

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXXIV July, 1951 No. 7

Annual Report of the Institute

CONSCIOUS of the Lord's providence in our coordinated efforts as well as in our individual lives, a review of the past year always has some of joy in it as well as of regret, joy that he has opened so wide the windows of heaven, and regret that our vessels have been so small.

While reporting to you who appointed us to serve as directors of the Institute during the past year, we trust that in a very real sense our Lord himself has been the Director and we merely his representatives. Though appreciative of the privileges granted us by our position, we recognize that there is a similar responsibility placed upon every individual whom the Lord has accepted as a member of his Body; faithfulness being expected of each, however much or little he may be permitted to serve.

PILGRIM SERVICE

It has been our good fortune to have this service somewhat augmented and much enhanced in interest and blessing the past year by the service of three brethren from Great Britain, Brothers Jennings and Lodge each having six weeks in the field, in 1950, and now Brother Jones of Cardiff, Wales, has started a more extended tour which we trust will grant most of the brethren of this continent, the privilege of his Fellowship and ministry.

Miles traveled	116,227
Meetings held	986
Attendance	20,865

CORRESPONDENCE

Because of physical limitations it has been necessary to ask many of the friends to accept "The Herald" as our answer to their letters. The blessings these communications have brought to us have been many and great. It seems to have been profitable to print some in "The Herald,"

especially those that open the hearts of all to share in the sufferings of our brethren abroad. Those offering suggestions or constructive criticism also are appreciated and referred to our Board of Directors or the Editorial Committee.

Letters received: 4,105
Letters sent out: 5,709

Our various publications, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, Daniel, the Beloved of Jehovah, Our Lord's Return, What Say the Scriptures about Hell?, The Herald of Christ's Kingdom*, and the several tracts, all have evidence of being appreciated by the friends. Some report good results from mailing tracts to the relatives of the deceased listed in their local papers, others delivering them from door to door, and some handing them out on the street to passersby, all doubtless with a prayer that the Lord will direct the result to his pleasing.

Though it is only just now ready for distribution, a new edition of the "*Divine Plan, of the Ages*" was decided on and most of the work on it done in the fiscal year on which we are reporting. In spite of the greatly increased cost of almost everything else this year, and the fact that we were able to have somewhat better materials in this volume; the price will need to be increased to only 75 cents; 10 at 70 cents each, postpaid. In this connection, we would remind the brethren that this is an exact reprint of the volume as written by Brother Russell. Never has the world been in greater need of the comforting Message contained in this book.

The book, "*I Will Come Again*" -- *Jesus*, written by Brother H. E. Hollister, a member of the Editorial Committee of the "Herald," -- was published by him this year, and we have advertised and endeavored to call it to the attention of the brethren in the hope that it will increase their faith in the "Lord's presence" and in the "love of his appearing."

A special edition of the "Herald," approximately 6,000 copies, was issued in May for distribution to those who might be interested through it in the institute and its work.

Some contributions have been received with the specification that the amount or a portion be used for the relieving of the, suffering; of brethren in Europe. This work seems to have been abundantly blessed as well as all other activities in which the Lord has 'permitted participation.

May the grace of the Lord guide all of us to more faithfulness this coming year in the use of all the privileges he provides, "doing *with our might* what our hands find to do.

Report of Annual Meeting

Balance Sheet April 30, 1951

Assets

Cash -- -- On hand and in bank \$ 8,548.05

Accounts Receivable 104.92 Inventory of Books, etc.

