from us for thou art much mightier than we"; and, "We saw certainly that Jehovah was with thee." - Gen. 26:16, 28.

JACOB A MICROCOSM OF JEWRY

An examination of the many reasons adduced for the unpopularity of the Hebrews leads us to the discovery of a significant fact. The Scriptures with the uncompromisingly frank way in which they point out the defects as well as the good qualities of the faith heroes of the past, have furnished us with a detailed account of the life of Jacob, the father of the Jewish race. A study of that life would seem to indicate that in his character was embodied many if not most of the traits which have become so disliked in his descendants. In fact the Patriarch seems to have constituted in his make-up a sort of microcosm of his descendants, and prefigures the very qualities which have made them disliked; just as the unregenerate Gentile world bears a marked resemblance to the character ascribed to Esau.

Even to the Bible student who is not unmindful of the fact that the Scriptural record contains no direct rebuke to Jacob on the part of God, the conduct and disposition of Jacob is hard to defend. One cannot avoid a feeling of repulsion at his willingness to take immediate advantage of his brother's weakness in the matter of the birthright, nor at the deception he practiced upon his blind father in order to make sure of the carrying out of the terms of the bargain that Esau had so rashly made with him. The reader will scarcely need to be reminded of several other incidents in the recorded life of the Patriarch which shed an unfavorable light upon his character and which has evoked much severe criticism on the part of those who fail to appreciate the nature of the ruling principle that dominated all his actions and transformed what was by nature a rather selfish and grasping disposition into one that could earn the approval of the Most High. That redeeming feature of his make-up was of course his admirable evaluation of the divine promises and his tenacity in clinging to them at all costs.

Would that we all might manifest the same resolute persistence in striving to reach our heavenly goal that Jacob did with respect to the earthly promises. It ill becomes those of us who have to confess daily to so many weaknesses of our own to be over severe in passing judgment upon one who possessed few of the advantages of light and understanding that have been given to the feet members of the Body of Christ. Let us remember that Jacob had no heavenly teacher such as we have, to show him by admonition and example the beauty of an unselfish Godlike character. Jacob was not a new creature, but a natural man, whose character defects have seemingly been inherited by many of his descendants and have consequently made them a much disliked people.

The customary Gentile estimate of the general character of those descendants reflects much of Esau's attitude toward his brother Jacob. They are depicted by their critics as a people who are cringing and fawning in 'adversity, but arrogant and sometimes cruel when the sun of prosperity

shines upon them. This view, mistaken though it may be, is perfectly epitomized in Shakespeare's portrayal of the character of Shylock in his play, "The Merchant of Venice." Here the Jew is shown to be lacking in the very qualities which the Prophet admonished him to cultivate, viz., "To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." - Micah 6:8.

It is small wonder then that the sort of prejudice against the Jewish race which is entertained by so many different kinds of people the world over is frequently made the excuse for debarring them from many Gentile communities and either restricting them to Ghettoes or denying them entrance entirely into countries where the spirit of anti-Semitism prevails. These people whose dislike for the Jewish race affects all their political ideology mention two prominent reasons for that dislike: first, the faculty which the Hebrew possesses of profiting by any shiftlessness on the part of his Gentile neighbors, to enrich himself at their expense; and secondly, the fecundity of the Jew.

The present day Arab cites as one of his principal objections to the admission of the Jew into the Holy Land his fear that the latter would multiply so fast that before long he would become overwhelmingly superior in numbers to the Arab himself, and thus dominate the country which the Arab considers his own. The Bible student will remember that a certain Pharaoh who ruled Egypt some three thousand years ago had precisely the same kind of fear. (Exod. 1:9, 10.) An article which appeared in the press quite recently shows plainly that this fear at least is a justifiable one. We quote from an Associated Press dispatch under the date line of Sept. 1946, Tel Aviv, Palestine:

"Babies healthy and glowing from parental care form a new and powerful echelon in the Jewish struggle for predominance in Palestine. The birth rate has increased astonishingly in the past two years, says a prominent Vienna obstetrician in the Tel Aviv Municipal health service. Good healthy children with a normal family life give us an immigration route that is completely unchecked . . . Officially the infant mortality among the Jewish population is recorded as 55 per thousand as against 140 per thousand for the Moslems . . . And the Jewish doctors have reduced the infant mortality rate even lower than that in America."

Another agency official writes: "Many of our people are young and strong and eager to establish a family.... After years of fear, war, and fright they now see hope for homes and a country of their own. All of them are secure in their new feelings of nationalistic unity. The bumper baby crop is a natural result."

Thus we see from the foregoing that Jehovah's care over fleshly Israel still makes of no avail all the efforts of their enemies to exterminate them, as in the case of their far away ancestors in Egypt, "the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew." (Exod. 1:12.) The other plaint so often heard throughout the Jews' history concerns the universally admitted flair which the Jew has for handling financial affairs. His enemies complain that he is rarely a producer of wealth himself but merely a trader, buying and selling and otherwise manipulating the money market. This, it seems to us is a somewhat illogical complaint for any Gentile to make, for one cannot help but recall the fact that for many centuries every trade or profession but one was closed to the Jew, the single exception being that of commercial transactions. Why then should any one complain about his becoming an adept at the only line of endeavor they had left open to him? His ancestor Jacob showed *very* conclusively that he was a hard man to get the better of in a business transaction, as his Uncle Laban could testify. (Gen. 30:31.) It is evident to all that his descendants have lost none of his business acumen.

