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The Pentecostal Flame

*"Paul ... hasted, if it were possible for him, to be present at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost."
Psalm 29:7; Acts 20:16.*

PENTECOST, as is well known, means *fiftieth* in Greek, and was a Jewish feast day -- the fiftieth after the beginning of the harvest "from the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing grain shalt thou begin to number seven weeks." On the following day, which was the fiftieth, the "Feast of Weeks" was celebrated -- called "Pentecost" in the New Testament. Its particular feature was the offering -- the waving before Jehovah -- of two loaves of leavened bread, the first baked from the flour ground from the new crop of grain.

It was one of the two religious feasts provided under the Mosaic Law based on the square of seven plus one: seven times seven days indicated the fiftieth day, or Pentecost; seven times seven years pointed to the fiftieth or Jubilee year. The one was an annual reminder of the other. Many Bible students believe that these Mosaic ordinances involve a time prophecy; that seven times seven on a grander, antitypical scale have, nearly or quite run out; and that the "year" of the Grand Jubilee is just at hand -- the baking of the two wave loaves nearly complete.

The descent of the holy spirit on Pentecost of A. D. 33 inaugurated an entirely new dispensation of divine grace. A faulty translation in the Authorized Version might lead the student to infer that this was the antitypical Pentecost, viz.: "When the day of Pentecost was fully come." The American Revised Version renders this statement: "When the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled," and a similar rendering is found in most of the critical translations. It evidently has reference merely to the typical period, and really marked the *beginning* of the preparation of one of the loaves for the future offering. It indicated the commencement of a new dispensation of divine grace -- not the culmination of an old one.

This new development of God's intentions toward "men of good will" was so revolutionary in character as to necessitate a striking miracle to introduce it to the disciples -- present and prospective. This great, new operation of God's power among men was designed to select, train, and complete the Church, the Bride of the Lamb, the Body of Christ; that Body seen by John the Revelator in his vision on Patmos: the "one hundred forty and four thousand ... who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." -- Rev. 14:1-5.

"CONFORMED TO HIS IMAGE"

During this preparatory period -- the Gospel Age -- it is "foreordained" of God that each member selected for this Body be "conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29, A. R. V.) This Body, intimately united to its Head -- its Princely Leader -- when the Greater antitypical Day of Pentecost has *fully* come, becomes with him the "Seed" of Abraham, selected in accordance with the divine purpose and; covenant confirmed to Abraham, for the blessing of "all the families of the earth."

For this new operation of divine power, announced by the visible descent of the spirit, certain specific agencies were assigned by the great Planner of the Universe. These were:

- (a) The Begetting of Believers by Holy Spirit, to a New Nature;
- (b) The Word of God -- in the Apostles, and afterward in the Holy Scriptures;
- (c) The "Fiery Trials" of the Candidates for membership in the Body;
- (d) The Fellowship of the Ecclesia -- the Assembly;
- (e) The Consciousness of a Sacrificial Dying;
- (f) The First Resurrection from the Dead.

(a) THE BEGETTING OF HOLY SPIRIT

The flame of fire which descended upon the disciples symbolized by its sound ("of a rushing, mighty wind") and its source ("from heaven") that it was of the spirit world; its violence indicated its power; its division showed that it was of One, but that its application was individual. It was "like tongues," signifying that the *agency of dissemination* (seed sowing) was to be *speech*. Thus was illustrated the spiritual begetting or embryonic life giving of the members of the Church. These probationary "called" ones are spoken of as a "creation" and "created in five passages in St. Paul's Epistles to Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and Colossians. It is further evident that the Apostles thought of this process of forming a "New Creature" as analagous to physical procreation -- Paul, Peter, James, and John so refer to it, and in various Scriptures call attention to its remarkable correspondence to human biological processes.

"BEGOTTEN TO A NEW HOPE OF LIFE"

The germ cells of man are different and distinct from the body cells of their hosts -- they are not produced by the human body, which is merely a vehicle for their incubation and transmission. They originated in one. source -- Father Adam, in whom they were placed by his Creator. They are multiplied by fission -- cell division -- and passed from generation to generation by procreation -- literally, forwarding creation. The germ -- cell builds its own future host while that host is an unborn infant, and to a considerable but varying extent dominates that host throughout its active existence. Thus mankind has been impelled to fulfill the divine command to "multiply and fill the earth."

Similarly the seed of the New Creature originates with God -- "Of his own will begat he us" -- the seed being the "word of truth," further defined in various Scriptures as "the 'Gospel and (the assurance of) 'the resurrection of Jesus Christ"; and by Jesus himself, in the parable of "The Sower," as "the Word of God concerning the Kingdom," i.e., the Sovereignty. This Word must be personal to the individual; it must be applied specifically to the vehicle which is to be the host to the New Creature during its period of gestation. This host, as shown in Jesus' parable referred to,

is a receptive human mind. It may be received directly from the written Word of God -- the Scriptures -- but it is not usually so received: there is usually a personal agency. Thus the Apostle writes: "How shall they hear without a preacher?" "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ," he says, "yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel. Again he says: "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds"; and he writes, "unto Timothy, my own son in the faith," and, "to Timothy, my dearly beloved son."

In "cold type" these things of the spirit of God are often, to our dull minds, something theoretical and impersonal; we feel that they apply to some one else, not to ourselves. Some one or something must say, to the individual: "This word applies to *you*. This is an invitation to *you* if you will accept it. *You* can attain to a new life. *You may* rise to heights undreamed of by your human mind; *you may* suffer with Christ, and later reign with him, to bless all mankind. 'The word is nigh *thee* if *thou* shalt confess . . . and believe ... *thou* shalt be saved.'"

If such an one is "obedient to the heavenly vision" a new mental life commences within him -- the "hope of a new life" on the spirit -- plane with Christ. It gradually grows in strength, if it has its intended development, and more and more, dominates its host, "the old man." Those who experience this begettal are definitely aware of it, as, the Apostle declares: "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye all know it." "If any man is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Life has acquired an entirely new aspect.

(b) THE WORD OF GOD

Sustenance for the mental embryo New Creature is supplied, as in the case of the human embryo, through the host -- "the old man," "the flesh." The human will in both cases must be subservient and cooperative, else the embryo will not develop properly. The necessary subsistence -- the life blood -- is the Word of God. By neglecting to thus feed the New Creature it is possible to starve it to death; to bring about an abortion. In such case the human host will also eventually perish.

