

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

*VOL. XXX July, 1947 No. 7*

## **Modern Babel** **"THUS PASSES THE GLORY"**

IN THESE eventful days in which the political aspect of the world is being transformed into a pattern which will divide present day civilization into two opposing camps, a remarkable development is taking shape, one which will radically alter the world's allocation of political and economic power during the months or years that lie ahead. From present indications it would appear that one more of the world's great empires is undergoing a process of disintegration which, if it continues at the present rate, must end in forcing the British Commonwealth to take its place in the ranks of those empires of the past of which it was written, "As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." (Dan. 7:12.) From reports in the daily press we learn that the great Island Kingdom of Britain, the head and heart of the British Empire, is deliberately releasing from their allegiance to the crown, many of those colonies and dependencies whose addition to the list of nations ruled by Great Britain had enabled the latter to claim the proud title of the "Empire upon whose dominions the sun never sets."

The spokesmen for the present British government have recently been forced to confess that the country is no longer able to sustain the role it has so long played, that of being in effect the policeman of Europe. The great drain upon its resources of wealth, and man-power which has been occasioned by the country's engagement in two world wars within the space of less than a half century, has made it impossible for the Empire to fulfil its commitments to be the strong supporter of the smaller democracies of Europe, while the secession of its former protectorates has opened the eyes of the world to the undeniable fact that the once great Empire is becoming dissolved and is relinquishing its position as the great creditor nation of the world. In this connection the Bible student cannot but be reminded of the words of the inspired writer of Hebrews, "They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as cloth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed." - Heb. 1:11, 12.

Great Britain, the country which so many million Americans still love and regard as their motherland, the home of their ancestors, and from which we derive our language, culture, and historical traditions --this nation which for a hundred years has been looked upon by all as being the very stronghold of financial strength and stability, has at last been forced by stress of hard

circumstance to admit its almost bankrupt state and its need of adopting a policy of national retrenchment if it is to survive. This need has been forced upon it through a successive number of misfortunes unparalleled in its previous history. First and perhaps most costly of these has been the losses 'sustained by' the Empire of most of the flower of its young manhood in the two " great conflicts through which it has passed. Many thousands of these perished in the first World War, and ere the succeeding generation had fully matured, they too were destroyed in the dreadful carnage of the second conflict. But in addition to the loss of two generations of its best blood, the country has found itself reduced to its present dire straits as a result of the crippling blows dealt to its merchant shipping largely through submarine action during the early years of the last war. As Britain is a rather small, densely populated country, it has never for the past century been able to produce from its own soil the food necessary- to supply the needs of its people, and in consequence has had to depend in large measure upon its imports to sustain its population. This has always necessitated the maintenance of a large fleet of merchant ships to bring to its shores their cargoes of food and raw materials, and to carry back to the markets of the world its manufactured products. This once great fleet has suffered the loss of almost half of its vessels, and the country in its present impoverished condition has found it impossible to replace them. Then the imperative need of money and credits with which to defray the enormous war expenses has compelled the government to liquidate nearly all the nation's foreign investments, thus depriving it of many of its most profitable sources of income. Thus even under the most favorable of circumstances, the country faced the prospect of long years of unremitting toil and hardship for its people, and the enduring of many privations ere it could hope to regain its former solvency. But those favorable circumstances have been absent. To the contrary it would appear as though the forces of nature itself were banded together in a determined effort to complete the ruin of the once powerful Empire. The past winter has been the most terrible and severe in all British history. Snow-storm followed snow-storm accompanied by sub-freezing temperatures, so that for weeks on end, all transportation was tied up, all roads blocked and electrical power completely shut off from many places. After years of existing on the scantiest kind of war rations, the poorly clad, hungry people were forced to endure much suffering, and as the country's industry was well-nigh paralyzed, it has been found almost impossible for the workers to make the effort necessary if British economy was to be rescued and the country placed once more on its feet.

### **THE AWAKENING OF THE EAST**

Probably one of the most important contributing factors in the loss of power and prestige which is being experienced by the Empire is directly traceable to the world-wide spirit of unrest and revolt which is being manifested among all "backward races" the world over, and which is especially noticeable in the British possessions and protectorates, those situate both in the near and far East. These so called "inferior peoples," whether as a result of the agitation carried on by propagandists or due to nationalistic aspirations long cherished, have been almost as a unit demanding release from every form of white exploitation. Shrewdly taking advantage of the weakened condition of their former rulers, a state induced by the exhausting efforts they have had to put forth in gaining victory in the death struggle through which they had passed, these subject races are now vociferously demanding the fulfilment of the promises made to them in return for their support or neutrality during the great war in such instruments as the "Atlantic Charter."

They are encouraged in their demands, by their knowledge of the fact that both in Britain and the United States, there has arisen during the past forty or fifty years, a school of thought, the proponents of which openly avow their sympathies with the nationalistic aspirations of oppressed peoples the world over. The election in Britain at the close of the war of a Semi-socialist labor regime with strong anti-imperialist view have raised high the hopes of these native peoples for entire independence from foreign domination. The great sub-continent of India, once called by

the Victorians, "The brightest jewel in the British crown," has already been proffered its freedom, and its complete separation from the ruling country -- and the putting into effect of this proposal merely awaits the formation of a responsible native government in order for India to be granted its complete autonomy. Burma too has been promised its independence; and quite recently the few remaining British troops prepared to withdraw from the soil of the ancient land of Egypt.

Thus there are being enacted on a world-wide scale the scenes which our late Pastor fifty years ago predicted would mark the earlier period of the great antitypical jubilee, the year of liberation. We well recall his words:- "It [the antitypical jubilee] will open with sweeping reforms, with the recognition of rights, liberties and possessions long lost sight of ... investigation on the part of the people of their original, God-given inheritance, and their present lacks, rights; etc., many in ignorance and selfishness claiming what others have; and the attempt to hold on to as much as possible on the part of those who have possession-causing disputes, controversies, strikes and lock-outs, with more or less justice and injustice on both sides." - S. S., Vol 2, pages B179-B182.

But alas for the hopes and aspirations entertained by so many -of earth's under-privileged, the "freedom" which they crave, and upon the attainment of which they build such high expectations, will, we may be sure, prove to be nothing but a delusion. This is not the moment when the weak can expect to be permitted to exercise independence of choice in the determining of the kind of government they wish to live under. The experience of the small' Baltic and Balkan States shows conclusively how remote are the chances of any small or weak country being allowed to retain its full autonomy for any length of time, when its location places it within the orbit of any great and aggressive power. This is an age of confederacy, and the whole world is being split into two antagonistic factions representing mutually hating ideologies, and woe to the small country that attempts to remain independent of either side. The nations are associating themselves together in preparation for the great battle, and each country, whether large or small, is almost inevitably bound to be drawn into the coming struggle. The words of the ancient Prophet come naturally to the mind of the Bible student and surely apply to present world conditions: "Associate yourselves, oh ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces. And give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces." (Isa. 8:9.) It seems almost unbelievable in view of what all the world knows concerning the awful powers of destruction possessed by modern weapons, that men should ever dare to think of once more risking the destruction of their entire "civilization," but such appears to be the case. "The heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing," and as a result, the day approaches when the Lord shall "speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." (Psa. 2:5.) All signs point to the fact that the "Day of the Lord's vengeance" is at hand. On every side we see evidences of "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things coming on the earth." (Luke 21:26.) But let the Lord's-people heed the Prophet's words and fear not. - Isa. 8:13.