The fact never in all history stood out more plainly than at present that although the hand of Divine Justice has borne down heavily upon Israel throughout the "seven times" of his period of disfavor, yet his Heavenly Protector has been ever faithful to his promise made so long ago to Abram: "I will bless him that blesseth thee, and curse him that curseth thee." The anti-Semite wherever he may be found will yet learn that lesson which all history teaches and which was pointedly taught to the Moabitish king by the disobedient prophet, which records one of the first examples of anti-Semite propaganda we have any knowledge of: "Come curse me Jacob" were the words of the king, "and come defy Israel," to which the prophet, actuated by some force stronger than himself replied, "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed, or 'how should I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?" (Num. 23:8.) Then speaking in prophetic vision he declares (verse 9), "From the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the [other] nations. Here, in the inspired words of the Prophet, is the intimation given to all men of -the futility of trying to apply to the course of Israel the yardstick by which historians and statesmen measure the capabilities of other races.

The words of Leviticus 20:24 still apply to the Hebrew, "I the Lord your God have separated you from other people." It becomes manifest then that whether he be liked or whether he be hated by the Gentile, the divine decree concerning the Jew still remains in force, and it would be much to the advantage of those who are trying to settle the Palestine question if they were able to accept this fact at its face value. If such were the case, they would realize the folly of endeavoring to thwart the divine purpose in regard to the establishment of a Jewish State in that land predestined to be his everlasting home.

PRESENT PROSPECTS OF ZIONISM

As we have already pointed out, the condition of the homeless, dispossessed Jews of Europe and the Near East who are victims of the brutality of the Axis powers is a desperate one. Their almost frenzied passion for admission to Palestine has been intensified by the fact that the opposition of the Arab League to that entry has had the support of the British government, which for political reasons fears to offend its Moslem subjects. These hold the key to the defenses of the Suez Canal, that all-important strip of water which is so vital to Britain's sea lanes, and also to the possession of the vast oil fields of Iran and Saudi Arabia, that fluid which is the very lifeblood of our modern mechanized civilization. The experiences of the Jewish people during the past seventy years have predisposed them to, in general, favor the policies of the great Western Democracies, more especially in view of the fact that Britain and the United States have always been sympathetic to Jewish aspirations and have been the only countries that have ever lifted a finger in support of Zionism. Moreover, American Jewry still supplies the financial means without which it would be practically impossible for the Zionist movement to continue to function. However, made desperate by the present impossible situation, an "underground" movement of Palestinian Jews has been recently functioning, some of which have been so ill-advised as to commence a campaign of terrorism directed against the British authorities. The actions of this group have done much harm to the cause of Zionism and have alienated the sympathies of many who have in the past been well-wishers of Zionist hopes and aspirations. Many of these extremists are anti-Zionist Jews who are favorable to the Communist ideology, and who welcome every opportunity of embarrassing the Western powers in the Middle East or elsewhere. Others, are those who are endeavoring to force the British to consent to the admission into Palestine of some 100,000 dispossessed and homeless Jews despite all Arab opposition. And so the sad conflict of racial and economic interests continues with no prospects of reaching a satisfactory conclusion as yet.

The British government has recently appointed a commission to confer in London with representatives of both sides invited to attend to discuss the possibilities of coming to an understanding which would lead to some kind of harmonious settlement, but so far both parties stubbornly refuse to even make the concession of attending. There are few subjects that have been more exhaustively thrashed out, both in the columns of the Press and by the public the world over than has been the Palestinian question. Many writers who have exhibited brilliant mentalities in their treatment of other subjects have had to confess to being completely baffled in any attempt to solve the Jewish Problem. Most of these people being essentially secular-minded fail entirely to understand what is to them the strange insistence of the Jews in declaring that Palestine and no other place will satisfy the aspirations of Zionism for a national home for all Jewry. These people, well meaning and sympathetic though they may be, show that they know but little of the strong ties that bind the hearts of the Jew to the only spot on earth which he has always envisaged as being the eternal home of his race. No wonder the Jew turns a deaf ear to every proposal that he settle in some other country. Any Jew who fails to feel the drawing power of that bond between him and the land of his ancestors merely gives evidence of having lost (if indeed he ever possessed) faith in the eternal promises of Jehovah.

Yet responsible Zionist leaders realize to the full the dangers of trying to force a political solution which ignores the fierce racial and economic conflict which would surely come to a region torn by ancient dissension. Nevertheless, many believe that the Arab if freed from the evil influence of agitators from the outside, who foster dissension by working, on the fanatically zealous racial and religious prejudices of the Moslems, could be made to see that his best interests would be served by the admission into Palestine of a limited number of European Jews, Then time would eventually work out a solution to the problem that seems impossible in theory. These pioneers would necessarily have to be limited in number to avoid the danger of throwing the economy of the country entirely out of order. The next group of settlers could be permitted" to enter when the land had been made ready to absorb them, and that with no injustice or hardship, to the Arab population. Such a plan would unquestionably raise the standards of living among the Arabs to a far higher level than anything they enjoy at present.

During the period between the two World Wars such Jews as had emigrated to Palestine accomplished wonders in the cultivation of the soil by the use of modern methods, and transformed what had for centuries been desert land into a veritable **Eden**. Repeatedly the Arabs came to them for advice and help, and much of the tension that had existed in the past between the two races, and which had been kept alive by selfish interests disappeared. There can be little doubt that if those re-awakened flames of prejudice against the Jews could be abated, a Jewish colony in the Holy Land would have no difficulty in getting the needed financial support from international Jewry, and with' this entering wedge once in place, the Jewish population would, we believe, under Divine protection be made to rapidly increase to the extent that ere long Palestine would become the predicted "land of unwalled villages" of Ezekiel 38:11, and be prepared for the next step in the long history of Israel.

- J. R. Hughes.