(c) THE FIERY TRIALS

As a human embryo is exercised and its growth promoted or retarded by the activities (voluntary and involuntary) of its mother, so the embryonic spiritual, New Creature, which is a purely mental growth, is exercised or injured, by the mental life of its host. St. Peter makes this clear: "This is acceptable, if for conscience toward God a man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted for it, ye shall take it patiently? But if, When ye do well, and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when lie was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose' stripes ye were healed.... Arm ye yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." The human body, under the domination of the New Creature, is no longer committed "to the lusts of men, but [is consecrated] to the will of God." -- 1 Peter 2:19-24; 4:1, 2

(d) THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINTS

As the New Creature develops, it is hampered as well as nurtured by its human host. In no way is this more apparent than in its relationship to others of the New Creation. Practice in unity and fellowship -- i.e., partnership, united effort -- is *essential*, in preparation for the close unity and cooperation of the Body in its future work. For this very purpose the ecclesia -- the Church in the world -- was established by the Lord. But it is, alas, impossible for the New Creatures to assemble in the Ecclesia as commanded in the Scriptures, apart from their human hosts. "The flesh" must carry them there if they *go*, and supply the medium of speech for their communication and mutual edification. And herein the difficulties begin to appear. "The flesh" is often reluctant to make the effort "to assemble." When it is finally persuaded or forced by the new mind to do so, more trouble ensues. It has deep seated animosities and antagonisms toward the flesh of other New Creatures.

But, in these very, circumstances lie the opportunities for acquiring the virtues of tolerance, kindness, consideration, strength, and helpfulness.

The more clearly the Christian thus recognizes the duality of nature which he and his brethren possess, and determines to "know no man after the flesh" (himself as little as possible), the more quickly he "clears the deck for action" and makes progress towards the great goal of his desires. An arrival at this most desirable frame of mind will be substantially aided by looking up and considering the more than one hundred references in the Epistles to "the flesh." It will help to engender a wholesome contempt for our own fallen human natures, and, in view of our own difficulties with *ours*, *will* greatly increase our tolerance for others; and will lead us to the conclusion, with St. Peter, that "the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles" -- particularly of the one Gentile for which we are responsible; and with St. Paul that "*we* are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for if ... [ye do] ye must die: but if by *the* spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live." It actually being a matter of life and death, it would seem that some of the Lord's people might well give greater diligence to the cultivation of the New Creature, and the concurrent suppression of the flesh.

(e) THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF A SACRIFICIAL DEATH

However much the fleshly mind might like to make this subject one for dogmatic controversy, the New Creature insists that this agency and qualification for its own development to maturity shall remain on a strictly Scriptural basis. The quotation of three passages will suffice to establish its verity. Perhaps the less we all have to say of how we reason on this subject with our own faulty minds, the better.

At the climax of his Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 12:1) St. Paul says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

The Apostle John writes (1 John 3:16): "Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for *us*: and we ought to lay down our *lives* for the brethren."

St. Peter *says*: "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example ... arm yourselves with the same mind." - 1 Peter 2:21; 4:1.

"The mind of Christ" -- "your bodies a living sacrifice". -- "laid down for the brethren" -- who can question the importance to those who would "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," of a *continuing consciousness of* living in Christ and dying a sacrificial death, until it is

accomplished? Under sentence of death -- how it alters the aspect of all human interests, and "sets our affections on things above"!

(f) THE FIRST RESURRECTION

However' faithfully and well the New Creature avails' itself of the various agencies provided for its development, the death of its human host would mean extinction of its own existence, if no other vehicle for it -- were provided. Herein it differs from the human germ cell, which creates its own future host from elements derived from and through the mother host.

However, the Being who provided the spiritual seed which has *so* far progressed toward a complete New Creation, gives assurance of a glorious consummation of his work. "Shall I bring to the [point of] birth, and not cause *to* bring forth? saith Jehovah." (Isa. 66:9.) Of this bringing forth from the dead the Apostle declares: "God gives to it a body as he designed." - 1 Cor. 15:38.

"Wherefore, writes St. Peter, *ex cathedra* if ever, "let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls in 'well doing to a faithful Creator. . . . And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little *while*, shall himself complete, establish, strengthen you. This is the true grace of God: stand ye fast therein." - 1 Peter 4:19; 5:10, 12.

"Soon the resurrection 'change' will perfect the elect: Church of Christ, and qualify them as kings and priests and judges of the world." -- *Reprints*, page R5789, par. 1.

The Scriptural description of the development of the New Creature, outlined *in* the foregoing, is too well established by *Apostolic* authority to be regarded as fanciful or merely figurative. The sound of the "rushing mighty wind", that filled the house at Jerusalem that Pentecost of A. D. 33 was more significant than the atomic bomb that exploded on the New Mexican desert *in* 1945; the fission of the flame of Holy Spirit at the little meeting of the disciples of Jesus nineteen hundred years ago released a greater power than the splitting of the atom over Hiroshima did. For the first time there was extended to fallen man generally -- "cast into the earth" -- the opportunity of worshiping God acceptably, in spirit and in truth the burning censer from, which a "sweet smelling savor of Christ" might arise to the Great God from each of those *who* followed in the Master's footsteps.

Soon the great antitypical Pentecost *will* have "fully come," and that which the two wave loaves represented *will* be offered, complete, to Jehovah. One of these loaves is identified by St. *Paul*: "*For* we, being *many*, are one loaf, one body." (1 Cor. 10: 17.) The Apostle "hasted, if it were possible for him, to be present *at* Jerusalem the day of Pentecost." All the members of the Body have an appointment to meet their Head in the New Jerusalem on the antitypical *Day* of the Great Pentecost.

And "the King's business requireth haste.

-- *H. E. Hollister.*

God's Foreknowledge in the Permission of Evil

God's Prescience - PART I

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my Pleasure." - Acts 15:18; Isaiah 46:9, 10.