### **STORMS IN THE DIVINE ARRANGEMENTS**

Our faith in that discovery that Nebuchadnezzar made so many centuries ago, namely, that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will (Dan. 4:17) must surely be strengthened when we note the effect that nature's forces have had upon historical events that have changed the face of the world. Nearly all historians date the rise of Britain to power as a great maritime Empire, to its defeat of the "invincible Armada" in the year 1588. Up to that time Spain had been the world's great colonizing nation and had exercised sway over the seven seas. For a hundred years prior to that date, her ships had brought to the home ports their rich cargoes of treasure which had been ravished by the Spanish from the ancient, Aztec cities of the newly discovered America. The loot had filled the coffers of the Spanish kings, while a

substantial share of it had been appropriated by the Papal Church which at that time regarded Spain as its favorite son.

King Philip the Second had been for some years endeavoring with pious zeal to subdue with fire and sword, the Lutheran "heretics of the Netherlands. This "laudable" enterprise had been greatly interfered with by the companion "heretics" of England, who had opened their doors to receive those Dutch refugees who had succeeded in escaping from their own land to seek protection in the realm of England's Protestant Queen Elizabeth. So by this time (1588) it had become obvious that English aid to the Netherlands must be cut off or Spanish rule there would end. Thus the launching of the great Spanish Armada was to a very large extent a religious enterprise, designed to crush the English heretics who were such a thorn in "the side of the Papacy.

On the 29th of May a great force of about 33,000 marines and sailors were embarked on a fleet of 132 large ships, and carried with them no less than 150 monks together with the Vicar of the Inquisition. Almost from the outset the expedition ran into trouble when it encountered a great gale which scattered most of the ships and forced them to return to Cozonna for repairs. So it was not until the week of July 21-29 that the Spanish Admiral engaged the small English fleet off Plymouth. The result of the battle that ensued is too familiar to all to need to be dwelt upon in these pages. Suffice it to say that the Spanish fleet was completely out-manuevered and beaten by the English seamen, and forced to flee northward towards the Scotch coast. Had they been able to get away from the English ships that hung on to their flanks they might have been able to re-assemble and return to the attack. This hope however vanished when a great hurricane such as had not been experienced in years struck the large unwieldy Spanish vessels, and strewed their shattered wrecks all along the English and Scottish coasts, and as far north as Norway.

Eventually, of that great fleet that had so proudly sailed on its mission of destruction from Lisbon, a mere fifty battered remnants crept back into the shelter of the Spanish ports. During the years that followed the great disaster, the fortunes of Spain declined until she became one of the weakest of European powers. At the same time those of Britain advanced, and the middle of the nineteenth century found her the greatest maritime power in the world, with colonies and dependencies ranging over all the face of the earth. Thus the first step in her rise to greatness as a world empire came as a direct result of one great storm, while another one, or rather a series of storms, occurring during the past winter, apparently has given notice to the world that her sun has begun to set.

But the point which may be of special interest to us as students of the Divine Plan in the foregoing recital of a scrap of history, concerns the length of elapsed time between the defeat of the great Armada and the present day.. Next year will be 1948, exactly 360 years since the beginning of Britain's rise to world leadership (1588-1948) in other words one prophetic year made up of 360 calendar years. We have no idea whether this coincidence has any chronological significance, but merely take note of it for future reference, while the scroll of events gradually unrolls before us and we near the time when all the great kingdoms (mountains) of earth will be carried into the midst of the sea of anarchy (Psa. 46), to be replaced by that Kingdom which shall stand forever. Meanwhile, we who are receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, are privileged, to note the symmetrical pattern into which, under divine guidance, the events of human history are being woven, giving evidence to all who are the Lord's, of the planned work of the divine Weaver.

"See the mystic Weaver sitting  
High in heaven -- his loom below.

Up and down the treadles go.  
Takes for web the world's dark ages,  
Takes for woof the kings and sages.  
Takes the nobles and their pages,  
'Takes all stations and all stages.  
Throne's are bobbins in His shuttle.  
Armies make, them scud and scuttle  
Web into the woof must flow,  
Up and down the nations go!  
At the Weaver's *will* they go!

"Calmly **see** the mystic Weaver  
Throw his shuttle to and fro;  
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,  
Well the Weaver seems to know  
What each motion and commotion,  
What each fusion and confusion,  
In the grand result will show!"

### **OUR HOLY CALLING**

And who are the people to whom has been given the high honor of being permitted to gaze into the workshop of the divine Weaver? Who are we, who are allowed to see in advance, the completed pattern of the glorious Plan which is being worked out on the stage of human history? What a privilege has been bestowed upon us. The Apostle tells in eloquent words how highly valued in the heavenlies is this knowledge which has been so freely given to us in these latter days. He declares that angels have desired to look into these things and that the Prophets of old searched diligently for the understanding of what is now made known to the Church. Peter, whose first epistle seems designed to impress upon our minds the seriousness, the importance, nay, the dignity of our High Calling, seems to be saying, "This is no light matter in which you are engaged. This is no ordinary undertaking, to be embarked upon lightly. On the contrary, the most costly price in the whole universe has been placed upon the scales of Divine justice on your behalf, that you may be eligible to even enter this race. Yes, nothing less than the precious blood of Jesus himself has been applied, that you might qualify for this high undertaking." The Apostle uses that word precious" twice in this chapter, once in verse 7, where he speaks of "the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold," and again in verse 15', where he reverently applies the term to that blood which bought us and which, praise God, still covers us and enables us to have access to the Throne of Grace, assured that we are accepted in the Beloved One. Another Apostle warns us solemnly against treating the matter casually, and counting the blood with which we are sanctified a common or unholy thing (Heb. 10:29), and Peter admonishes us in this same epistle to be holy even as our Master is holy. - 1 Pet. 1:16.

In our every day contacts with a world that regards those who have been shown the heavenly vision as being of small practical importance, and the work upon which they are engaged as being merely one of the forms of Protestant worship of which Christendom has so many varieties, we ourselves are sometimes prone to lose sight temporarily of the dignity with which the Scriptural writers have invested those who by the grace of God are privileged to be sealed in their foreheads with the knowledge of the Truth. The Psalmist declares of the faithful followers of Christ, "I have said, ye are gods, all of you children of the Most High" (Psa. 82:6), and the inspired Prophet speaking of our great Forerunner, "He shall divide the spoil with the strong." (Isa. 53:12.)

Wherefore, holy brethren, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, casting all our care upon him who once said, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

*- J. R. Hughes.*

## Annual Report of the Institute

SOME OF the brethren may feel that the plowman has done his work and the harvest is ended, that there is nothing more to be done by us but wait. It does not seem so to us. The reports coming in our correspondence, some of which we have been able to share with you in the "Herald," and the word from our Brother J. T. Read who has been serving the brethren in Great Britain, indicate that the troubles instead of ending the work have speeded it up. The report from all lands where we have contacts indicates rapidly ripening grain.

While the brethren serving with the Institute as directors, editors, and pilgrims have endeavored to be faithful to their responsibilities, and we trust with some success in the sight of the Lord, it has not been with the thought that they could thereby lessen the responsibility of the brethren in general. The bearing of one another's burdens cannot be in that sense. In this respect the Scriptural injunction is, "Every man shall bear his own burden." We praise our heavenly Father for giving us the faithful brethren who have upheld our hands during past years, and we take this opportunity to thank them for the many assurances of their support, moral and financial, and above all for their prayers.