Pocket Edition -- Divine Plan ... \$ 12.88

Revelation Exposition -- Van. I 361.00

Daniel Exposition ... 383.00

Hell 'Booklet,' 'Our Lord's Return,

Booklet, Tabernacle Shadows, etc 173.89

Total Inventory 930.47

Annuities Receivable 6,331.04

Property, at 177 Prospect Place 12,000.00

Total Assets \$27,914.48

Less: Accounts Payable 101.25

Net Worth (as per statement below) \$27,813.23
Statement of Income and Expense

and Analysis of Net Worth May 1 1950 to April 30, 1951

Income

Contributions -- General Purpose \$ 6,827.92

"Herald" Subscriptions 1,192.23

Gain on Sale of Books, etc 76.76

Rental Income ... 540.00

Total Income ... \$ 8,636.91

Expenses

Pilgrim Expense \$5,426.43

Printing and Mailing 'Herald' 2,295.11

Allowances to Office Staff .. 2,910.00

Free Literature 847.43 . Maintenance of Property, including taxes, gas, electricity, insurance, and repairs 1,150.22 Comfort Committee Expense 74.58

Office Expense 421.92

Total Expense ,... . 13,125.69

Expense fiscal[

;\$ 4,488.78

Net Worth, May, 1,950 32,302.01

Net Worth April 30 1951 4as per Balance Sheet'

above) 1.. ... \$27,813.23

Statement of Auditors --

The books of account and record of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., were examined by us, covering the fiscal period from May' 1, 1950 to April -30 1951; and in our opinion and to the best of our knowledge and belief they show the correct, historical record of the above mentioned -- year. The foregoing

financial statements are in agreement with the said books

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of account.. ,

THOMAS P. TILLEMA

FimEnExlex A. LANCE

Louis NEWMAN

Following the usual devotional service and the election of chairman and secretary for the meeting, Brothers Jordan and Thomson, the reports for the past year were heard and unanimously approved.

The first report, given orally, was that of the Chairman, who was able to report a year of cordial, and he believed, profitable cooperation. The reports of the Treasurer, the Auditing Committee, and that of the Board are the Treasurer calling attention to the fact that our most valuable assets, the good will of the Lord and the brethren, could not be listed in a financial report. During the meeting a unanimous vote of thanks was accorded Brothers P. L. Read and B. F. Hollister for their faithful service of the past and their assurance of continued cooperation.

After the votes of the members in attendance at the meeting were collected, and while the votes and the proxies, previously received, were being counted by the Tellers, Brothers Newman, Boyle, and Glass, the friends fellowshipped in the singing of hymns and testimonies, and several selections were sung, by Brother J. T. Read. On the return of the Tellers it was announced that Brothers F. A. Essler, H. E. Hollister, J. C. Jordan, J. T. Read, W. J. Siekman, T. G. Smith, and P. E. Thomson had been elected to serve as the directors of the Institute for the coming year.

At the session of the Board held after the closing of the Annual Meeting, among other actions taken for the coming year, the following brethren were appointed: Chairman, J. C. Jordan, Vice chairman, W. J. Siekman; Treasurer, J. T. Read; Secretary, P. E. Thomson. Editorial Committee: R. W. Godfrey, A. Gonczewski, H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, J. B. Webster. Full time Pilgrims: F. W. Petran, J. T. Read, P. E. Thomson, Part time pilgrims: Brothers H. J. Barlow, L. Benedict, C. Czohara, J. E. Dawson, F. A. Essler, C. M. Glass, A. Gonczewski, E. W. Hinz, B. F. Hollister, H. E. Hollister, A. Jarmola, W. Lankheim, C. A. Liomin, G. E. Lodge, C. Loucky, G. Oberg, W. H. Peck, L. Petran, P. L. Read, C. G. Reynolds, W. C. Roberts, F. Shallieu, T. G. Smith, T. P. Tillema, W. Urban, A. Van Sant, A. L. Vinin, B Webster, J. Wyndelts.

"1951 Printing of "The Divine Plan of the Ages"

Our new edition of, the "Divine Plan" is now ready for mailing. It is an attractive little volume -- pocket size, of black cloth, flexible binding, with gold lettering. Single copies, seventy cents each; in lots of ten or more, seventy cents each, -- postpaid.

Never has the world been in greater need of the comforting message contained in this volume. May we all realize our privilege and responsibility of sharing in this ministry of the divine message binding up the broken hearted, comforting all that mourn. Gracious privilege!