AN INHERENT power of the Almighty God is that of foreknowledge, by which he is able to determine the end from the beginning. That God's powers of foreknowledge are unlimited is fully demonstrated by the multitude of prophecies of the Bible foretelling events and the course of nations and individuals. While he acts upon those powers only where it is essential to his purpose to do so, yet to have failed to foresee Lucifer's rebellion would have been pure negligence. But as God is perfect, he is never negligent; and Lucifer's rebellion did not take him unawares. We have conclusive proof that the Eden episode was foreseen by God and prepared for in his purpose. One way this proof is shown is in the fact that God planted a small paradise in the land of Eden for the dwelling place of our foreparents several thousand years before the earth could be climatically fitted through the slow process of physical law to be a fit habitation for perfect man. If God has permitted evil merely because of the issue raised in Eden by the Devil, then the Eden episode would be an unfortunate incident which God as not able to forestall because of no foreknowledge of it. But as God's foreknowledge is a demonstrated fact, supported by a wealth of Scripture testimony, it is evident that this view is short-sighted. Had not the permission of evil been a predetermined purpose in God's Plan, he would have exercised his foreknowledge to prevent the circumstances of the Eden incident. God would not have placed Lucifer in the office of, protecting overlord of the human family without a wise and foreordained reason for the permission of the reign of evil which his rebellion ushered in. Neither would God with the foreknowledge of Adam's sin have created him without a wise and predetermined purpose to be served there by. (It is a basic error to assume that Adam's sin, though willful, was of such an inexcusable nature as to alienate him from the benefits of the ransom.)

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PERMITTED EVIL

The omnipotence of God is a degree of power in which the creature is unable to interfere in any way with God's purpose. Yet according to some present teachings, the Devil not only succeeded in frustrating God's commission to Adam and Eve, to "Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth," but also caused him to have to permit the terrible reign of sin and death in order to prove his sovereignty. On an unbiased consideration of this teaching, its unreasonableness should be apparent to all. For God to have decreed the past six thousand years of sin, suffering, and death for no higher or more necessary purpose than the meeting of the Devil's challenge to his sovereignty, would have been a cruel injustice that would have marked him as a veritable demon, instead of a just and loving Creator.

Let us note the situation that existed in the heavenly realm prior to the creation of man. Until the time of Lucifer's rebellion, the principles of right and wrong were in. all practical points unknown by God's creatures. The principle of evil being dormant, they were ignorant of it; and as the suggestive, phase of Bible testimony is clear that the spirit plane of life is free from incentives to sin except in connection with an order of creatures of reasoning intelligence on the material life plane, its inhabitants led a harmonious, sinless existence. In this sinless situation with practically no knowledge of evil, the term, righteousness, would have conveyed but, little meaning to them. And because it had not been declared, they were ignorant of God's law. Nor was it possible to

declare this law without a contrasting knowledge of the evil of sin. And a knowledge of evil was impossible without a demonstration of it. *As a* knowledge of God *can* be revealed only through the operation of his *law*, until that law was manifest, the knowledge of him possessed by his creatures was limited to that of mere acquaintance with him as a beneficent Creator. His attribute of justice was entirely unknown, and knowledge of his wisdom and power was only such as was reflected by his creations. Love, which is the ruling principle of God's nature, was visible to his creatures only in his benevolence toward them for their welfare and happiness. This was sufficient for a responsive chord of gratitude, but far too insufficient to reveal the great depths of the elements of love as these attain in Jehovah God. As God is the fountainhead source of love, its attainment by his creatures is possible only to the degree that his love is revealed. Therefore it is clearly evident that during that long epoch of ' time, none of God's creatures were perfected in love; and even though they were sinless and under no condemnation, they were not as yet in actual possession of eternal life.

The thought that God's law was inherently written in the hearts of Adam and the angels in their bringing forth, is without a vestige of Scriptural support. The, very fact that Adam and a host of the angels fell into sin, is in itself the most positive proof of the fallacy of this thought. In the beginning of their existence, God's creatures possess neither knowledge nor wisdom. But they do have a perfect mental foundation for the acquiring of wisdom through instruction. Knowledge and instruction are highly extolled, and the priceless value of wisdom declared in glowing terms in Bible testimony. (Proverbs, first eight chapters.) It is through the operation of God's law upon the eruption of sin in the earth, and his plan of redemption, that his law is being revealed. Not only is it God's purpose that all good creatures of good will towards him living at the present time, and the redeemable element of those who have died in. the past, come to a knowledge of his law that it may be written in their hearts, but it is also his purpose that all brought into existence, in future ages be given that: knowledge for the same purpose. (1 Tim 2:3, 4.) Permitted evil has been an educational feature in God's Plan for the compiling of a text book of knowledge and wisdom for the perfecting of his creatures in love, by the writing of his law in their hearts. In fact the circumstances of evil, through the enlightening features of its permission, which have resulted in a complete revealing of God and his law, is in marked contrast to "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," and so constitutes this great text book of divine wisdom.

Until God's law is written in the hearts of his creatures his creative work in them is not finished. In other words, when God brings into existence creatures in his own image of reasoning intelligence, his creative work in them is not complete until his law is written in their hearts. This does not mean a mere knowledge of that law, but an attainment to perfect heart harmony with it. - Jer. 31:33.

WHY THE TEST OF OBEDIENCE UPON ADAM

Evidently the first mandate restriction ever placed upon any creature, was that of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. It has been assumed that this restriction was placed on Adam as a test to determine his worthiness of eternal life; the thought being that if he had stood this test, in time he would have been granted eternal life on the strength of it. The short sightedness of this view is, apparent. God does not have to test the work of his hands to determine its perfection; for his workmanship is always perfect. But if Adam had been obedient to the test upon him even to this day, he could not have been granted eternal life on the strength of it alone. Eternal life is not bestowed for mere sinless obedience to a mandate, but is the gift reward of perfect love: attainment in the completed workmanship of God in the heart of the individual. Such as fail to attain eternal life are those who refuse to yield themselves to God's workmanship for their

perfecting in love. Adam did not have eternal life set before him in the mandate restriction to his liberty, as there was not anything in this test of a love developing character.

The Bible presents a positive line of proof that Lucifer's rebellion and Adam's sin in connection with it were foreseen and prepared for by Jehovah God. This is suggestively testified to in Genesis 3:17 in God's words to Adam after his condemnation: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." As the curse upon the earth for Adam's sake was its unfinished state as a fit habitation for perfect man, which in Adam's condemned state was for his sake, or, in other words, for his good, to prevent him and his entire posterity from sinking into unrecoverable depths of sin, it was a definite manifestation of God's foreknowledge and wisdom.

The creating of a perfect climate to make the earth a perfect dwelling' place for human creatures, is a slow, progressive process of physical law that cannot be hastened. An advance step in, this process was the breaking up of the aqueous canopy surrounding the earth, which produced the deluge of Noah's day. But at the time of Adam's creation, that event was still in the future. The breaking up of this canopy was far from completing a perfect climate adjustment. Since the deluge, destructive storms, earthquakes, floods, droughts, and extremes of temperature have prevailed, indicating an unbalanced state of the magnetic field of climate control. While there will not be another deluge, there -- is seeming evidence that the physical forces of the earth are slowly building up to a cataclysm of another nature, which no doubt will result in a perfect climate with atmospheric changes of a life stimulating nature.