Each year we find it necessary to include a word of information as to the basis on which our organization was founded in 1918. "It represents merely a voluntary association of Christian believers for mutual comfort and edification. There is no written or understood creed or formula of belief, nor articles of faith other than that of an acknowledgment of relationship with God and his dear Son by faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice and consecration to do the divine will. It is recalled that this was the good foundation upon which Christian believers were united and the Church was formed in the beginning of the Age. Consequently from the commencement of this ministry [twenty-nine years ago], the importance of recognizing this broad basis of Christian fellowship has been given much emphasis-that the brethren everywhere should seek to put away the spirit of sectarianism and intolerance and to recognize the one foundation upon which all should be united."

Also at all times it has been the practice of our association to place as first in importance the assisting of one another to attain the likeness of our Lord, by knowing and meditating upon the Word, and by living it and preaching it by word of mouth and the printed page as the opportunity may be *ours*. The year past has seen good use made of special "Heralds" for those struggling for freedom from *a* recent bondage; leaflets for those still in the world *or in* creedal bondages *Studies in the Scriptures* and the Revelation and Daniel volumes for those who have learned something of truth and its value; our pocket edition of the *Divine' Plan of the Ages* taking a prominent place *in* this. service, together with the two booklets, *What Say the Scriptures about Hell?* and *Our Lord's Return*, the last three being reprints of volumes of the same name from the early days.

As there is no thought among our brethren that the Institute is a divine channel, except as is every consecrated individual, the many constructive suggestions that have come to us during the year have received careful consideration. We class ourselves as "Protestants" against any claim to lordship over, the Lord's heritage -- he alone is head, he alone is judge, his Word *our* only guide.

## HERALD AND PILGRIM MINISTRY

The Editors, who decide on the material to be used in the "Herald," and we, the Directors, who select the brethren serving as pilgrims, realize their dependence upon the readers and the hearers to inform us as to the service that brings the largest blessing. The great diversity of needs must mean that each of the brethren will read some articles and hear some discourses that will not be the most helpful to them. It is our desire however that there shall be something of refreshment or enlightenment to all, *in* the ministry of these branches. Many letters tell us of articles and of talks that seemed just for themselves-an evidence of the planning of the Lord, who alone knows the needs of his' people. It is when the "Herald" goes into the home of the isolated, *or* a Pilgrim spends a *day* or two there, that the very richest of blessings seem to be granted. Neither numbers nor the lack of facilities for entertainment should therefore deter any one from asking for these services. A special fund is provided to take care of such matters for those who in the Lord's providence are not able to bear the expense, the "Herald" going free and the pilgrim brother being entertained at *a* reasonably priced rooming house at the Institute's expense when necessary.

Your cooperation in sending the office word of those to whom three months' free subscriptions should go, securing yearly subscriptions, free or paid, and encouraging timid ones to ask for the pilgrim service, is much appreciated, as larger cooperation in the future. will be proportionately.

Miles traveled	132,129
Meetings held	970
Attendance	19,715

Even in *our* own land the Pilgrims are not able to get to every, individual who has requested service. This lack of fellowship has, we trust, been partly compensated for by our correspondence department: but here *also* we have fallen far below the standard of our desire, time and strength failing long before all that we would like to do has been accomplished. Therefore we must ask the brethren often to accept the columns of the "Herald" as our personal message to them. Inspiration, encouragement, and enlightenment have come to us also through the *mails*. It is a matter of regret that frequently we, have had to take advantage of the little phrase some have thoughtfully added, "No reply necessary. There has been much in the letters received to bring *us* joy. We are especially gratified by the evidence that our years of standing for liberty in Christ have borne fruit, and even in the lives of some who, coming from recent disheartening bondage, have for a time seemed frightened at the very thought of liberty.

Number of letters received	4,555
Number of letters dispatched	6,861

Let us not slacken our hands either *in* the serving of the brethren or the public, using faithfully our Bibles and our "Bible Helps," "doing good to all men as we have, opportunity" in big things and in little, "preaching the Word, instant in season and out of season," remembering however to "please our neighbor 'for his good' unto edification." Perhaps the, Lord, if we are faithful in that which is least, will grant that this coming year will see the placing of more tracts, more First Volumes, more "Heralds," and the giving of a larger personal witness. Above all there should be more prayers, and more fervent prayers, for all the Lord's servants regardless of where they are serving *in* his name, and more rejoicing in the 'blessing., the Lord places *on* the labors of others.

"Narrow is the gate, and strait the way that leads unto life," and it is no occasion for surprise if each year the Lord's people individually and collectively find. the difficulties more apparent. Regarding this *we* would not murmur, but would urge a careful girding of, the *loins* of our minds



that the *coming* year may be entered upon safely. To a degree the brethren can say, "We have stood," but the year *past* that has taught *us* to know, to love, and to trust the Lord a little more, has also revealed a little more of the wiliness of our Adversary, therefore warning *us* to still more carefully "take heed lest we fall." It was at, the very entrance *to* the promised land that Achan fell under temptation. For many of the brethren, especially those *in* foreign lands during the years of the recent war, the attacks of Satan have been as the roaring of a lion. *Now* in the quieter days let *us* not forget his other roles-the subtle "serpent" and the enticing "angel of light." We are living in a world gone mad. "Be ye therefore of sound mind, and be sober unto prayer." We are one year nearer Home, and one year nearer the final tests. Eternity will hold out to no one greater hopes than a faithful passing of our Jericho *will* attain for us.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Below are submitted financial statements, prepared in customary form, together with a statement by the Auditing Committee.

Pilgrim Expense increased from \$3,941.01 in the previous year to \$4,804.81 for the year under review, an increase of \$863.80. Twenty brethren participated in this ministry as compared with fifteen in the previous period.

Of the total Comfort Committee Expense \$210.00 was sent to brethren in foreign lands.

Cost of "Herald" printing and mailing increased from \$1,478.66 to \$1,874.72 or about 25%, which is not in excess of rising prices generally.

Income from "Herald" subscriptions increased, indicating a corresponding increase of interest in the journal, which should prove encouraging to our Editorial Committee.

The increase in property maintenance is largely accounted for by the costs incident to converting from coal to gas heating equipment.

Other items, we believe, are self-explanatory.