Treasurer's Report

Inventory and Sale of Books

	Inventory	Sales
Pocket Edition, Divine Plan	34	251
Revelation Exposition, Volume I	722	31
Daniel Exposition	766	41
Hell Booklet	852	212
"Our Lord's Return" Booklet	1,048	54

Balance Sheet April 30, 1951

Assets		
Cash-On hand and in bank		\$ 8,548.05
Accounts Receivable		104.92
Inventory of Books, etc.		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan	\$ 12.58	
Revelation Exposition-Vol. I	361.00	
Daniel Exposition	383.00	
Hell Booklet, "Our Lord's Return,"		
Booklet, Tabernacle Shadows, etc	<u>173.89</u>	
Total Inventory		973.47
Annuities Receivable		6,331.04
Property at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N. Y		12,000.00
Total Assets		<u>\$27,914.48</u>
Less: Accounts Payable		<u>101.25</u>
Net Worth (as per statement below)		<u>\$27,813.23</u>

Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth May 1, 1950 to April 30, 1951

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Total Income		<u>\$ 8,636.91</u>
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Printing and Mailing "Herald"	2,295.11	
Allowances to Office Staff	2,910.00	
Free Literature	847.43	
Maintenance of Property, including taxes, gas, electricity, insurance, and repairs	1,150.22	
Comfort Committee Expense	74.58	
Office Expense	<u>421.92</u>	
Total Expense		<u>13,125.69</u>
Net Expense for fiscal year		<u>4,488.78</u>
Net Worth, May 1, 1950		<u>32,302.01</u>
Net Worth, April 30, 1951		<u>\$27,813.23</u>
(as per Balance Sheet above)		

Statement of Auditors

The books of account and record of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., were examined by us, covering the fiscal period from May 1, 1950 to April 30, 1951, and in our opinion and to the best of our knowledge and belief they show the correct historical record of the above mentioned year. The foregoing financial statements are in agreement with the said books of account.

THOMAS P. TILLEMA, FREDERICK A. LANGE, LOUIS NEWMAN

The Fight for Liberty

"Fight the good fight of faith." - 1 Tim. 6:12.

ALL THE liberty there is in the world today has been paid for; none of it has been attained without sacrificers. Why? Because selfishness is so entrenched in the race that those who possess power, authority, privilege, opportunity, would hold these for themselves to the disadvantage of others, to the enslavement of others, were not the rights and liberties fought for. Looking back over the history of nations, without approving of wars, every reasoning mind can see, nevertheless, that only through wars have liberties come to the race. The mistake that is being made today is the supposition that humanity would ever be able to attain the condition of absolute equality and unselfishness through laws or wars or any other means within the power of Adam's race.

The Scriptures point out to us that there is a limit beyond which we must not expect selfish humanity to make progress-that any progress beyond that limit must come from on high, through the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son that while wealth and influence and talents will yield to the pressure of the masses for their own protection and aggrandizement, they will not yield everything, but would permit the entire social structure to dissolve rather than to submit to a general equalization, as is the aim of Socialism. Hence Socialism, while not intending anarchy, will produce anarchy; while striving for greater liberty and universality of blessings of earth it will effect a wreck of all these. Thanks be to God that his program is that on this wreck of present institutions he will establish the true reign of liberty on the plane of love, under the guidance of the Master and his joint-heirs.

THE CHRISTIAN'S FIGHT

If the world's liberty has required fighting for, much more may we expect a battle for those who take the still higher ground of the Bible, and who strive for the "liberty wherewith Christ makes us free." (Gal. 5:1.) For although this very Scripture declares that Christ gives this freedom, the Word shows us that he gives it only to those who desire it and who will fight for it. Their battle is not to be with carnal weapons which the law of love forbids, yet their warfare is to be mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds of error. Against what, then, do they battle? We answer that their chief fight is against the fallen tendencies of their own beings. They find that, through the long centuries of the fall, sin has become inbred and entrenched in their flesh to such a degree that it necessitates a warfare in the new mind. They get the new mind or disposition through hearkening to the Word of the Lord, which while speaking peace and forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ, invites to a newness of nature and a joint-heirship with Christ through a full consecration of all to the divine service-to the service of righteousness and truth. The making of the consecration on the part of the believer was his entering upon the career of a good soldier of the Lord Jesus. It was his engagement to battle against sin and selfishness everywhere, according to the rules laid down by the chief Captain.