GOD'S TIMING OF MAN'S TESTING

It seems erroneous to suppose that the Lord's original purpose was, to populate the earth with a race of perfect men, under the imperfect climatic condition that has existed over the earth since the creation of man. The increasing population would have been forced out of the protecting boundaries of the Garden of Eden into the inhospitable climate outside of it, there to battle with the "thorns and thistles" of the comparatively unfruitful condition of the earth in a struggle for existence, even as fallen man has had to do. But we can see God's wisdom in permitting evil under this imperfect situation. The thought has apparently prevailed that the climate was the same outside the Garden of Eden, as within it. But even if this had been true, how about the inevitable deluge and the climate since? The Bible testimony indicates that the Garden of Eden was only a small tract of land, inaccessible except at its eastern point, and with an artificial greenhouse temperature, possibly' created by hot springs.

The unfruitful condition of the earth and the declared character of the vegetation that thrived under the existing climate is apparent proof that an ideal climate, such as in theory has been pictured, did not exist over the earth during the pre-flood era of human existence. The aqueous canopy surrounding the earth, while protecting it from freezing temperatures, also tempered down the sun's heat to a point not ideal for many forms of vegetation. Clothing was required for comfort as well as for covering. This was especially necessary to stand the chill fog that prevailed nightly through the condensing of the atmospheric moisture in its return to the earth. It is especially noteworthy in this respect that the Lord provided' the condemned pair with coats of skins on evicting them from the Garden. Garments of this character could not have been worn in comfort in their former Eden paradise. This line of evidence adds up to just one thing -- God's foreknowledge of sin and his predetermined purpose in its permission.

The suggestive light of Bible testimony clearly indicates that God's purpose in the test of obedience upon Adam was to demonstrate that without a practical knowledge of "good and evil" his creatures were not dependable, not capable of obedience under all circumstances and

situations. And Adam's failure to stand this test also demonstrated the necessity for the permitted operation of evil for a limited time, that this knowledge might be -- made available to all God's creatures.

Unlike the spirit plane of life that in itself presents no incentives to covetousness, which is the basic root of evil, the material life plane provides strong temptations to covetousness, not only to its inhabitants, but also to the angels in connection with these inhabitants. (James 1:14, 15.) In the creation of an order of creatures in God's image of reasoning intelligence on the material life plane, a spontaneous outbreak of sin was inevitable unless steps were taken to prevent it. God did not prevent sin altogether, for there was no way in which this could be done without interfering with the free moral agency of his creatures, but by permitting sin for a time under a controlled situation, that limited its operation to this one small planet. God's wisdom is seen in that he created but the one human pair, and arranged a test of obedience whereby sin would have its beginning with this pair. This in no sense made God the author of sin, as some are inclined to illogically assume. The fact that God termed this tree, "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil," is clear proof that it was God's foreordained purpose that his creatures gain a knowledge of these principles through the use of that tree. And we now see that God's use of that tree in his demonstrative test upon Adam, and which was also a test upon Lucifer, has resulted through his providence in the complete revealing of the principles of "good and evil." In the full sense of the term "good," a knowledge of this principle implies a full knowledge of God and his law, as this knowledge has been revealed through the circumstances of permitted evil.

As it is through God's, plan of redemption that he and his law are revealed, his infinite wisdom is manifest in the providing of a situation of condemnation in a declared penalty for disobedience, which made a ransom possible. Had sin broken out in any other situation, the result would have been chaos, with no workable foundation for a ransom, and there would have been no way in which God and his law could be effectually revealed. The mere declaring, and putting in force of the penalty of death for sin, under any other circumstance of its outbreak, would not keep the situation under control, as a slavish fear of punishment is not an effectual sin deterrent. Furthermore it is not God's purpose to rule his creatures through fear of punishment, but through his law of love which will be written in their hearts; and by which their loyalty will be inspired entirely by love: for perfect love is the real spirit of obedience. Because God's creatures thus perfected will have no desire to offend, they will not exist in a state of fear of him; for as declared: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment." -- 1 John 4:18.

THE BASIS FOR A RANSOM

It was the mitigating features of Adam's sin that made a ransom possible. Without the extenuating circumstances that led to Adam's sin, the justice of God's love, would not have permitted a ransom for Adam or for a posterity from him. These extenuating circumstances are clearly presented in the Genesis narrative. Yet through a line of unsound reasoning, the entire testimony of the Genesis record has been wrested to support the hard hearted unscriptural view of an eternal condemnation against him. In this harsh judgment against Adam the fact is not taken into consideration that Adam possessed no knowledge of God's law, and that his knowledge of God was limited to a mere acquaintance with him as a beneficent Creator; and that because of Adam's total ignorance prior to his sin of the principle of evil, he possessed no practical knowledge of right and wrong. That the declared penalty for disobedience in the eating of the forbidden fruit conveyed no understanding to Adam's mind of these principles prior to his sin, but merely the thought of fate, is clear from the testimony of Genesis 3:22: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man has become as one of us to know good and evil."

Man's degree of love for God is in ratio to the knowledge of him possessed. Adam's love for God was for this reason limited to mere gratitude for the blessings of life he enjoyed at his hands. Eve's sin cast such a despondent gloom over Adam's mind, in the conviction that he was going to lose her, that these blessings became mere existing mockeries of his former happiness. It was in this state of hopeless despair, as the situation appeared to Adam's mind, that he sinned. Adam's sin was in no wise due to a moral degeneration as has been charged against him, but was the result of knowing disobedience in his failure to resist his murder by the Devil. The Devil unwittingly used the justice of God's law as the weapon to slay him. The mitigating circumstances of Adam's sin could not be taken into consideration by the justice of God's law to relieve him of the declared penalty for disobedience; but God's love could take these into consideration as a basis for a ransom to be provided in due time, and which the justice of God's law is bound to respect.

-- H. Silloway.

(To be continued in next issue)

The Letter to the Colossians

"If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory." - Col. 3:1-4, R. V.

THE PARAGRAPH to be considered in this discussion is the beginning of a new section in the letter. The controversy with the errorists of Colosse is ended, and Paul has entered upon his exhortations to those desiring to be "rooted and built up in Christ." (Col. 2:7.) The bridge that connects the two sections is, "If then but, in the words that follow, there is a reminder of the controversy which he considers as fully settled by the arguments already presented-lovingly, but with no lack of positiveness. This phrase, "If then ye were raised together with Christ," corresponds to the one that opens the previous paragraph (Col. 2:20), "If ye died with Christ"-an argument against submission to the thinking of the errorists. The new phrase serves the still loftier purpose of exhortation to the life of holiness, to which the rest of the epistle is principally devoted.