Greetings for the New Year
Midland Elders' and Deacons' Meeting
Held at Rugby, November 10, 1946

Dear Brethren:

As this eventful year draws to its close, the Elders and Deacons of the above group send you their Christian love and greetings.

The above mentioned group comprehends the Rugby, Leicester, Coventry, Blaby, Warwick, and Birmingham Classes of "Free Bible Students."

Another year dawns, we know not what awaits us, He kindly veils our eyes. Our prayer is, therefore, that we might be unitedly kept in paths of sanctification, unity, and praise; kept in "our Father's Name" in safety, for the glory which awaits the faithful in Christ Jesus.

"*The Way*" may sometimes appear dark, and doubts may arise and cast an unwelcome shadow in our path. It is in these experiences that we learn the meaning of the New Life and can triumph by the power of "The Indwelling Christ."

As we journey in "the Narrow Way" may we unitedly experience that perfect rest which is the happy lot of those who keep His Yoke upon them. May we always rejoice in "the Liberty of Christ," which comes to those who make the full surrender; let us remain identified with Christ in his Death that we may experience full union with him in his Life.

There is no finality in God's working, we are being transformed continually; we go from faith to faith, strength to strength, victory to victory, receiving grace for grace, the more absolute our surrender the greater will be his Revealing.

In conclusion, may we with, open face manifest a fulness of faith in "the Living God" that we may experience his abiding presence, revealing to us those life-giving promises-"As thy days so shall thy strength be"; "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

With heartfelt Christian love,
We remain, by grace,
Your Brethren in Christ,
H. H. Barge, Secretary.

[The above is published with the feeling that our readers will especially appreciate receiving it as it reveals the spirit in which the brethren of Great Britain are preparing for the visit of Brother J. T. Read. The first suggestion to arrange for this visit came from this group. *Directors.*)]

Dogma versus Doctrine

"Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." - 2 Timothy 1:13, A. R. V.

"WORDS!" How supremely important they are! "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver" -- divine thoughts enmeshed in human speech. Jesus said: "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Prov. 25:11; John 6:63; Matt. 12:37, A. R. V.) The "pattern" of words in which the Christian's belief is formulated, in his mind or in his creed, powerfully influences his life along a corresponding, line of words and conduct. That line may be rigid, harsh, austere; or it may be loving, tolerant, and kind; or it may compromise between these extremes, as modified by his natural disposition, environment, and habits, which are varyingly difficult to overcome. Hence the importance of determining just what the Apostle meant in his admonition to his "beloved son, Timothy," in urging his adherence to the "form" or "pattern" of sound words and doctrine. For in the end these would mold Timothy's character and determine his position in the Kingdom. Are they less important to us now?

ST. PAUL'S DEFINITION

St. Paul makes numerous references, in his personal Epistles to Timothy and Titus, to "sound doctrine." He outlines what this doctrine is in 1 Timothy 1:5-11: "The end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned . . . according to the Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." In Titus 1:5-9 he sets forth the qualifications of Elders and Bishops, all of these requirements being moral and ethical until he comes to the last, which reads (verse 9): "Holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." In verses 1-8 of the following chapter he further tells Titus just what 'to preach as sound doctrine: "That aged [mature] men be temperate, grave, sober minded, healthy [margin] in faith, in love, in patience"; likewise that the women be "sober-minded, chaste, kind . . . that the word of God be not blasphemed . . . showing thyself an example of good works; in thy doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned."

In all of this it will be noted that there is no reference to any particular "doctrine" or code of doctrines ("creed") in the modern sense. Neither in the qualifications for teachers (Elders, Bishops) in the Church, laid down by the Apostle, nor in his instructions for their preaching, does he mention conformity to the minutia of doctrinal interpretation. Does this disparage all "doctrinal" teaching, by which is commonly meant all the facts concerning our Lord referred when he said: "Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition." Jesus quoted Isaiah, saying: "In vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matthew 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13; Isaiah 29:13.) These "fables" greatly troubled the early Church, but presently were outgrown. To cover the long list of similar man-made creeds and dogmas which would succeed the Jewish influence, the Apostle, under the direction of Holy Spirit, added the comprehensive "commandments of men." Thus he characterized all dogma, whether of Judaism, Romanism, Protestant sectarianism, or Bible Student exclusivism, as distinguished from the commandments of God. The latter, as set forth in the New Testament, in their application to Christians, invariably refer to the salvation which is in Christ Jesus (Acts 17:30) and to that "new commandment" which our Lord laid upon his followers, that they should "love one another as I have loved you." Anything more than this, imposed as a required belief

upon Christians by other Christians, is a "commandment of men," against which the Apostle specifically warns.

ST. PETER AND ST. JOHN ALSO DEFINE

The Apostle Peter also defines the requirements of God incumbent under the new dispensation, and refers to them as the "present truth." Present truth is truth applying to the present (Gospel) Age, in distinction from truth applying to the previous -- the Jewish -- Age. Thus the Ten Commandments were the law of the Jewish dispensation; and, that Israel might "live thereby" (Leviticus 18:5; Roman 10:5) was "present truth" during that period. Under the new dispensation there is a new relationship with God, a new basis for obtaining God's favor and eternal life. This the Apostle defines in the first chapter of his Second Epistle:

"Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ . . . divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, . . . precious and exceeding great promises.... Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence in your faith supply virtue . . . knowledge . self control ... patience ... godliness . . . brotherly kindness . . . love.... If ye do these things ye shall never stumble: for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the truth which is with you" - or "the present truth." (A. V.) This is the Apostle's formula for character-development and for obtaining entrance into the Kingdom, which he declares to be "the present truth."