**Balance Sheet**  
**April 30, 1947**

**Assets**

Cash -- On hand and in bank	\$12,571.30	
Accounts Receivable	160.28	
Inventory of Books, etc.		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan	\$429.57	
Revelation Exposition-Vol. 1	431.00	
Daniel Exposition	470.00	
Hell Booklet, Our Lord's Return		
Booklet, Tabernacle Shadows, etc	<u>288.27</u>	
Total Inventory		1,618.84
Miscellaneous Securities (Net)		1.00
Annuities Receivable		9,885.30
Property at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N.Y.		<u>12,000.00</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>\$36,236.72</b>
Less: Liabilities		<u>none .</u>
<b>Net Worth (as per statement below)</b>		<b>\$36,236.72</b>

**Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth**  
**May 1, 1946 to April 30, 1947**

**Income**

Contributions-General Purpose	\$ 8,219.15
Legacies	none
"Herald" Subscriptions	1,313.18
Gain on sale of Books, etc	71.23
Rental Income:	<u>534.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$10,137.56</b>

**Expenses**

Pilgrim Expense	\$4,804.81
Printing and Mailing "Herald"	1,874.72
Allowances to Office Staff	1,421.00
Allowance to widow of deceased Pilgrim	500.00
Allowance to "Herald" Contributor	360.00
Allowances to Pilgrims	none
Free Literature	25.36
Maintenance of property, including taxes, coal, gas, electricity, insurance and repairs	<u>1,287.79</u>
Comfort Committee Expense	3315.00
Office Expense	<u>436.89</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>11,045.57</u></b>
<b>Net Expense for fiscal year</b>	<b>\$ 908.01</b>
<b>Net Worth, May 1, 1946</b>	<b><u>37,144.73</u></b>
<b>Net Worth, April 30, 1947</b>	<b><u>36,236.72</u></b>
(as per Balance Sheet above)	

**Sale of Books and Inventory**

	Sales	Inventory
Pocket Edition, Divine Plan	189	1,161
Revelation Exposition, Volume I	51	862
Daniel Exposition	52	940
Hell Pamphlet	86	1,484
Our Lord's Return Pamphlet	83	1,488

## **Statement of Auditors**

The books of account of the Pastoral Bible Institute were examined by us, covering the fiscal period from May 1, 1946 to April 30, 1947, and we wish to state that in our opinion they are correctly stated and that the foregoing financial statements are in agreement with the said -books of account.

N. F. Nicholson  
Louis Newman  
Frederick Lange

## **Report of Annual Meeting**

As provided by the charter of the Pastoral Bible Institute, those members who were able to do so assembled in the afternoon of June 7 for the election of directors. Following a season of devotion and the election of officers for the meeting, the reports of the year's activity were heard and approved.

Tellers were next appointed and the ballots having been collected, the time during which the count was being made was divided between praise, testimony, and fellowship. Later it was announced 'by the chairman of the tellers that Brothers B. F. Hollister, H. E. Hollister, J. C. Jordan, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and P. E. Thomson had been elected to serve as directors for the coming year. The ballots were entrusted to the secretary for safekeeping for six months and then to be destroyed. A devotional service, as usual, closed the meeting.

At the meeting of the new board held shortly after, officers were elected as follows: Brothers J. C. Jordan, Chairman; J. T. Read, Vice-chairman; P. L. Read, Treasurer; and P. E. Thomson, Secretary. The Editorial Committee of last year was reappointed: Brothers H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, P. L. Read, W. J. Siekman, and P. E. Thomson, with Brother R. W.. Godfrey serving temporarily during the absence abroad of Brother J. T. Read.

Pilgrims appointed for full time are: Brothers H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, and P. E. Thomson; part time:, Brother C. C'zohara, F. A. Essler, H. H. Fink, M. Glass, E. W. Hinz, B. F. Hollister, A. Jarmola, J. C. Jordan, W. Lankheim, C. Loucky, O. R. Moyle, G. Oberg, F. Petran, P. L. Read, W. C. Roberts, W. J. Siekman, T. G. Smith, W. Urban, A. Van Sant, A. L. Vining, J. B. Webster, and J. Wyndelts.

## **Tolerance of Christian Liberty**

*Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." - 2 Peter 1:2-12.*

IN discussing this or any other subject dealing with divine truth, we should endeavor to be guided by the spirit of our Master, the spirit of kindness, the spirit of helpfulness, and so keep our minds and hearts void of antagonism, faultfinding, or judging in the sense of condemnation. As true Christians we must be motivated by the spirit of truth and righteousness; for it is only those who are led by God's holy spirit who can truly claim relationship with the Father as children, and so merit his approval as ministers to the flock.

The indications all about us make it evident that the saints of the Lord are being tested, more or less severely, along the lines, of tolerance, of Christian liberty, and of brotherly love; and it is also evident that this testing is permitted of the Lord that the approved may be manifested, regardless of how they view this or that matter, provided their views are not such as preclude sonship.

### **DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES**

Doctrinal differences on subjects more or less hidden in types, shadows, and figurative language, and consequently more or less subject to imperfect human reasoning powers, are the basis offered by some for withholding full fellowship from others who, on the plainly stated fundamentals and essentials of Holy Writ, are in full agreement. In some instances also, brethren against whom there is no fault to find either in doctrine or spirituality, are denied the privilege of service to the friends because of their cooperation with other brethren who do not see eye to eye respecting some teachings considered by the majority as "present truth."

In speaking of fundamentals and essentials, we here refer to those things in a Christian's belief and practice which are stated in the Bible in such a way as to leave no room for reasonable doubt in the mind of any earnest seeker after truth as to their meaning.

The question then arises, To what extent are we justified in hedging ourselves about with arbitrary rules which in their operation are intended to act as barriers to others of the Lord's people in the matter of service and whole-hearted fellowship?

In proposing a question of this kind we realize that it cannot be answered without due thought, because there are too many points that enter into the discussion; but if, as present conditions seem to indicate, most of us may sooner or later be required to decide this matter for ourselves, we should be able to take our stand in full assurance of faith. To this end let us consider some of the things that have a bearing upon the issue, and so prepare ourselves for a better understanding and guidance by the Lord's holy spirit.

### **FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS**

There are certain basic facts to which all true disciples of the Lord must agree, else they are not his disciples, and cannot be considered as brethren:

All must believe in God, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, and must acknowledge his right and authority over their lives and possessions.

All must believe in the Bible as being the true Word of God, and must accept its teachings as being the only authoritative standard of belief and practice -- the last resort in every argument.

All must accept Jesus, the Savior of mankind, as being their personal Redeemer, from sin and its penalty, death; they must see in him the only one able to give unto God a ransom for Adam and his race; and they must recognize that in the resurrection of Christ dwells their only hope for life in a like resurrection from the dead.

All must have sufficient faith in God, in Christ, and in the Word of God, to cause them to make a full and unreserved consecration of themselves to do God's will and to follow in the footsteps of Christ Jesus their Lord.

All must realize their own fallen, sinful state, and must cooperate in the transformation of their own characters by seeking continually, through the infilling of God's holy spirit, to walk in accordance with the instructions given in his Word.

All must be loyal in their obedience to God's commands, and must continue faithful unto death.

Any true and enlightened child of God must assent whole-heartedly to these fundamental things of Christian belief and practice, and to the ramification of these as stated in plain and unmistakable language in the Scriptures.

In these things we may all see eye to eye; but when it comes to the interpretation of types and shadows, parables and dark sayings, figurative language and prophetic utterances, the Lord has left us room for the exercise of our sanctified reasoning powers, and so for differences of opinion. Manifestly, had God so desired, he could have made every statement of his Word so plain that it would not have been possible for differences of opinion to arise. He could have done this either by the way he worded the Scriptures, or by the illuminating power of his holy spirit. However, he did not choose to do this. On the contrary, he has arranged the matter in such a way as to call upon our reasoning powers and force us to search (by comparing Scripture with Scripture) in order to gain an understanding of the details of his great Plan of Salvation.

God does not forcibly inject a knowledge of the structural and artistic beauties of his Plan of Salvation into our minds; we have to study in order to understand these things, just as we have to struggle in our fight against the world, the flesh, and the Adversary in order to be transformed into the character-likeness of our Lord. The course of a true Christian is not made plain and easy, but is often puzzling and hard to follow. Jesus said, "How narrow is the gate of life! how difficult that way leading thither! and how few are they who find it." - *Diaglott*.