The first exhortation, "Seek those things that are above," nestles, as a jewel' in its golden setting, between two supreme inducements-one that the present should fully appropriate, and the other that adds unspeakable lustre to a glorious future: no better present inducement to "seek the things that are above" can be suggested than that the old life has been left behind, if "ye were raised together with Christ"; but to claim to have been raised together with Him becomes a mere farce if we do not "seek the things which are above, [the place] where Christ is," and where we hope to dwell with Him for eternity.

The exhortation that immediately follows is similar: "Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." In this instance, the reason follows, and is a double one: "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." By this arrangement the Apostle has placed the two jewels, the two precepts, in a setting of divine logic, motives beyond the pale of human selfishness. They embody the thought of union with Christ in His death and in His resurrection, and a consequent participation in His life, both the present hidden life and the future glorious one which is to be manifested to all creation. This full blossoming flower can be a possibility only if there has been the patient period of growth and development as a bud under the great Husbandman's direction.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

Earlier in the Epistle Paul has told us of the great change which, must be evident in every Christian, viewing it from the two aspects of death to the world, and death to self. (Col. 1:6, 10, 11; 2:10, 11) just as there is a definite time for this growth and experience, so there is also a definite means-union with Christ through faith. The faith that comprehends His death and appropriates it, can be trained to appropriate and experience His resurrection life. Thus -his death and resurrection become both the basis of salvation and the pattern of life. There is, too, in the latter a prophecy of the future life.

UNION BY FAITH WITH CHRIST

Only by a living faith can there be genuine communion with Christ, and only by a living faith can there be the communication of this hidden, but none the less real, life in Him. "In Him was life" (John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6; Rom. 5:21; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 John 5:12), and therefore, in the words of this Epistle (Col. 1:17), "in Him were all things created, and in Him all things consist." Jesus, in His discussion of the resurrection in John 5:24-26, uses a similar expression, but evidently with a different meaning, for there it is, "As the Father hath life in Himself" that He "hath given to the Son to have life in Himself." The Logos gave life to Adam and Eve and to all living creatures, drawing from the Heavenly Father's reservoir of grace. Just as from the day of His creation as the first-born of all creation (Col. 1:15-17) union with the Father maintained Him in life, so in God, the Self-existing One, all creation, including the Logos, lived and moved and had their being. (Acts 17:28; Exod. 19:4; Dent. 6:24; 33:27; Psa. 18:35; 37:17; 41:12; Isa. 41:10; 46:4; 63:9, etc.) "How precious is Thy lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou wilt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light." "In Him was life: and the life was the light of men." (Psa. 36:7-9, R. V.; John 1:4.) Finally there came a day that the Logos was given life in Himself in a new sense. From that day He has been "the express image of the Father's person" and therefore has life in Himself as the Father has life in Himself, and union with Him can give life in a new sense. - Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15.

It is impossible that a God of wisdom would trust Him with the supreme powers which this implies until He had been tested in the last point where weakness might show up some, moment in the eternity ahead. (Heb. 4:15.) And until the testing is finished and successfully passed, Jesus could not permit Himself to be called "good." (Matt. 19:17.) It is therefore not only a sympathetic Life-giver we have during the time of our being tested in all points, but One whose life has been tested for absolute perfection and who consequently can give life that is without spot or blemish or any such thing. (Eph. 5:27.) When the last of our tests has been successfully passed, we also can as safely be made "partakers of the divine nature."

Life as it is manifested in vegetation and the animal kingdom is dependent on union with the Fountain of life, though even the intelligent animal, man, is generally unaware of that union. The higher life of the new creation can be neither begun nor continued except by a conscious union with Him. In truth they must "acknowledge Him" in *all* their ways if He is to direct their paths and thus continue them in life. (Prov. 3:6.) In this way only is His fulness received into our emptiness, His righteousness into our sin-condemned being, His life into our deadness.

THE HIGHEST HUMAN ATTAINMENTS NOT SPIRITUAL

To "live after the flesh" is to starve the new creature, and to study the beauties of the Bible *merely* from an intellectual standpoint, would be following the flesh and might result in the deadening of every spiritual sensibility. The exercise will be good for the brain, but a vain thing in this battle against the world's allurements and the weaknesses of the flesh, especially as the powers of evil are arrayed on the world's side, with intellects far surpassing the best of ours. Such activity instead of being an evidence of life is only the galvanic twitching of the muscles in a corpse. If Christ lives in us, the symptoms of life should be continuous, and quickly so, if we live in Him, by Him, with Him, for Him. To this end all our powers, not excluding the best our brain can give, must be devoted.

The passage under consideration, along with many others, proves that the resurrection of Jesus was an uncontested article of faith in the early Christian religion. That resurrection is to us a seal of the Messiahship of Him who was "declared to be the Son of God with power, by His resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4); and it is a prophecy and an assurance of ours, for "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruit* of them that slept"; and, too, it is a pattern of our newness of life, as indicated in the exhortation to "*likewise* reckon ye yourselves to be dead unto sin." Union through Christ, if faithfully maintained, inevitably results in a moral and spiritual change, of which His resurrection is the symbol. Death with Christ brings to an end, reckonedly, the old life with all its selfish desires and sympathies with the sin that every where surrounds it; but resurrection with Him institutes a new life—new hopes, new aims, new thoughts, new activities, new capacities. The weaknesses of the flesh having been condemned, and covered by the precious blood, in this reckoning of ourselves dead, a new life is begun, in which by faith the Christian can say with the Apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) The heathen converts to whom Paul was writing were probably, many of them, outstanding examples of the contrast between the life that Jesus calls death (Matt. 8:22) and the "newness of life" in which all who are His must surely learn to walk. Those heathen, as well as their ancestors for many generations, had walked in the ways of sin, but they were now planted in a path, the end of which revealed, in vivid contrast to the blackness of sin, under the flood-light of divine love, their eternal hope, the heavenly home, "where Christ is."

Nothing less than true heart-appreciation has ever appropriated that hope. Many a mature Christian must look back regretfully on early years of merely intellectual acceptance of truths, years in which he was thinking of himself as being "dead with Christ," though actually still very much alive according to the flesh. He reached his maturity only when his *heart* had grasped Christ. Only then could there be any real death with Him or any living of the new resurrection life. "To this end Christ died, and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living" (Rom. 14:9), not however that He might be in the culmination Lord over dead Christians, but over those who are "alive in Him."