St. John's similar definition is found in 2 John 4-6. In his salutation, occupying the first three verses, he refers to "truth" four times; in the following three verses he defines his conception of truth. He declares that he is not urging a new commandment, but one "heard from the beginning" -- that "we should love one another." This, he says, is "walking in truth." "Many deceivers" he says have opposed this law of Christ, denying his coming (in all sufficiency) "in the flesh." Such "go beyond" -- "take the lead" (Emphatic Diaglott and A. R. V. Margin) in excess of this "simplicity in Christ," and the Apostle declares that such "have not [the approval, the backing of] God" in their position. But "he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath [the approval of] both the Father and the Son." The Apostle concludes: "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works." These are grave and significant words, often overlooked and disregarded!

DOCTRINE, Vs. DOCTRINES OR DOGMAS

It is a noteworthy fact that the true doctrine of the New Testament is invariably (forty times) referred to in the singular; whereas the plural, "doctrines," in the Scriptures are always, "of men" or "of devils." This plural appears in but five passages in the New Testament, viz., Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7; Col. 2:20-22; 1 Tim. 4:1; and Heb. 13:9. Summarizing these passages: Our Lord said that the worship of God through -the "doctrines and commandments of men" is "in vain"; the Apostle refers to their observance in the early Church in fleshly ordinances of "touch not, taste not, handle not"; and he warns of their prevalence "in the latter times" as "doctrines of men and of devils. The contrast between the latter and the "sound doctrine" in its "pattern of sound words," is that the "doctrines" create division in the Body of Christ, scattering the sheep; while the "doctrine" gathers and unites them. "The *love of Christ* constraineth us -*holds us together-not* the dogmas and creeds of men and devils.

Webster defines *dogma* as: "A doctrine formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed or laid down, as by a church ... a definite, established and authoritative tenet." This word derives from the Greek *dokeo*, to think, to seem. As we have found in a comprehensive examination of the usage of the word in the New Testament, "the doctrine" is defined in all simplicity -- the teachings of Christ; whereas doctrines -- dogmas -- are what men *think* or what *seems* good, right and proper to them; and how multifarious are the dogmas of Christendom! Included are the dogma of the Trinity; of the immortal soul; of eternal torment; of the Mass; of baptism in water; of election; of free grace -- etc., etc. Some indeed are true, or contain a measure of truth; but all are set forth in creeds and "commandments of men" (which say "I *believe* -- and you must so believe if I am to recognize you as a full member of *my church*"); all are instruments of division among the Lord's people; all go beyond the plain teaching ("the doctrine") of Holy Scripture. Why then should we add the "s" to the doctrine -- teaching -- of Christ and his Apostles, and change it to *dogmas* -- the commandments of men?

WHY THE MULTIPLICATION OF "DOCTRINE"?

What is the reason for the powerful tendency toward creed-making, partisanship and sectarianism, prevalent in the Church from the very earliest days as is clearly apparent from New Testament records, and from Church history, and our own observation in the present?

Undoubtedly most if not all creed making has come about through the mistaken zeal of men completely sincere and in deadly earnest; who have been so sure that they were right that they *honestly confused their own thinking with* that of the Almighty; their own opinions with the dictates of Holy Writ. The Apostle stated the *reason* for this universal tendency in the Church--from his own time to the present--in writing to the Corinthians: "YE ARE YET CARNAL."

Of course we are all human-minded -- which is what the Apostle meant--until we are "transformed by the renewing of our minds" by Holy Spirit. And this is a gradual process. So in all sincerity, we are naturally inclined to follow our human wisdom. A closely knit organization of those whose opinions are identical is the pleasantest and most efficient association to "build one another up" in the common opinion of the group, and to accomplish as "great and wonderful works" for the Lord as possible. It is a commendable *desire*, and its accomplishment by establishing a standard of belief (a creed, under whatever disguise) seems so good to human wisdom, as to have been put into effect in every branch and every stage of the Church. But this is not the method of *divine* wisdom, which is "pure, peaceable, gentle, easily entreated, *full* of mercy and good fruits, without partiality or hypocrisy." (James 3:13-18.) How combative instead of peaceable, harsh' instead of gentle, unbending and unmerciful to those who do not agree, and partial to its own, has been every sect and division of those claiming unanimously to be Christians! How many heartaches, discouragements and spiritual tragedies have resulted therefrom! How much cold cruelty is manifested even today between those professing to be consecrated brethren, because of dogmatic differences!

"But," some one demurs, "how are we to maintain the purity of doctrinal teaching if we do not have a standard to which all at least of those who teach are required to adhere?"

The answer is that our perspective has been imperfect. We have all the standard that is necessary in the Word of God. There only is to be found "the pattern of sound words." The requisite doctrine needs no restatement. All Christians are agreed on the essentials, because they are stated so plainly in the Scriptures that there is no room for differences of opinion. Those points which are not so stated are non-essential. These are the points upon which *all* divisions in the Church,

today or in the past, are founded. Hence in the judgment of God there is no excuse for perpetuating such divisions. - See Reprints, page R5284, "Doctrines More or Less Important."

THE AUTHORITY OF THE ECCLESIA

The local Ecclesia, properly constituted (of consecrated, spirit-begotten believers) and educated in the Word, is self-purging. It is not necessary (except in rare cases, for *moral* not doctrinal divergences) to expel a disagreeing member, or to treat him unkindly or harshly. The Ecclesia has power to protect itself from imposition or disturbance; and the unruly and obstreperous are soon disaffected, and as in the early Church, "they go out from us because -they are not of us." - 1 John 2:19.