### **NO GAIN WITHOUT A STRUGGLE**

The Christian does not attain to the heavenly inheritance without a struggle. The butterfly that flits from flower to flower with such ease and grace, attained its development and beauty only because the larva stage of its existence had to struggle to break through the -cocoon. that enveloped it; and should any one, in mistaken kindness, assist the larva to gain its freedom by breaking the cocoon, he would forever deprive it of the very thing that eventually enables it to fly. In like manner also God permits us to struggle to overcome the difficulties he sees fit to leave surrounding us, for he knows that by the earnest endeavor to overcome these we will be made

strong in character and in the will to do his will. Having predetermined that we should be free moral agents, God cannot force the issue in respect to our characters, and so is under the necessity of bringing about our development by requiring of us a willing and persistent effort to break through the cocoons of our natural tendencies and environment that eventually we may wing our flight to realms above.

Sectarianism in the struggle of the Church toward perfection of character is brought to our attention in the picture given us by the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthian brethren where he speaks of wood, hay, and stubble in the building or superstructure we erect upon the foundation of our faith in Christ's sacrifice on our behalf.

In the first chapter, Paul chides them for their carnality and sectarianism; for some were claiming to be of Paul, some of Apollos, some of Cephas, and some of Christ; but Paul did not recognize any Paulite Christians. He denied having given any basis for such a thought. He declared that he preached nothing to them but Christ and him crucified. Then in the third chapter he points out that their sectarian spirit shows them to be mere babes, to whom he could feed only the milk of the Word. Then from the ninth verse on he says, "That as a master builder, he having laid the foundation of their faith in Christ and him crucified," they were to build the superstructures; but he says, "Let every man take heed how he builds thereon." Paul, all through these three chapters is combating their sectarian spirit, and in this third chapter warns them that such material entering into the construction of their building will cause its downfall.

"Individual *Christian* faith is a building, and as such must have both foundation and superstructure." The only foundation upon which to build, says Paul, is "Jesus Christ and him crucified." This is the great rock foundation, the basis upon which faith may be firmly established; and any man who builds thereon (whether or not he understands and can properly describe *all* the elements that go to make up that Rock) is, a true Christian and will be saved, even though his superstructure may be such as to merit destruction. There may be room for argument as to what is meant by "gold, silver, precious stones-wood, hay, stubble"; but whether these be hopes, doctrines, or character qualifications which manifest themselves in right or wrong attitudes and treatment of brethren, the lesson is the same, and constitutes a warning to all of us even though we be building upon the Rock.

Unquestionably, doctrines, as "precious stones," have an important place in the erection of the superstructure which we build. We cannot believe the doctrines which Satan has injected into Christian beliefs all down through the Gospel Age and expect our faith structure to stand the shaking it will receive during this time of trouble; but precious stones are not the only element that should go into our superstructure. The gold of a Godlike character -- love -- and the silver of heavenly aspirations -- hope -- must adorn that structure also. Dependence placed upon leaders or on hopes derived from any source except God and his Word is bound to result disastrously to our faith structure. Certainly no one could object to being a follower of Paul upon any ground except that he was *not the source* of truth and wisdom, and our dependence and authority must be founded upon that source rather than upon the instrument used to acquaint us with divine truth. Carnality and sectarianism are not elements with which to build an enduring structure, and if we let even the spirit of these take possession of us we will be the losers.

Factions, in dealing with differences of belief in doctrine or practice, most always arise through ignoring the Lord's spirit and methods; and such factions always tend to hinder the character development of those who take an active part therein. Satan is always on hand to take advantage of differences between brethren and divert doctrinal controversies, which of themselves would

not affect character one way or another, into contentions and divisions that do affect the character.

### PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

In the Scripture reading with which we prefaced these remarks, Peter intimates that the greater our knowledge concerning God, the more grace and peace we will have. What does he mean? Is he saying here that the more we know about the philosophy of the atonement and the details of the Plan of Salvation the more grace and peace we will have? There is class, of believers to whom such knowledge appeals and *who* may have their appreciation of God's wisdom increased thereby; but to other minds, the fact of the atonement and the evidence of God's love and mercy, as revealed in the gracious provision h has made for his children, are sufficient to acquaint them with God's character and to call forth their own love and appreciation in response. Such Christians may be compared to the man who, though he understands only in a general way the working and operation of an automobile, derives as-much pleasure and benefit from its use as does the mechanic who is familiar with every detail of its construction. We can not all have the type of mind that will enable us to be "master workmen in the mechanical details, so to speak, of God's great Plan. Some have minds more adapted to thinking upon the spiritual qualities of character development, and no doubt are equally honored of the Lord in their ministry.

Both Rotherham and Weymouth render this passage of Scripture in such a way as to make it evident that what Peter is speaking of is a personal knowledge or experience with God. Rotherham's translation says, "*Favor unto you and peace* be multiplied, in the *personal* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." This is a knowledge which we gain through attaining (to a measure of Godlikeness in our own characters; for in the next verse, the Apostle continues the thought by saying, "Seeing that his divine power has given us all things that are needful for life and godliness, through *our knowledge o f him* who has appealed to us by his own glorious perfections." (Weymouth.) The Apostle here gives the same thought which we find emphasized by our Lord in John 17:3: "This is life eternal, that they might *know thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou halt sent." This is thee knowledge, which, above all knowledge, is essential to us in our development as prospective heirs of glory, honor, and immortality. A true knowledge of God comes only through experiencing a measure of his glorious perfection of character in ourselves and the more we reflect that character by being transformed into the image of Christ, the better we come to know God.

### COMPARATIVE VALUES

In the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians Paul points to a number of things that we might possess and do, which of themselves are very desirable, but which, apart from love, have no value in making us acceptable unto God. The Apostle is not making light of faith or a , comprehensive knowledge of salvation; nor of zeal manifested in the giving of one's time, possessions, and life in the service of God,--but is simply calling to our attention the comparative worth of these and God-like love.

"Love," says the Apostle (Weymouth), "is patient andd kind. Love knows neither envy nor jealousy. Love is not forward and self-assertive, nor a boastful and. conceited. She does not behave unbecomingly, nor seek to aggrandize herself, nor blaze out in passionate anger, nor brood over wrongs. She finds no pleasure in injustice done to others, but joyfully sides with the truth. She knows how to be silent. She is full of trust, full of hope, full of patient endurance." Then the Apostle continues by declaring that present languages (modes of speech), present knowledge, and present prophesying will come to an end because they are imperfect, and so the things of real value that remain are faith, hope, and love, and of these the greatest is love.

The foregoing remarks must not be interpreted in a way to make light of doctrinal matters, for it is not possible to read God's Word with an understanding, mind and not realize that doctrines are vitally important-to our spiritual welfare. Paul, in his letter to Timothy says, "Take heed to *thyself* and to *the doctrine*." Paul took delight in Timothy, his son in the faith, and gloried in his ability to serve the cause of Christ, but he cautioned him to be ever on the alert to see that his own life be exemplary and provocative of good in those to whom he ministered, and also that he go not astray in his teaching of doctrine.

Manifestly, some teachings are of far greater importance than others to the Lord's people in the making of their calling and election sure, and such call for a definite and unhesitating stand; but our attitude in those things which we glean from God's Word -through the process of reason and deduction, should be one of tolerance.