The resurrection life demands this, not only the highest type of morality, but much more than this. We are enjoined to "let not sin reign in our mortal bodies" (Rom. 6:12), and if Christ live in us, ours will be the Christ-life. The water in the stream and the water in the fountain are the same. The light that filters into earth's foulest dungeon does not lose its heavenly purity. The Christ that liveth in us is the same Christ that lives in heaven.

There are many arguments for the life beyond the grave, but the one proof of it is the resurrection of Jesus. Many excellent discourses have been preached on the subject of the resurrected life manifest in us, but by far the best one is the life itself, the "living" epistle—that discourse preached by the Christian in his daily living in newness of life, the life begotten in him "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 4:25; 10:9.) As Jesus manifested God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16; John 1:18; 17:6, 26), so also we should be effectively "epistles of Christ," showing forth **His** praises by living the new life that speaks not in praise of self, but of Him who bought us. - 2 Cor. 3:2, 3; 1 Pet. 2:9.

THE HIDDEN LIFE

However well we may in our present state show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, the great importance of that light will still remain hidden except for a few stray beams. Not only is it impossible for us to give out more than a very much obscured light, but as only man knoweth the things of man (1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Cor. 2:11), so only those who are living after the spirit can comprehend the things of the spirit. Our light must therefore in the main fall on blinded

eyes. There is a more important sense, however, in which ours is a hidden life. Its source is a hidden one, "Your life is hid with Christ in God." As another has said:

"The life of those who dwell in the secret place of the Most High may be called a Hidden Life, because the animating principle, the vital or operative element, is not so much in itself as in another. It is a life grafted into another life. It is the life of the soul incorporated into the life of Christ; and in such a way, that while it has a distinct vitality, it has so very much in the sense in which the branch of a tree may be said to have a distinct vitality from the root. It buds, blossoms, and bears fruit, in the strong basis of an eternal stock. 'I am the vine,' says the Savior, 'ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.' This is a great mystery, but it is also a great truth. The Christian, whose 'life is hid with Christ in God,' can never doubt that his spiritual existence and growth originate in, and are sustained in, that divine source alone.

"In the second place, the life which we are considering may properly be called a Hidden Life, because its moving principles, its interior and powerful springs of action, are not known to the world. This is what might naturally be expected from what has already been said in respect to the relation existing between a truly devoted Christian and his Savior; inasmuch as he is taken from himself, and is grafted into another, and has now become a 'new man in Christ Jesus.' The natural man can appreciate the natural man. The man of the world can appreciate the man of the world. And it must be admitted that he can appreciate, to a considerable extent, numbers of persons who profess to be Christians, and who are probably to be regarded as such in the ordinary sense of the term, because the natural life still remains in them in part. There is such a mixture of worldly and religious motives in the ordinary forms of the religious state, such an impregnation of what is gracious with what is natural, that the men of the world can undoubtedly form an approximated if not a positive estimate of the principles which regulate the conduct of its possessors. But of the springs of movement in the purified or Hidden Life, except by dark and uncertain conjecture, they, know comparatively nothing. Little can the men who, under the teachings of nature, have been trained up to the reception and love of the doctrine which inculcates 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' appreciate the evangelical precept which requires us, when we are assaulted, to 'turn the other cheek.' Still feebler and more imperfect is the idea which they form of that ennobling Christian philosophy which inculcates the love of holiness for holiness' sake. They are entirely at a loss, and, on any principles with which they are at present acquainted, they ever must be at a loss, in their estimate of that intimacy and sacredness of friendship which exists between God and the sanctified mind. Rightly is it said in the Scriptures, 'But the natural, man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.'

"Again, the Hidden Life has a claim to the descriptive epithet which we have proposed to apply to it, because, in its results upon individual minds, it is directly the reverse of the life of the world. The natural life seeks notoriety. Desirous of human applause, it aims to clothe itself in purple and fine linen. It covets a position in the market-place and at the corners of the streets. But the life of God in the soul, occupied with a divine companionship, is not so. It pursues a lowly and retired course. It obeys the precept of the Savior: 'When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and pray to thy father which is in secret.' It neither desires to see nor to be seen openly, except when and where duty calls it. It is willing to be little, to be unhonored, and to be cast out from among men. It has no eye for worldly pomp, no ear for worldly applause. It is formed on the model of the Savior, who was a man unknown. He came into the world, the highest personage on the highest errand; and yet so humble in origin, so simple in appearance, so gentle in heart and manners, that the world could not comprehend Him; and He was ever a sealed book, except to those who had the key of the inner life to open it with."

- P. E. Thomson.

(To Be Continued)

Conventions and Items of Interest

Annual Meeting

All lovers of our Lord Jesus and friends of the truth are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting of the Institute to be held at 2 p.m. in the office of the Institute at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn 17, N. Y., Saturday, June 2, 1951, as announced in our April issue. In addition to the primary business of the election of directors, opportunity will be given for consideration of, such other matters as may properly come before the meeting.

Members of the Institute who are not receiving the "Herald" in their own name, or the name of a member of the immediate family, but who are readers of the "Herald," should so inform the office at once so the proxy forms may be sent them.

In addition to the present directors, with exception of Brothers B. F. Hollister and P. L. Read, who have withdrawn their names, the following have been placed as nominees: T. G. SMITH, Gardiner, Me. T. P. TILLEMA, Schenectady, N. Y.

Recently Deceased

Brother Henry L. Hawes, Ilford, Eng. -- (March).
Sister Anna W. Jerbert, Seattle, Wash. -- (March).
Brother Wm. Pistorius, Spokane, Wash. -- (December).
Sister Martha H. Prediger, Santa Monica, Calif. -- (March).
Brother Allen M. Saphore, Jersey City, N. J. -- (April):
Sister Estelle Seeley, Jersey City, N. J. -- (March).

"The Hidden Life"

"Your life is hid with Christ in God." - Col. 3:3.