To human wisdom the Ecclesia, as defined in the Scriptures, is much too loosely and broadly constituted to be efficient. In every century of the Church leaders have arisen who have felt that they could improve on the provisions of the Lord for the safeguarding and well-being of his flock. In their reasoning, if there are no bars raised to keep the sheep inside and the wolves without, the Church will fail to cherish the former and will be ravaged by the latter. These feats are due to lack of complete faith in the wisdom and all-sufficient care of the great Head of the Church. The fleshly arm is still put forth to "steady the ark"!

Small ecclesias are particularly fearful of infringements on their liberties, or on their activities in the Truth, and on these fears their leaders play. But such fears are groundless. A majority has some rights which a minority is bound to respect; a minority which is actually being restricted of its liberties can always form a subordinate group or committee to pursue its own activities, without making a complete split from the main body. Thus unity will be maintained on the essentials, and other differences will be adjusted in the course of time. If a complete split is made, through the rash action of either the majority or the minority, the reconciliation of differences and the furtherance of all-important unity will be made much more difficult. - See Reprints, page R5501, "Christian Liberty Based on Principle."

THE REAL "APOSTLE'S CREED"

Even the human desire for a standard of belief to lean upon is provided by the Apostle, in Ephesians 4:4-6. So comprehensive is it that it may be regarded as the one approved, definite and all-sufficient Creed, of the Church. Note the emphasis and urgency of St. Paul in presenting this Code. He has previously pointed out that God sacrificed his most precious Son on the cross, and abolished his ancient covenant with Israel, in order that he might create one new Man or Body, in oneness of spirit, and bring it to himself in peace. In view of this remarkable statement of the purpose and objective of God the Father himself, the Apostle's intense earnestness in stating the method designed for its accomplishment, and the exact way in which the prospective members of the Body can *cooperate with God* in bringing about his purpose, is understandable.

"I therefore the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called." (If we do not so walk we are proving ourselves unworthy, and will miss the mark of our calling.) "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity [one-ness] of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (It is astonishing that it should be so, but the accuracy of the Apostle's forecast that it would actually require hard work -- "diligence" to keep the peace between brethren who had been so highly honored by God, and each of whom had so great a personal task of overcoming his own weaknesses before him, has been fully demonstrated by the experience of the Church.)

"The one-ness of the Spirit:
One Body,
One Spirit, . . .
One Hope of your Calling, One Lord,
One Faith, One Baptism,
One God and Father of all,
 who is over all, and through all, and in all."

The Apostle then emphasizes the individuality and importance of "EACH one of us" in maintaining and, perfecting this oneness of spirit: "till we all attain unto the one-ness of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the *fullness* of the Christ." 'Thus it will be seen that the hope to attain to this stature and fullness by any process of division, sectarianism, or exclusivism, is a vain hope, leading inevitably to complete disappointment.

For this structure of unity is in itself sufficient to exclude all diverse elements,, and to contravene all errors. Definition of the Seven Unities in *Purely Scriptural language* (the "pattern of sound words") will be found to deny all -the host of dogmatic inventions conceived by human wisdom throughout the Age. What more can we properly desire? What dare we add to that which has been given us by divine wisdom through his Apostle? Shall we venture during these last days of the Gospel Age, in what we profess to believe to be the very Presence of our Head, to make dogmas of the doctrine and thereby put the slightest impediment in the way of any brother who adheres to this "Apostle's Creed," to hinder either his fellowship or his service of the brethren?

THE LORD'S JUDGMENT OF PILGRIMS

It is not incumbent upon the Elders to "guard the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made them overseers"? Ah, no! dear anxious brother; by so misquoting this text you assume an unassigned burden and an. obligation impossible for you to discharge. Your very efforts in this direction will bring upon the flock greater dangers than those from which you seek to protect them. They will begin to depend upon an arm of flesh, instead of upon "the everlasting arms." The text reads: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to *feed* the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." - Acts 20:28; also 1 Peter 5:2.

It is a noteworthy fact, generally overlooked, that our Lord himself left specific instructions for judging itinerant religious teachers, such as Jesus himself, the Apostles, and those whom we now call "Pilgrims." The Church can judge the qualifications of its own local brethren by the testimony of their lives, as instructed by St. Paul. (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-16.) But strangers come among them "with a message," perhaps with credentials from some trusted organization or agency. If the brother professes faith in "the sound doctrine" of the Word, it is proper for the Ecclesia to yield him a hearing: "Forget not to show love unto strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Rom. 13:2.) But the Scripturally constituted, free and self-respecting Ecclesia will not blindly accept any exterior credentials or recommendation, but will reserve final judgment to itself, and that judgment should be based upon these personal instructions of the Head himself.

As usual, our Lord's counsel in this connection was parabolic. It is to be found in Matthew 7:15-20; 12:33-37; and Luke 6:43-45. A synthesis of the three passages, following Rotherham's translation, might well read as follows:

"Beware of false prophets,
Who come unto you in clothing of sheep --
While within they are ravening wolves.
By their fruits ye shall find them out
Unless perchance men gather --
From thorns grapes!
Or from thistles figs!"

"Either make the tree good and its fruit good,
Or make the tree worthless and its fruit worthless;
For from the fruit the tree is known.
For not of thorns do they gather figs,
Neither of a bramble-bush do they gather a bunch of grapes."

"The good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth that which is good; And the wicked man out of the wicked heart bringeth forth that which is wicked; For out of an overflowing of heart speaketh his mouth."

"After all, then, by their fruits shall ye find them out.
For by thy words shalt thou be justified,
And by thy words shalt thou be condemned."