All down through this Gospel Age there have been Christians who have made their calling and election sure without understanding clearly many of the things relative to the sin-offering, the philosophy of the atonement, and other matters which we today look upon as present truth. Evidently then, these things are not indispensable to one's standing or acceptance with the Father, and perhaps we would more truly manifest God's spirit if we would show a more kindly tolerance of those who do not see eye to eye with us in things which, though to us they be present truth, are not indispensable to our character transformation.

### **MINOR FEATURES**

There can be no question as to the blessings received from the study of types and shadows that have been more or less hidden in God's Word until the time when he saw fit to reveal them largely through Brother Russell. Had these been essential to our salvation, however, they would have been stated in the same plain and unmistakable language that garbs those things that are essential, and would then constitute tests of sonship and fellowship; but that they are not was quite evident to Brother Russell, who under the heading, "Relationship to the Lord not necessarily dependent upon knowledge of every detail" says:

We wish to suggest here that none should feel unnecessarily annoyed if he is not able to understand all the items of the chronology or of the Tabernacle Shadows, or other *minor features*. Our relationship to the Lord is not necessarily dependent upon our knowledge of every detail. We are to remember that many of us were God's people before we understood *any of* these things, before we understood the philosophy of the Divine Plan. Hence we are to be trustful of the Lord and wait for the remainder, as he may open it to us. And we are to remember that the supreme test is loyalty to the Lord. This was the test upon our Lord Jesus: would he be loyal to the Father? And this is the test upon us. ' Will we be loyal to the Lord? *Whoever is thus loyal is an 'over comer*.' He will strive to be faithful under all conditions, and will trust even where he cannot trace the Lord's *providences*." -- *Reprints*, p. R4746.

Brother Russell here calls the chronology and the Tabernacle Shadows "*minor*" features, things not to be considered as tests of one's standing with the Lord.



## TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS OUTLINED

What qualifications then are we to require as a basis for our judgment of those worthy to serve us?

Paul answers this question for us in his admonition to Timothy respecting the appointing of elders; he says (1 Tim. 3:1-7, Weymouth translation) "A minister [elder] must be a man of *irreproachable character*, true to *his* own wife, temperate, soberminded, well-behaved, hospitable to strangers, and with a gift for teaching; not a hard drinker nor given to blows; not selfish or quarrelsome or covetous; but ruling his own household wisely and well, with children kept under control with true dignity. (If a man does not know how to rule his own household, how shall he have the Church of God given into his care?) He ought not to be a new convert, for fear he should be blinded with pride and come under the same condemnation as the Devil. It is needful also that he bear a good character with people outside the Church, lest he fall into reproach or a snare of the Devil."

The Apostle places the emphasis here upon the character and behavior manifested in the Church, the family, and in the world, and then in addition thereto, he says they should have a "gift for teaching." This statement does not relate to a profound understanding of the doctrines, but to just what it says -- "a *gift*" for teaching; the ability to impart the knowledge possessed; the ability to set forth what the Scriptures say.

In his instructions to Titus, Paul again outlines the qualifications of an elder, very much as he did to Timothy, but adds that he should hold "fast the faithful message which he has received, so that he may be well qualified both to encourage others with sound teaching and to reply successfully to opponents. For," says the Apostle, "there are many that spurn authority -- idle, talkative, and deceitful persons, who, for the most part are adherents of the circumcision. You must stop the mouths of such men, for they overthrow the faith of whole families, teaching what they ought not, just for the sake of making money. One of their own number -- a prophet who is a countryman of theirs, -- has said, 'Cretans are always liars, dangerous animals, idle gluttons.' This testimony is true, (therefore sternly denounce them, that they may be sound in the faith, and not give attention to Jewish legends and the maxims of men who turn their backs on the truth. To the pure everything is pure; but to the polluted and unbelieving nothing is pure, but on the contrary their very minds and consciences are polluted. They profess to know God; but in their actions they disown him, and are detestable and disobedient men, and for any, good work are utterly useless.

We have never known any one in the Truth, we are glad to say, who would fit this description given by the Apostle Paul: "Spurners of authority, idle, talkative and deceitful persons; teaching for the sake of money; always liars, dangerous animals, idle gluttons, polluted in mind and conscience." The early Church, having to contend with such characters in her midst as here described, had a very difficult problem to meet, and so needed the help that God gave them through the Apostles and those whom the Apostles appointed as instructors and leaders.

The context of Paul's letter to Titus, including the portion above quoted, shows that the thing about which the Apostle was concerned was not mere differences of opinion respecting the interpretation, of types, shadows, prophecies, etc., but rather that these opponents, adhering to the circumcision group, were blasting at the foundation principles of the Gospel of Christ. Those early Christians were called upon continually to withstand the opposition of, Judaizing teachers who sought to take away the "grace of God in Christ and leave in its stead the "requirements of the Law," thereby doing away with the very foundation principles of the Gospel of Christ; and the fact that their lives were so *obviously* out of line with the character requirements of that Gospel

was further proof of their unfitness as teachers. Paul says: "They profess to know God: but in their actions they disown him, and are detestable and disobedient men, and for any good work are utterly useless." Such characters have no place in the Body of Christ and certainly should not be acting as elders or teachers to that Body. Therefore we see a good reason for the admonition to hold fast the faithful message which they had received that they might be qualified to encourage with sound teaching and to reply successfully to the opponents;

The gist of the matter then, as it seems to present itself through the various Scriptures set forth for our guidance, is that we should endeavor when choosing our elders or when inviting speakers and teachers to address us, to have such as are loyal to the Lord and to His Word of Truth -- men whose daily lives in their association with the brethren and those outside, give evidence of having partaken of the Lord's spirit in that they manifest the fruit and graces of that spirit. As regards the fundamentals of the Faith, they should be well grounded and positive; but as regards those portions of Scripture that are couched in a manner to call for an interpretation by the reader or teacher in order to be understood, our attitude should be such as would convey a kindly tolerance, granting Christian liberty of thought even though we do not agree as to the interpretation given. We should not have that narrow, sectarian attitude that denies a brother full fellowship and opportunity for service when the differences under dispute do not jeopardize belief in the foundation principles of our faith.

Jesus told us how we might judge between false prophets or teachers and good teachers. He said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Without stopping to investigate, we might think that all fruit was good fruit, but not so: the nature or quality of fruit is determined by the character of the tree that bears it. Jesus said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

There are just two masters: "the god of this world," and "our Lord Jesus 'Christ." If a teacher has the spirit of "the god of this world," it will be manifested in the evil fruit of that spirit in his own life and in the results of his labors; whereas, if he have the spirit of the Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ, it will be manifested in "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such," says the Apostle, "there is no law." When we find one who manifests these qualities, whether he agrees in every point of doctrine or not, we can know for a certainty that he is of God, for, says Jesus, "an evil tree *cannot* bring forth good fruit."

The Lord's people, until they imbibe a large measure of his spirit, tend toward dogmatism and intolerance, for they have very definite and positive views; consequently in "contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints" they are also apt to contend for beliefs which are either their own or some other man's interpretations. Naturally, being positive in their views, they are ready to defend them; but they should not forget that it is possible to be absolutely right in their interpretations and yet become ensnared by the Adversary through the wrong attitude they take in defending their views. There are subjects upon which, seemingly, it is difficult for all to see eye to eye. This may be due to the differences in our mental make-up, or in our education and emotional trend; but whatever the cause may be, it gives opportunity for the testing of our love one for another and for the exercise of tolerance.