To the surprise of every soldier he finds that some of his greatest battles are within. True he finds the world an opponent to his full devotion of time and talent and influence to the service of the Truth. The world is not prepared for such an extreme, which more or less reproves it of sin and selfishness: the world, therefore, sneers and cries "hypocrite," "saint," etc., and seeks to turn aside the consecrated. To be a good soldier he must be prepared for this and have on the sandals of preparation afforded by the Gospel, else the difficulties strewn in his path by worldly opposition would soon make him so footsore that he would be disposed to turn back notwithstanding the term of his enlistment -"even unto death." The Adversary also is a foe who must be reckoned

with, and whose subtle attacks may be encountered in various ways. The Christian soldier has the assurance of his Captain that all the arts of the Adversary are known to him, and that all his interests shall be guarded so long as he is loyal to his Captain and faithful to his consecration and enlistment.

But, as we have said, the chiefest of all the Christian soldier's opponents is the human foe -the weaknesses and cravings and demands and subtle persecutions, etc., of the fallen conditions of his own' mind and body. To his surprise he finds himself a slave to his own weaknesses, and that he must battle daily, hourly almost, for victory, in order to attain fully the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed. From this standpoint all battles against our own fleshly weaknesses, our own selfish instincts and propensities, are battles for liberty, battles for right, battles on the Lord's side. Our great Captain is not so much wishing us to fight his battles as wishing us to fight the good fight of faith in ourselves; and in this matter he is ready to assist us, and without him we can do nothing. True, our battles extend beyond ourselves sometimes when, either amongst the Lord's brethren, the Church, we need to battle for the Truth, the right, or in our contact with the world we may sometimes find hostilities necessary.

Amongst the Lord's people, even in the Apostles' day, there was a tendency at times to fight each other rather than to fight the Devil and the spirit of the world and the weaknesses within. The organs of combativeness and destructiveness, which would serve a Christian soldier in good stead if directed against his own weaknesses and blemishes, are sadly out of place when, ignoring his own weaknesses, he merely becomes contentious with the brethren-often over nothing, or over questions whose importance he exaggerates, because of his contentious spirit. Such should remember the Scriptural statement that greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city (Prov. 16:32.) The Apostle refers to that misdirection of Christian energy which bites and devours one another, and tends to the destruction of all that is spiritual amongst the Lord's people. Not that the Apostle favored slackness as respects the important principles of the divine revelation, for he himself urged that we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered, to the saints. (Jude 3.) But this earnest contending is not to be done in a biting and devouring manner-it is to be with patience and longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love.

The Lord's people have enlisted as New Creatures, Spirit begotten, to walk (to live) not after the flesh but after the spirit, and must continually recognize this fact, and keep watch that they are walking in line with the spirit of truth, and must know that in so doing they will not be fulfilling the desires of their fallen flesh. The Apostle states this as a positive rule, without exception, that the flesh, the natural inclinations, tendencies, lusts or desires, are contrary to the spirit, and likewise the spirit desires are contrary to the flesh. These two desires being opposed one to the other we cannot gratify both, and whichever is gratified it will be so at the expense of the other. If we ever want to attain to the true liberty wherewith Christ makes us free we should know that it can be only by a persistent warfare of the new mind against every sinful tendency and inclination of the old nature. It is not the new will warring against the old, for the old will we have reckoned dead. It is the new will warring against the flesh, which the old will used to control, and which flesh still has its evil tendencies.