The Lord, be it noted, does not mention "doctrinal" qualifications! The "fruit of the lips" is an outpouring of the fruit of the in-dwelling Spirit, later described by St. Paul. (Gal. 5:22-24.) It comes, Jesus declares, from the "abundance" or "overflowing" of the heart. The Emphatic Diaglott happily translates this word "exuberance." There is nothing, as our Lord implies, that prompts to exuberance or elation and free utterance like the privilege of preaching the glorious message of the Kingdom. It is so inspiring that inevitably there creeps into it the personality and disposition of the speaker: making his message mild, sweet, healthful, satisfying, like figs or grapes; or irritating, stinging, worthless, like the fruit of thistles and brambles. If the speaker preaches the Word and conformity to the image of Christ, and unity of the Body in accordance with the Father's plan and will, the fruit of his lips is good -- it cannot fail to feed and build up the Body; if the speaker preaches himself, or his organization, or dogmatic interpretations which cause divisions, his fruit is evil, no matter how smoothly and attractively it is presented. He is sure to reveal himself to the instructed and discerning hearer. And Jesus declares: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that *gathereth* not with ME [in my way] *scattereth*." - Matt. 12:30.

ST. PAUL'S CONCLUDING MESSAGE TO TIMOTHY AND TO US

The Great Apostle, in almost his last recorded words, summing up his admonitions to his "beloved son, Timothy," concerning the purity of the doctrine, left this solemn exhortation: "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his Kingdom: preach THE WORD; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine [margin, healthful teaching]; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables." - 2 Tim. 4:1-4.

- H. E. Hollister.

Christian Liberty

"The true doctrine is not to think for ourselves, but the right of the other man to think for himself." The impression very widely prevails that the battle for Christian liberty has been fought and won. So far as, regards precaution of the more active kind, this is the case in the larger part of the civilized world. The right of the minority to free speech and free action in the line of conscientious conviction, is, in theory at least, conceded.

But it is a mistake to assume that because harsh laws have been softened, human nature has been radically changed. The grosser forms of persecution have disappeared, but subtler forms, remain. The intolerant spirit has survived the death of many institutions by which intolerance was once manifested. Christian liberty is still, in a considerable degree, conceded only in theory. Men still endeavor to punish those who have the temerity to differ from them.

There is no cause for astonishment at this manifestation of inconsistency. It is one of the curious things in human history to see how generally the persecuted have become in turn the persecutors the moment the power was lodged in their hands. And why? Because the true principle of Christian liberty had not been grasped, and is to this day apprehended by only a few. The right of any body of men to differ from others has always been claimed by them; there is no novelty in that. From the beginning, every Christian sect that has arisen has vehemently contended for its right to differ from others. It has protested against persecution-that is to say, the persecution of itself by others. But in few cases has any sect conceded the right of others to differ from it, or forbore to persecute when it had the power. And in our own day each man is prompt to claim and assert the right to think for himself, but how loath **most are to** concede the equal right of all other men to think for themselves. Every one resents any attempt to coerce him into the avowal of anything that he does, not honestly believe, but how few fail to attempt to coerce others.

The true doctrine of Christian liberty is not our right to think for ourselves, but the right of the other man to think for himself. There is no danger now that our right will not be insisted upon and enforced, particularly if our thinking happens to fall in with that of the majority. It is the other man's liberty that is in danger, particularly if he is in the minority. It is his liberty that demands defense at all hazards; for, if liberty is denied him, how long will it be conceded to us?

To demand liberty for the other man,, even when he differs from us, is not to admit that truth and error are essentially one, or to deny that it is of great consequence what the other man believes and teaches. It maybe our duty to oppose with all our might what he teaches, to denounce it as a deadly error. But this may be done without identifying the man with what he teaches, and without the display of the spirit of intolerance and persecution. We need not try to make the man odious because his opinion is odious to us. To be loyal to the truth, and yet faithfully to recognize the equal rights of all men to free thought and free speech is not always an easy task. The two may, however, be combined. And nothing can be more certain than the preservation of" Christian liberty for any if conditioned on the concession of that liberty for all. - N. Y. *Examiner-Reprints*, page R203.

Cooperation in the Ministry

IN AN article appearing under this caption in our January issue, we referred to a proposal which was being considered whereby the activities of the Dawn Bible Students Association and our Institute might be brought into closer cooperation, and we published two letters having reference thereto, one from the "Dawn" to the Institute, dated May 11, 1946, and the other dated June 27, 1946, from the Institute to the "Dawn."

Our readers will be interested to learn that the conference suggested was held. July 9, 1946, since which date there has been a further exchange of letters, as follows:

August 16, 1946

Pastoral Bible Institute.

Dear Brethren:

Christian love and greetings! We are writing as a committee for the trustees of the Dawn Bible Students Association. On July 27 at a trustees' meeting, an encouraging report was made by two of our number who conferred with you on Tuesday night, July 9, 1946, as the committee representing the Pastoral Bible Institute.

It seemed from the report of our brethren that at that conference of July 9 there was no difference of opinion as it pertained to the matter of fellowship; furthermore, that we had virtually the same understanding of Bible doctrine. We understood, moreover (when the choosing was within your jurisdiction) , that you were interested in using only brethren who were sound in the present truth, as outlined in our original letter to you, providing they were apt to teach, and possessed a goodly measure of the spirit of the truth and the spirit of love, as evidenced in their lives.

It was agreed that a general acceptance of the teachings of the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures* in the light of the Pastor's last forewords to them, together with *Tabernacle Shadows*, and "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach," was concurred in by you, but that lest it appear as a creed no subscribing to it was to be done in writing. It was understood by us that any 'traveling speakers would be selected and chosen individually by weighing the brothers' beliefs, abilities, and character as we might know them.

If we are correct in our understanding of the accord as herein outlined, we are sure further progress and perhaps complete unity of action may be attained in our ministry to the brethren and witness to the world.