Brethren who attend a Class where something of this nature exists are inclined to take sides in the matter, but in all probability, neither side is wholly to blame. And it is well to remember that such an unhappy outcome would not be possible if the love of Christ were ruling in the hearts and minds of all concerned, for then that which naturally tends toward trouble, separation, and heartache, would be turned into a real asset in character development.

In the Scripture citation at the beginning of this discussion, Peter speaks of being established in "present truth." This is a very familiar expression to most of the Lord's people, and when used by them has reference to the many teachings which we believe to be truths, revealed to the saints in the last sixty or seventy years. Peter, however, was not referring to these things when he made this statement, but rather to the Gospel Message-"the grace of God through faith in Christ" in contradistinction to the attempt to gain salvation by works under the Law. Peter says: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."

In the early Church, the strife between Judaizing teachers and those who held fast to the Gospel message of grace was very keen. The Epistle to the Galatians was largely written to counteract such teachings and to keep the Galatian brethren from being brought under bondage again through the admixture of the Law. Paul says, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the *grace of Christ* unto another Gospel: which is not another; but there be some who trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ." One commentator has said, "The test of the Gospel is grace. If the message excludes grace, or mingles law with grace as the means either of justification or sanctification, or denies the fact or guilt of sin which alone gives grace its occasion and opportunity, it is 'another' Gospel, and the preaching of it is under the anathema of God." So, after arguing the matter, Paul says, "Brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

May it not be that there is a message here for us at the present time also? Satan has never let pass an opportunity to enslave the Lord's people. It has not been many years since the most of us escaped from the bondage of sectarianism; then slowly but surely, many were again brought under bondage through subservience to a dictator over an earthly organization; but by God's grace we were able to cast off that bondage and again stand free from all restrictions not authorized by the Word of God. True liberty is the result of the Lord's holy spirit controlling our minds and hearts, for Paul says (2 Cor. 3:17), "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."

- J. T. Read.

## **"Many Infallible Proofs"**

No. 4 -- and last

**A short series of meditations, both devotional and doctrinal, on "Jesus and the Resurrection."**

*"Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." -- 1 Cor. 15:51-52*

IF WE were attempting an exhaustive consideration of the Apostle's argument as presented in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, it would require more than a "short" series of meditations for its accomplishment. Our purpose, however, will best be served if, omitting some parenthetical observations he introduces, we follow closely the main theme, and make this the last meditation of this series.

The Apostle has established first the resurrection of our Lord, and then the general principle of a resurrection and its applicability to all mankind, because the redemption accomplished by Jesus was a ransom for all! -- and not for a chosen few. Let us now follow him in his discussion of the "first resurrection"; that resurrection in which the Church -the Church at Corinth, the whole Church everywhere-is especially interested. His words, found in verses 42-44, describe, as clearly as it is possible for us to understand things so far beyond our plane of existence, the grandeurs and perfections of being which will be ours when we shall have experienced this great change of the first resurrection. We shall no longer be weak and imperfect, with dying tendencies and animal bodies, but shall be incorruptible, powerful, and have spiritual bodies. "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." - 1 John 3:2.

### **"Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God"**

What He now is like, "it doth not yet appear" to our finite minds. However, we know that He is no longer a human being, for as a human being He gave Himself a ransom for our race. Indeed, it was for this very purpose that He became a man. (1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 10:4, 5; Heb. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22.) He is now highly exalted (Phil. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:27), the express image of the Father's person. (Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15.) No longer is He to be known "after the flesh," even by those who once knew Him so. (2 Cor. 5:16.) Put to death in flesh He was raised in spirit, -- a life giving spirit-being. (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:45.) And we, the Church, are to be like Him! What a glorious hope is thus set before us! No wonder the Apostle John declares: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." - 1 John 3:3.

In the 50th verse, where the Apostle declares that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," we are not to suppose, as some have done, that while "flesh and blood" cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, "flesh and bones" can. We are to recognize that the Apostle, in the use of these words "flesh and blood," signifies human nature, just as our Lord did when He said to Peter on the latter's confession of his belief that Jesus was the Messiah, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee." (Matt. 16:17.) Our Lord did not mean to say that His Messiahship had been revealed to Peter by "flesh and bones." **His** evident meaning was that this revelation had come to Peter directly from the heavenly Father, without the *instrumentality* of any human being. So, also, with the Apostle Paul in the passage before us. His declaration, properly understood, is that human nature cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

This is in full accord with his other statements and the statements of the other Apostles that we must become new creatures in Christ Jesus, partakers of the divine nature, if we would be sharers

with our Lord in the coming Kingdom, and its great and glorious work. This is in agreement also with our Lord's words to Nicodemus, when He declared Except a man be born again, [begotten to a new nature and born in the resurrection], he cannot enter the Kingdom of God, and cannot even see it. (John 3:3, 5.) Earthly beings of human nature, "flesh and blood," can see earthly things, but as no man hath seen God at any time (John 1:18), likewise no man can see the glorified Son of God, and for similar reasons, none will be able to see, with the natural eye, the glorified Church, for all these in their resurrection change will be spirit beings, and like their Lord, the express image of the Father's person. We must keep in mind the fact that the Church is entirely separate and distinct from the world, and that in many particulars their hopes are to be differentiated from those of the world.

### **"We Shall not All Sleep"**

The Apostle next proceeds to note a difficulty which might arise in the minds of his readers. Those members of the Church who have died will be raised incorruptible, immortal, in the end of the Gospel Age. That much his readers may realize. But how will it be with any who may chance to be still in the flesh at the time of the second presence of the Lord, and the setting up of His Kingdom, and His awakening of His sleeping brethren? Will these living ones pass over into the Kingdom with bodies of flesh and blood?

This mystery the Apostle undertakes to solve. "Behold," says he, "I show you a mystery," or, as Weymouth translates the passage, "I reveal to you a truth hitherto kept secret: we shall not all sleep."-Ver. 51.

Note the expression carefully. He does not say that we shall not all die, but that we shall not all sleep. Death comes in a moment; sleep, on the contrary, occupies a period of time. When, therefore, the Apostle says that we shall not all sleep, he is to be understood as saying that we shall not all remain in the condition of unconsciousness that is styled in the Scriptures "sleep." "But," he goes on to say, "we shall all be changed." It will be as impossible for the human nature, the "flesh and blood," of those living at the close of the Gospel Age to participate in the spiritual Kingdom which Christ will then establish as it will be impossible for the "flesh and blood" of any of the brethren of the past to do so. How, then, will these get rid of their "flesh and blood," their human nature? We answer: The Scriptures are most explicit on this point. None need err in the matter. All who will be partakers with Christ in this, **His** resurrection (the First Resurrection), must be sharers with Him in **His** death. As He Himself expressed it: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." - Rev. 2:10; 20:5, 6; Phil. 3:10, 11; Rom. 6:5, 8.

### **Changed in a Moment**

The change from corruptible to incorruptible, from mortal to immortal, from weakness to power, from ignominy to glory, from human nature to divine nature, in the case of these last members, will be so sudden as to occupy no appreciable space of time, and so the Apostle illustrates it by saying that it will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the instant of their dying will be followed the next instant by their change.