The new will, therefore, needs all the sustaining strength and assistance which it can secure. Many of these are provided for it as food, nourishment, strength, through the Word of God, whose exceeding great and precious promises are given in order that the new will may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might through faith, and conquer in all of its battles with the flesh.

The Apostle's declaration, "Ye cannot do the things which ye would," is in full accord with all our experiences. We can sometimes do as we would in some things, we can gain the victory over the flesh; but there are certain weaknesses, failings, blemishes in our flesh which are so powerful that the new mind never gets as complete a mastery over them as it desires. Nevertheless in all the battles being waged the new mind grows stronger and stronger while the flesh grows weaker and weaker. The Scriptural proposition, however, is that we must expect to have more or less of these battles until our dying moments. Thank God that will be the end of the strife, for in the resurrection we are promised new bodies, perfect, complete, in which the new mind will be able to exercise itself without conflict. That is the rest which remains for the people of God, and associated with it will be various other blessings, honors, dignities and responsibilities which the Lord has promised.

The works of the flesh the Apostle enumerates, and they are all violations of the law of love under which the New Creatures in Christ are being examined; they all come under the head of selfishness and imply injury to our fellow-creatures. He enumerates these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, malice, wrath, strife, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. The Apostle points out that anyone begotten of the spirit who walks, that is who lives, along the lines of these works of the flesh need have no hope of any share in the Kingdom of Heaven. He does not say that all such would share in the Second Death, but we know of a surety how such conduct persisted in would ultimately result in the Second Death. It is sufficient for our purpose, however, to leave the matter where the Apostle does, and to note that there is no prospect for a share in the Kingdom for any who do these works of the flesh and of the devil.

It is unfortunate for some that they seem unable to realize the scope of this testimony; they seem to think of adultery, drunkenness, and murder as being the crimes that would debar from a share in the Kingdom. They overlook the fact that the Lord defined adultery to be a desire to do evil where only the opportunity is lacking; that he defined murder as represented in that condition of heart which hates a brother. They overlook the statement of the Apostle in this very list that the spirit of variance, the spirit of ambition and jealousy, the spirit of envy and division, are spirits of the flesh and in opposition to the New Creature

led by the holy spirit. O, if all of the Lord's people could have in mind these searching tests and apply them to their own lives, what a profit would result, what a blessing, what a fleeing from these weaknesses of the old nature, what a fighting against them for the liberty of the New Creature and its final attainment to glory, honor, and immortality with their Lord in the Kingdom!

- *Reprints*, pages R3857-9.

Our Lord's Return - Part I

"Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." - Titus 2:13

WE MAKE no apology for dealing with a subject which of late has been prominently in the minds of many brethren and the basis of much discussion; for if we have grown weary in our consideration of this wonderful theme, we need to examine our hearts as to whether we have lost our "first love" for the Lord.

The doctrine of "Our Lord's Return" is one of the most important themes of the Bible. In fact it is second only in importance to the doctrine of our Lord's atoning sacrifice. The place which it occupies in Holy Writ is such that undoubtedly it was intended that this subject 'should always' be prominent in the minds of God's people; that the hope of this great event should exercise a molding influence in their lives and characters, and that it should be the goal of their ambitions.

We have only to turn to our Bibles to note that all the hopes of the Church, the assurance of restitution times and the utterances of all God's holy prophets center around the fact that the Lord would one day return in power and great glory. The disciples of the early Church had seen his coming, but in the body of his humiliation. The prophecies had taught them to look for the advent of Messiah, and it was the central hope of all true Israelites. A few there were who recognized the Lord during his presence among them. This recognition was expressed in the words of Peter when he boldly confessed Jesus to be the Christ 'for whom all Israel had been waiting and longing. It is therefore evident that this theme must have been very prominent in the Scriptures which we now call the Old Testament. On the basis of this recognition those early disciples of Jesus looked to him to set up his Kingdom, but instead of that he suffered and died. In their ardent longing for his Kingdom of glory and blessing, they had overlooked certain other prophecies which told of the necessity that he should suffer and be offered as a sacrifice.