If this is the case we will be prepared to make, and to entertain, certain definite recommendations looking toward this unity objective.

In the blessed hope,

Committee for the Trustees of the

DAWN BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.

December 24, 1946
Dawn Bible Students Association.

Dear Brethren:

We were glad to receive your letter of August 16, 1946 and to learn that you had received an encouraging report from the two brethren who represented you at the conference held with our representatives on July 9, 1946. We are pleased to advise that our committee of three, too, also reported back favorably to us.

During the weeks that have passed we have been unable to arrange a meeting of our Board of Directors, but recently several of them were able to get together for an informal exchange of views.

Our brethren remain of the opinion, as indicated in our letter of June 27, 1946, "that we should continue to stand free . . . from all 'confessions of faith,' " and appreciate the attempt you have made in your letter of August 16, 1946, to meet our views in this respect. They are of the opinion that something was accomplished at the July 9, 1946 conference and think that such conference might well be followed by another, at which time the definite recommendations which, in your closing paragraph, you contemplate making, might be discussed in detail.

Will you please let us know, preferably two or three weeks in advance, the time and place which would suit you for this second conference so that we could arrange accordingly.

Your brethren by His Grace,
PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE, INC.

Interesting Letters

Dear Brother Thomson:

. . . Permit me, dear Brother Thomson, to enter into a little constructive criticism in connection with an article written by you in the September issue of the "Herald" under the caption, "Faith for Today."

You comment on Luke 18:8. After citing various translations on the text, the most of which are unfortunately misleading, while the King James Version is wanting, you come to the conclusion that there is reference made not concerning "the faith" once delivered to the saints, but to "this faith" or to "this truth."

No, my dear brother, there is no such thing in the Greek text as "this faith." It is simply "the faith." The article in [connection with] the noun denotes *preciousness* as regards faith. Our Lord having in mind the value of the real faith -- faith tried by fire -- makes it a matter of doubt whether he would find the faith on earth when he shall have come.

The meaning of the text, therefore, is very simple, and it raises a very important question, namely, Is the faith found on earth today? And if the faith is found -- as we believe it is found -- is the Lord present? We know when the Lord returns, he takes to himself "those who remain" at his *parousia*, and then there is no more the faith found on earth. For if the Lord has returned, and has been with us for several decades, then surely he has found the faith on earth. But the Lord expresses improbability in finding the faith on earth when he shall have come. Let us call to mind the case of Noah and the flood: When Noah had entered into the ark, the faith went in with him -- no faith was left behind. There is food for thought.

With love in the blessed Master.
C. C. -- Greece.

A Reply:

Dear Brother Thomson:

"Thank you for sending me a copy of extract of letter from Brother C -----,

It seems to me, first, that Brother C----- has misunderstood the point of your article. The scholars from whom you have quoted would agree with Brother C----- that the word "this" does not appear in the text. As you have already quoted from Ellicott, on page 144: "The Greek noun for 'faith' has the article." It is, therefore, "the" faith; that is to say, as Brother C rightly says: "The faith once delivered unto the saints." But this one true faith is tested, in many ways, and under a great variety of circumstances. One of these circumstances is present in the parable under consideration, which parable is, in itself, part of the main theme, which extends from 17:20 to 18:8, and is the Second Advent of our Lord. In the parable of the widow, therefore, we have this one true faith -- the faith once delivered to the saints -- being tested in the special manner described. To quote from Godet:

"Is there not a very close correspondence between the duty of persevering prayer, and the danger which the Church runs of being overcome by the carnal slumber which has just been described in the preceding portraiture? The Son of Man has been rejected; He has gone from view; the masses are plunged in gross worldliness; men of God are become as rare as in Sodom. What is, then, the position of the Church? That of a widow whose only weapon is incessant prayer. It is only by

means of this intense concentration that faith will be preserved. But such is precisely the disposition which, Jesus' fears, may not be found even, in the Church at his return."

With the foregoing, I am satisfied, both you and Brother C-, and the rest of us will be in full agreement. His only reason' in questioning the word "this" is because, as he rightly says, it is not in the text. Those commentators who have used it, however, have done so not to distinguish it from "the faith but merely to show "the" faith in this special application and circumstance.

'The rest of the argument advanced by Brother CI find unconvincing. He evidently believes the Lord is not yet present, and labors to find support for his view in the text, Luke 18:8, Concisely stated, his position is: Our Lord here declares that on his return he would find no faith left on earth. Since we know that for the past. several decades there has been much evidence of faith, and still is, we can only conclude he is still absent."

'To my mind, this argument goes far beyond, and is indeed, wide of the mark towards which this parable is pointed. Our Lord is not saying that on his return there would be no faith left. The purpose of his parable is to point out that difficult days are coming, a "time of trouble, such as was not since there was a nation," a time when because iniquity will abound, and in consequence, "the love of many will wax cold." To be forewarned is to be forearmed. How shall they be on guard, lest they, too, become overwhelmed, in this evil day, when the tests will be so subtle as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect? By persevering prayer -- that is how. Pray always; pray as in the parable this widow prayed. She, indeed, had an unjust judge to whom she must present her plea; we have not that handicap, we ought to win out, but our Lord's "Nevertheless" cautions us not to relax, but to gird up the loins of our mind, as Peter expresses it.

It seems to me that this is the obvious lesson to be drawn from the parable. If, on the other hand, all faith is to disappear before our Lord returns, as Brother C- seems to think, the parable, it seems, should have indicated this more clearly. It should have counseled us to pray, as this widow prayed, so that we should finish our course with joy, before our Lord arrives.