Again, the thought of some, that this resurrection change has come to each individual at the moment of dying, all down through the Gospel Age, is contradicted by the Apostle. For, after having said that "we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," he goes on to tell us when that is to be. It is to be "at the last trump" "when the seventh trump shall sound." Then it is that the dead, that is to say, these special dead, the dead who are under discussion, the

dead brethren, the dead in Christ, shall be raised incorruptible. Then it is that we, that is, those of the Christ's members who will be living, shall be changed.

The last trump, or the seventh trump, just alluded to, like the previous six trumpets, are all symbolic, as students of the Book of Revelation are aware, and represent seven great periods of time, and their events. It is sufficient here to say that we find ourselves today in the midst of the very events which mark the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The increase of knowledge, the angry nations, taken in connection with time prophecies, establishes this as a fact. Its fulfillment extends through a period of 1,000 years. Its events mark and coincide with all the various features of the Millennial reign of Christ.

### **Death Swallowed up in Victory**

After this change of the Church has been completed, after this first, or chief, resurrection has been accomplished, then, the Apostle goes on to tell us, the prophecy written in Isaiah, (Isa. 25:8), will meet fulfillment: "Then shall he brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." - 1 Cor. 15:54.

Here again the Apostle's statement is generally misunderstood. Most readers get the impression that he means the victory over death and the grave is already accomplished. Others, a little nearer to the truth, infer that the victory will be fully accomplished in the change of the Church, the Body of Christ, in the first resurrection. However, neither of these views meets the scope of the statement. On the contrary, the first resurrection, the change of the Church, will be but the beginning of the great victory which Christ is to achieve over death and the grave. This will be merely the bringing forth of the first-fruits, as St. James declares: "A. kind of first-fruits of His creatures." The force, then, of the Apostle's statement is seen to be that then, at the first resurrection, this prophecy of Isaiah, of victory over death, will **begin** to have its fulfillment. It will require all of the Millennium to accomplish victory over death, and Christ and the glorified Church will be the victors, as it is written: "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15:25, 26.) To accomplish this complete victory over death and the grave will be the very object of the establishment of the Kingdom, and will require a thousand years, as it is written again, respecting the reign of those who have part in the first resurrection: "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." - Rev. 20:4.

### **O Death, Where is Thy Sting?**

Glancing clown the corridors of time, and taking his place at the close of the Millennium, seeing the grand culmination, the Apostle takes up the words of another Prophet, Hosea, and exultingly exclaims: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (Hosea 13:14.) His thought here is that death has been stinging our race, blighting it for six thousand years, and sending it ignominiously into the tomb, but that God, who justly condemned us as a race, has looked down upon us in compassion, and beholding our impotence, has provided a Savior, even Jesus, our Redeemer, and that His Kingdom, with which the Church is graciously permitted to be associated, shall destroy, at one and the same time, death and the grave, completely delivering from their power all who will obey the requirements of that Kingdom. While the sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law, yet, under the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, the sins of the past will be forgiven because of the atonement accomplished; and the perfect law of God, having been met by the Mediator, will be applied to the ransomed race only in such proportions as they can receive it -- in proportion to their knowledge and ability to obey. Thus the Mediator of the New Covenant will ultimately bring off conquerors all who will obey Him.

## **Thanks be to God**

With such a glorious vista unfolding before his prophetic mind, when men will be actually lifted up out of sin and imperfection, -yea out of even death itself, small wonder that his argument ends in a note of praise and gratitude: "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." True, it will not be until the close of the Millennium that this vision will be fully realized. But the Apostle does not feel like waiting until then before voicing his song of thanksgiving. Nor will we, if our hearts are in tune with his. While we have not yet actually triumphed over death and the grave, this victory is reckoned as ours already, by faith; for by faith the consecrated have "passed from death unto life." (John 5:24.) The word "giveth" is in the present tense and means that He giveth us, the Church, now by faith the victory over death. Our victory over death is a gift of God, won through Christ; and though yet enjoyed only in foretaste, it is sure. With appropriate solemnity the Apostle names the great Victor in full -- our Lord Jesus Christ -- and with this shout of triumphant gratitude, the splendid argument closes.

## **The Practical Conclusion**

And now what are the practical results which, to St. Paul's mind, should follow in the case of those who are convinced that "his" Gospel is true; who are assured that this life does not end all; but that, in God's plan and purpose, there is held out the hope of endless life

Knowing St. Paul as we do, we have no doubt at all but that he will draw a sober and practical conclusion; for it is characteristic of him that to whatever height he rises on the rising sequences of his logic, however wide the sweep of his impassioned rhetoric, he invariably comes back with gathered force to the simple duties of the Christian life. As we would say today, he was always a man who, though his head was in the clouds, kept his feet firm on the ground. And therefore we need feel no surprise at finding him descend from his rapturous song of victory over death and the grave, to so sober a conclusion as an exhortation to faithful and steadfast labor in the Lord.

From him we should have expected a sober and practical conclusion, but his conclusion is not quite what even those might have expected who are familiar with his habit of thought. The resurrection of our race as guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ; -- our victory over death as assured by Christ's victory, has been his leading theme. And when we remember how novel, how strange, his theme was to the people of his time, with what a shock of surprise it struck athwart the hopes and fears in which they had been bred, we might have expected that instead of drawing from it an incentive to steadfast labor in the Lord, he would rather have dwelt on its power to comfort and sustain men in prospect of death. And indeed he does thus conclude the earlier and briefer argument on the resurrection which he had addressed to the Church at Thessalonica. After having taught them how the dead would rise, and the living be changed, when the Lord should return, he adds: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." - 1 Thess. 4:18.

## **Fervent in Spirit, Serving the Lord**

The reason for this different conclusion is obviously "because the need of his readers was different. The Thessalonians were sorrowing without hope for brethren in Christ who had fallen asleep. They held that only those who were alive and remained to the coming of the Lord would behold and share His glory. They needed comfort, therefore, and St. Paul met their need. But the Corinthians were not mourning hopelessly over them that slept. They were busy with a multitude of speculations on the meaning, the possibility, the manner of the resurrection. They were

expending on these doubtful and unprofitable disputations time and energy which should have been given to the activities of the Christian life. They needed, when once their doubts had been met, to be recalled from the barren arena of speculation to the fruitful fields of steadfast and patient service. And therefore, instead of saying to them, as to the Thessalonians, "Brethren, be comforted for your dead; Christ will bring them with Him," St. Paul meets their need by saying: "Brethren, live out your life; be active, be steadfast, be immovable, abound in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye now know-now, after this lengthy presentation of the subject I have given you, even if you knew it not before -- that labor in the Lord is not, and cannot be, in vain."-Ver. 58.

### **The Glory of the Lord**

This, the more appropriate, is also the loftier lesson of the two, and therefore fitly closes the loftier argument. For to live an active, faithful life is more and better than to have comfort in our death; it is also the way to secure, not comfort only, but triumph in our death. What we think or fear our future state will be, when we are dying, will not greatly affect our future, though it may trouble and oppress our heart at the moment; but how we use our life-this will shape our future for us; for our future life, on whatever plane of existence it may be, will be only an extension, along endless and widening lines, of the life we now live in the flesh. The more we abound in faithful, joyous, zealous service for the Lord here, the fitter we grow for service on an ampler scale on the other side. The more steadfast and immovable we are in the work of the Lord so much the more fully shall we share the glory of the Lord-when we enter into the fuller, the more abundant, life; for **His** glory, as we well know, is the glory of service. - John 13:15; Matt. 20:26-28.

"Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep .... Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

- P. L. Read