TURNING AGAIN for a little time to the consideration of the suggestion made in the last study that God has been creating "a church within the church" it *may* be to some advantage to seek a little further explanation *as* to the meaning of the word "church," and to its place in the out-working of the great design of God. As we find it used in our English New Testament it stands as the equivalent of the Greek word "*ekklesia*." This latter word could be used in both a local and a universal sense. Concerning this word Archbishop Trench (*Synonyms of the New Testament*) says:

"There are words whose history it is peculiarly interesting to watch, as they obtain a deeper meaning and receive a new consecration in the Christian Church; words which the Christian Church did not invent, but has assumed into its service and employed them in a far loftier sense than any to which the word had -- ever put them before. The very word, by which the Church is named is itself an example -- a more illustrious one could scarcely be found -- of this progressive ennobling of a word. For we have '*ecclesia*' in three distinct stages of meaning -- the heathen, the Jewish, and the Christian. In respect to the first -- the Greek in particular -- the '*ecclesia*' was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city *of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship, for* the transaction of public affairs. That they were 'summoned' is expressed in the latter part of the word; that they were summoned *out of* the whole population, a select portion of it, including neither the (whole) populace, nor strangers, nor yet those who had forfeited their civic rights -- this is expressed in the first."

In other words "*ecclesia*" indicated a called-out company, being based upon the prefix "*ek*" (or *ex*), meaning "out of" and "*kletos*" meaning "called." Here then is the basis for the word church -- "a called *out* company" and if it is correct to speak of "a church within a church," there would be before our minds the thought of "a company, called from within *a* called-out company."

This word passed into Jewish usage through the Septuagint Version of their Scriptures as the equivalent for two Hebrew words, which in their turn have passed over into our Old Testament text as "congregation" and "assembly." The Hebrew citizen looked upon the "assembly" or "congregation" of the faithful, gathered to the tabernacle or temple, as a people called out from the nations and set apart to God. When in later days they were unable, because of their dispersion, to foregather to the temple services, scattered companies came together for devotion in what came to be called "the synagogue" -- another Greek compound word. "Synagogue" thus stood for the place of the assembling, while congregation (or assembly) would represent (in our tongue) those who gathered at the synagogue. But even so, the idea of being called-out (or separated from the nations), persisted in their minds. Strangers, desirous of entering the Jewish faith, though accepted as proselytes, were not accorded full and complete membership, of equal status with those of Jewish birth because of this "out-calling."

Very slowly *as* the followers of Jesus drew away from former Jewish associations -- actuated largely by growing Greek influences upon them -- the word "*ecclesia*" came to be more generally adopted as the term to describe the little companies who gathered in his Name. Once only is the place of gathering described *as* the "synagogue," and that not *unexpectedly*, by James, the Apostle who longer than any other sought to maintain the bonds between church and synagogue unbroken. -- James 2:2.

In its first *and* local sense the "ecclesia" came to be looked upon as the company of like-minded saints which in any city, town, or village, met together to worship God in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and sought to build each other up in its holy faith. Consequently we read of "the ecclesia which is *in thy house*" (Philemon 2), "in their house" (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19) also of "the ecclesia of the Thessalonians" (1 Thess. 1:1), of the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16), and of various others.

Slowly the thought also assumed shape that all these little, widely scattered churches were in reality only one comprehensive church -- a church united by its mutual and all-pervading sense of loyalty to its one Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. This enlarging conception seems to emerge by comparing phrases in the earlier Epistles of *Paul* with those of his later prison days. In the earlier letters he speaks of "churches" *in the plural number* -- as for, instance in Romans 16:16: "the churches of Christ salute *you*," and in 1 Thess. 2:14: "the churches of God *which* are in Judea,"" also in 2 Cor. 11:28: "the care of all the churches" -- in each case a clear indication of the separateness and independence of each of these little companies.

But in his later writings the church as a comprehensive whole is more often focused sharply before his mind, as for instance in Eph. 1:22; and 5:25, 32; and also in Col. 1:18. Thus, in due time, by slow degrees, Paul had come to comprehend and understand the thought enunciated by his Lord before his death, who, when blessing Peter for a heaven given flash of light said, "On this rock will I build my church." (Matt. 16:18.) To the eyes of the forward looking Lord the Church of this Gospel Age was but one church -- not a multiplicity of churches linked up with this or that state or race, but one church linked together into one universal brotherhood -- by the power and spirit of the Living God.

But throughout the period of its long development the thought inherent in the word "ecclesia" still holds good. It is still the designation for a company "called-out" from a larger mass of men and for a special purpose, by One whose competence it was to institute and make that call. Men may change and misapply to their own ends the designation for God's elect -- even to calling the stone built pile "a church" -- but always the designation, as seen within the range of the divine intent, was reserved for the whole community of faithful souls, in every land, throughout the whole Gospel Age. One church only -- not many -- was the objective therefore of the divine call! How then is it possible to speak of a church within a church?

In a former study attention was directed to two contrasting facts which must bear repetition at this point. The first of these two facts drew attention to the millions of believing souls in many lands, who, in greater or less degree had confessed allegiance to the Name of the dear Son of God. The second drew attention to the Scriptural standard of Christlike character, required by God, in those who would constitute "the many sons" to be associated and exalted with the Firstborn Son. (Rom. 8:29, 30.) Not all the many millions have sought that conformity to God's dear Son, yet many have lived religiously and piously according to their light and capacity. Even in the Early Church this distinction is observable. Not all who believed on the Lord Jesus either then or since, seem to have, been possessed of the desire, either to suffer with him here, or to reign as Kings and Priests with him "there." Consequently, even though the church of this Age has been apparently but one, its composition, as seen by the watchful All-seeing Eye, has been divided into a "many" and a "few." Is there any warranty for this thought as concerning the Early Church? If so, will that warranty stand good for all the ensuing years till the church's call is ended?

As a first line of evidence let us consider the conditions of -- the heavenly call. These are set before us in many ways There is a "course" to be run, a "fight" to be fought; a "cup" to be drunk; a "baptism to be baptized, with; a "cross" to be borne, and a "prize" to be won!