My own thought is, as you know, that our Lord did return years ago, and, when he came, he our little of "the faith" on the earth. But what little he found he greatly strengthened. Such strong faith as we have seen our brethren manifest since, has resulted, in my view, from the "meat in due season" with which, in accordance with another parable, we were led to expect at his hands, on his return.

Perhaps you will be hearing again from Brother C-. My prayers will continue with him that his faith may remain firmly trusting in our Lord, and whether or not he is able to see with us on such subjects as the foregoing, he will be continued in the love ' and fellowship and care of the One in whom we rest.

Sincerely in His love and fellowship,
P. L. Read.

Beloved in the Lord:
Greetings! Jer. 3:22-24.

Since the ban on writing to foreign countries is lifted, we feel pressed to greet all of you with words of love, and to again get in communication with our friends overseas and in other countries.

First we want to know if you are in good health, and if we have not been wholly forgotten by you. We trust we still have a place in your hearts, and that our Christian relation has not suffered any harm during this terrible and cruel -war. In any case we want to affirm our brotherly love for you. All during this war we have held you in sincere affection and have thought of you all with love. How could it be otherwise with the children of the Lord-those who have learned to love in the School of Christ. The best and deepest knowledge is of little value if we have not love. It is our conviction that higher than knowledge is our own inner relationship to the Lord himself, and the attainment of the Christian virtues. God will not award us the great prize because we possess much knowledge (even though this is important) but only because we have loved him above all else.

These lines will inform you dear ones that **we have** survived this war with its thousands of horrors. A catastrophe such as none before has come upon us and ruined our country. Through the guilt of an unscrupulous and proud leader, and in a certain sense also through the guilt of the people themselves, **wide devastation has** come to our country. **The towns are mostly destroyed** (see Jer. 6:11), factories closed, family life in most cases is broken up or wholly destroyed, millions are displaced from their homes in the country-banished or taken to the far East: The dead, starved, wounded, and missing count into millions. This is the harvest of a bad sowing, the result of an insane pride. So answered the Lord, the King of kings, whom these proud, sick, insane people attempted to dethrone!

It is by the great mercy of God that we survived the cruel experiences. How we prize the loving protection of our Father in heaven! We have learned to trust it his leading' and help as never before. How often have we been in immediate danger of death! But the Lord led us out. We have lost our home, property, goods, and position, and experienced a terrible flight in the midst of winter.' The exhaustion has enfeebled our health much. Oh! what we have lived to see! In all haste we took our leave in our motor car, and in our flight traveled in rows of columns, the streets being crowded. Therefore it was with much difficulty we traveled, and were followed closely by the Russians. In the cold, old men and babes froze to death in their carriages, which were loaded with only the most necessary property and goods. The dead bodies were simply put in ditches by the street, while great herds of cattle stamped on both sides in the deep snow. Many animals died of fatigue or were hanged in barbed wire. The fugitive farmers were compelled to leave much of their loads behind because the wheels of the wagons would break and they would have to empty out their food, clothing, etc., on the street. The conqueror of course took possession of all this. We ourselves had many boxes of household goods, clothing, books, furniture, expensive carpets, large wall pictures, some books and poems of our own writing, and other important things sent to the central part of our country, only to have a few things saved out of our big villa, but the Russians and Poles came there too and destroyed or took it away. Full of the greatest strategy, hunger and cold and dangers from the enemy was our flight from one place to another, facing all the indescribable misery of refugees. After all this, we pulled in on a little hand sledge in the deepest snow and severe cold our few remaining possessions, as we had to leave our motor car on account of the deep snow, for the Russians were following. We lost the last few things we had during a bombing attack on Berlin, this included my Bible, which had been my guide for about

forty years of my life, and also a number of my own poems and compositions. Later I experienced an attack by robbers.

My brother's flight was no more successful than my own., as he was under the domination of the Russians and Poles, when he was forced to do the lowest work. In the meantime the Poles seized our villa in Angerburg. After a half year of slave labor he came to the British occupation zone, half starved. His face and hands and feet were so swollen as a result of the hunger, we could hardly recognize him. We all suffered severe privations. After a separation of nearly two years my brother's family came here from Bavaria. My brother and two sisters and a niece and myself are here together. My sisters are separated from their husbands, who are still in East Prussia, and will probably remain there.

All these experiences, even though we have a high, celestial hope, press hard upon us. We are still human -- flesh and blood -- with natural feelings. Now we look back on our country home and realize what it means. In experiences like these the Lord is the only one who can really help and console. He does it in such a fatherlike manner. To realize His nearness is blessed beyond measure. In all our needs, temporal and spiritual, he has been manifest with so much love. Even if we have lost everything and even though bodily weak from lack of nourishment, he is always our sun and shield, and has been our help in the greatest oppression. He has given us a very small apartment and also good work. We trust that Psalm 33:19 will also be fulfilled on our behalf. The Lord is faithful!

Our circle of brethren back home was destroyed suddenly. We are scattered all over the country. There are several Christian circles here with whom we are associating, but they are different from us in some special points. In the people themselves we do not find much true penitence. It seems the midnight hour is coming very quickly, and the great day of the Lord's manifestation is near. Now it is for us to watch and pray and be ready, that we may be found worthy. May we all remember the admonition of 2 Peter 3:11.

We are trusting that our greetings from, a foreign country may reach you. It will make us very happy to hear from you. Let us know about your experiences and your situation now. Kindly give our Christian greetings to all the brethren in your country and let their know that we are still alive. Some dear ones from the United States and Switzerland have written us and made us very happy. We commend you all to the help and care of our faithful Shepherd, and remain with brotherly love,

Your fellow-sufferers in affliction, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, Emil and Otto Sadlack, Germany.

Recently Deceased

Mrs. Elta Collier, Ada, Okla. - (August).