The sentiments of those bewildered and perplexed disciples were expressed by one on his way to Emmaus after the death of Jesus: *"We trusted that it would have been he which should have redeemed Israel."* (Luke 24:21.) We recall how the Traveler, who afterward was recognized as the resurrected *Lord* Jesus, gently rebuked them for their failure to "rightly divide the word of truth." True indeed, the Scriptures abounded with statements concerning the coming of Messiah in power and great glory, but how slow of heart they had been to believe *all* that the Prophets had spoken. Their faith was 'strengthened and their hopes revived as Jesus, beginning at Moses and *all* the Prophets showed them that Christ must first suffer and then enter into his glory.

In this consideration it is our desire to remind one another of various statements found in the Word of God which may have lain dormant in the mind, and to reexamine them, to see whether our confidence has been based on a firm and sure foundation. Throughout this Gospel Age the Adversary; has very successfully deceived the vast majority of professing Christian people concerning what the Scriptures teach. By failing to "rightly divide the word of truth," and by taking statements out of their context, theories and doctrines have been built up which are not in harmony with the whole of Scripture., In these "latter days," so far as the Lord's people are concerned, and perhaps more especially those who have been blessed with the knowledge of "present truth," it will be generally agreed that the subject of our Lord's Return is one of the most

precious themes of the Bible. It means, so much to those who have been privileged to understand something of the ways of God.

To understand something concerning the manner of our Lord's Return it is helpful to consider some aspects in connection with the First Advent, for the differences of viewpoint among the Lord's people today are due in large measure to a failure to rightly appreciate the manner in which his Return would be accomplished. At the time of our Lord's birth it is recorded that all Israel were in expectation of the Messiah. (Luke 3:15.) The various prophecies indicated that at approximately that time the advent of the Messiah would take place.

The natural mind would have thought -- and indeed the majority of Israel did think -- that such an event would be heralded far and wide; that it would be accompanied by great signs and wonders for all to behold in order that there could be no mistake concerning the identity of this One. Instead of that his advent was unheralded except, to a few watching shepherds on the hillside. He grew to manhood's estate and came to the waters of Jordan, and of him John the Baptist said to the rulers of Israel: *"There standest One among you whom ye know not."* (John 1:26.) Yes, he came to his own, he moved among them daily, and although his presence was accompanied by certain signs, yet they knew him not.

During that time the Lord was doing a separating work in Israel among those who professed to be the people of God. John the Baptist described that work when he said, *"I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier, than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into, his garner; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."* (Luke 3:16, 17) The Scriptures indicate that all the signs of his presence were there, and when later John sent from his prison to inquire: "Art thou He that should come?" Jesus pointed to these signs to show that he was indeed the One sent of God.

The signs of his Messiahship were for all Israel to behold; there was nothing secret about them, and yet they did not recognize him, for his presence among them was not in accord with their expectations. So it was that Jesus, said to them: *"When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.... Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?"* (Luke 12:b4-56.) It is clear, therefore, that the period of our Lord's first presence among those' who claimed to know God, even although 'accompanied by signs, was undiscerned by all except a very few. It was a "harvest -- time" when over -- a period a separating work was taking place -- the "wheat" was being gathered into the garner of the Gospel Church; while the "chaff" was set aside: for burning. Is it unreasonable to assume that the conditions prevailing during that time of our Lord's presence would again exist when he came the second time?

"IN LIKE MANNER"

It was at the close of our Lord's First Advent, after he had been raised from the dead forty days, and was gathered with his disciples, that they asked him concerning the establishment of his Kingdom. He told them to wait for the coming of the holy spirit upon them, and he was taken up from them into heaven.. While they were still looking up, two men stood beside them and *said: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come' in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* - Acts 1:11.