But there is also a range of free gifts, for which there is *no* course to run; *no* fight to be fought; *no* cup to be drunk; *no* baptism to be baptized with; *no* cross to be borne; and *no* prize to be won! All this wide range of gifts is free; absolutely and unconditionally free, requiring only faith's accepting hand to take and possess! Even the very Book by means of which we learn of all this magnitude of grace is a gift; the light it sheds upon our way is also a beneficent gift; the Savior of whom it speaks is indeed a Gift of gifts; the salvation that reaches the sinner through him is a gift, as also is the life age-abiding which comes to us through knowing God. (John 17:3.) But none of these things constitute the "prize of the high calling" which those who "run so as to obtain" will receive at the end of their strenuous Christian way. Here is a distinction which separates the "many" from the "few." Millions have been ready to receive and find satisfaction in the gifts -- few only have been willing to undertake the rigors and sufferings essential to win the Prize! The provision of the gifts was dependent upon what Jesus *alone* had done; the obtaining of the "Prize" is made dependent upon what the Christian athlete, under God, *will himself have won*. There are therefore gifts for the *many* millions who will accept them as gifts, but there is also a prize for those (and only those) who run, and who run "so as to obtain." In line with this are the repeated assertions that "if we suffer with him, we shall reign with him." Here is the unchallengeable implication that, if we do not share the suffering, we shall not share, the Throne. A statement such as that would be both superfluous and meaningless if all were intended, by way of gift, to share the Throne. It is a plain indication that some would find pleasure in fulfilling the antecedent conditions of sufferings, and some would not! A very wide array of "ifs" in many, parts of the Apostolic writings -- too many for inclusion here -- all testify to the same end! "No cross, no crown" is a fact implicit in the heavenly call.

Again as a second line of evidence Paul makes various clear distinctions between some who were undertaking, or doing, certain necessary things, and some who were not.. As an instance he says (Rom. 6:3), "Know ye not that *so many as were baptized* into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Why that "so many as" if all had done the same thing? This point is so emphatic that certain modern translators, not discerning the distinction between the "many" and the "few" have seemed to want to tone down or iron out the conditional nature of the statement by translating (as the Revised Version for instance), "Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" as though "all we" was a fair equivalent for "as many as." But Paul's meaning is not so easily toned down as that, for he reiterates his thought a little later in the words: "For if we have been united with him;" and again, "But *if*, we died with Christ." (Rom. 6:5-8.) It is "if" we have been united with him in death, that we shall be united with him in life!

That the phrase, "as many as," does not necessarily mean, "we all, or "all we," in an unconditional and general sense, may be proved by making reference to other occurrences of the same Greek word. In Matt. 14:36, we read, "And as many as touched were made whole." The sick and suffering were, crowding around the Master seeking to touch his garments -- the result was "as many as touched it were made whole." Any not touching it were not made whole. Again in John 1:12, "To as many as received him to them gave he right to become children of God." Those not receiving him -- and there were many -- had no such right conferred.

Yet again "For as many as are led by, the spirit of God these are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.) Comment, here is needless. Again "As many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them." (Gal. 6:16.) And in conclusion "Let us therefore as *many* as be perfect [mature], be thus minded." (Phil. 3:15.) These illustrations are taken from a much larger list, but will suffice to show that the phrase, "as many as," indicates that difference exists between some who *do*, and some who *do not* comply with the context's terms of reference.

A nearly parallel phrase to Romans 6:3, is found in Galatians 3:27, which reads: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Again, in spite of the seemingly general statement of Gal. 3:26, some had been baptized into Christ and some had not! Paul is seeking to show the Galatians that the days of childhood tutelage are over, and that with the coming of "faith," the period of mature sonship has arrived. But of these same Galatians he says, "Now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments. . . . I am afraid of you lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain." -- See also Gal. 4:9, 11. . Reminding them again of the need to live above the flesh, he says (Gal. 5:24), "They that are of Christ have crucified the flesh." Only those who were truly Jesus' associates in the bonds of Christ had crucified the flesh -- others had not! Another passage in 2 Cor. 5:17, is also in line with this thought: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation." Why "if" any man, if all alike were in Christ, and all were "new creation"?

Here then from these varying standpoints we have Scripture evidence that even in Apostolic days the Church, possessed both an inner core of faithful' consecrated souls and an outer fringe of unstable, half believing souls, living, worshiping and cohering in the larger outer fellowship which had come to be called the Christian Church.

Is this state of things true also of later days after the Apostolic teachers had fallen asleep? There are good reasons to think that it is. One of our Lord's parables which links the sowing time with the harvest -- time seems to bear out such a thought. Tares intermingling with wheat were to remain untouched till the end of the Age. (Matt. 13:24-30; 37-43.) But the most appropriate and convincing proof of this is found in our Lord's final messages to the Churches. -- Rev. chapters 2 and 3.

In submitting these messages as evidence that there has always been a church within the church, throughout this Gospel Age, we 'know quite well that we are basing this evidence on what, to some students of the Word, is very uncertain ground. The writer is well acquainted with a certain line of thought expressed by not a few Expositors (and by some brethren in the Truth also) that these Epistles were addressed to the several churches whose names they bear, and were not intended, save as an expression of general Christian principles, to be applied to any period other than that of John, whose hand transcribed the words dictated by the Lord. Long and patient consideration has been given to the reasons adduced by pious and learned scholars for their insistence on this contemporaneous historical application to the Seven Churches, specified by the Lord Jesus, around the turn of the first century. One would not lightly disregard the conclusion of such able and saintly men, and only when the difficulties of such direct contemporaneous application outweighs the difficulties *they* cite concerning the age long historical application, would one turn away from their conclusions as altogether unsatisfying and inadequate to the understanding of the, words dictated by the Lord.

That has been indeed the experience of this pen. While it is not intended herein to weigh up these difficulties in the balances of extended investigation, it is at least permissible to state that far more difficulties, and of much greater complexity, were encountered in the application of these messages to the specified seven Churches alone, than, were to be found in their application to the age long universal Church, as it is known 'to have developed during the run of ecclesiastical history.

That they were intended to apply to the state of those seven Churches at the turn of that first century is admitted readily, but that they were additionally intended to have a larger, wider application to the whole universal Church is a conclusion so absolutely obvious and self evident to our understanding that one might wonder how any other thought has ever come to be

entertained. The position and relationship of the watchful, attendant Priest, who, of himself could say, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold I am alive for evermore" is sufficient of itself, alone, to show that he who was appointed the Shepherd and Bishop of all faithful souls, did not, and could not, confine his time and attention merely to *seven* out of the many churches then existing. This is a conclusion that some of the supporters of the other view have found themselves forced, reluctantly, to admit.

However this is not an argument pro-and-con as between the contemporaneous historical and the age long historical application. Our standpoint is most definitely that of the age-long historical. That is all we need or intend to say at this time. We leave the consideration of the messages to the seven Churches for a later article.

-- *T. Holmes, Eng.*

"I Will Come Again" - Jesus **The Five Successive Phases of the Advent**

This new book of 330 pages, by Brother Horace E. Hollister of the "Herald" Editorial staff, has met an enthusiastic reception since its publication January 1, 1951. It is believed to be the most complete treatment of this most important subject ever published.

What is "The Source Material"

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