It is interesting to note, first of all, two things that the messengers did *not say*. There is no suggestion in this statement that the return of the Lord would be seen by any. The verse does *not* say that the disciples would *see* him come as they had seen him go. Neither does it say that he would return in like form as they had seen him go. It is true that they saw him ascend into heaven in the form of human flesh, but when speaking of his return, the messengers said that it would be *in like manner*.

It was essential that the disciples should *see* the departure of our Lord in order that the *manner* of his return might be clearly understood. What was the manner of his departure into heaven? One is impressed with the quietness of it all. It might have been thought that here was an opportunity for the Lord to reveal himself to men as the great Messiah of God. What an impression could have been made on the minds of men if he had ascended in the midst of a stirring discourse in, the crowded Temple in, Jerusalem, or from some place where the crowds were wont to meet! But no, his going away, from earth was unaccompanied by any great signs or wonders. *All were unmindful of what, was taking place. The world was proceeding on its normal course, eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage.*" The heavenly messengers desired to make known to those watching disciples that just as his departure had been unnoticed and had not in any way seemed to alter the course of world events, so *in like manner* his return would be unobserved; men would be going about their ordinary business, and his coming would seem to have had no effect on the course of men and nations.

Nowhere do the Scriptures, when rightly understood, teach that the coming of the Lord, or the moment of his arrival, would be accompanied by any outward sign or event in the earth. Many are the Scriptures which speak of the signs of his *presence*, *but* the moment of arrival was to be unknown and unobserved by any. We will hope to consider later some Scriptural statements which on a casual reading would seem to suggest that the *arrival* of our Lord would be attended by great wonders and signs.

The teaching of Scripture -- is clear, that the purpose of his return is that his Kingdom might be established in the earth, and all the promises for the blessing of mankind and their reconciliation with God, spoken of by all the holy prophets, might be fulfilled. Before this work of blessing can proceed, however, all those who are to be "heirs of the Kingdom," to reign with Christ as his joint heirs, must have been tried and tested and exalted to the spirit nature like unto their Lord. Our Lord himself indicated that this gathering to himself would precede the blessing of mankind, and was to be the first work of his Second Advent. How cheering were his words to the troubled and perplexed disciples: "*If I go I will come again, and receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also.*" -- John 14:2, 3.

There are those *who* affirm that this gathering together of His people is the work of a moment, and the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17 are quoted in support of "this view: "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain SHALL BE CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*" To suggest that all this is the work of a moment is to make the passage contradict itself, and a careful examination of the context will show that the Apostle could not have had in mind an instant of time, but a period during which this work of gathering together the Lord's elect would take place. Paul says clearly: "*The dead in Christ shall rise FIRST THEN we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them.*" Rotherham translates this portion even more clearly: "*The dead in Christ shall rise FIRST, AFTER THAT we, the living who are left... .*"

Surely such language cannot mean that the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the gathering of the living members occur at the same moment of time! This is emphasized by the Apostle's statement in 1 Thess. 4:15 of this chapter, where he says, "*We which are alive and remain UNTO the parousia [or presence] of the Lord*" -- such will not precede them which are asleep. It is interesting to note that the Greek word which is here translated "*unto*" is the word "eis," and can equally well be translated "*into*." There will be those of the Lord's people who will remain *into* the "parousia period." It is of these the Revelator write, in Rev. 14:13: "*And I heard a voice from heaven saying; unto me: 'Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.'*" Why blessed? Paul supplies the answer in 1 Cor., 15:51: "*Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.*" The faithful overcomer of the "parousia" period will not sleep, but will be changed at the moment of death.

It may be said, however -- "But does not this verse in Thessalonians say that those who are alive and remain 'shall be *caught up together with them*'? Does that not indicate a simultaneous gathering together?" Let us look at another Scripture where the same word "*together*" is used -- 1 Thess. 5:10: "*whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him [Christ].*" No one will suggest that this Scripture teaches that the moment of our resurrection is simultaneous, and that it took place 2,000 years ago, when our Lord was resurrected! Thus we are able to see that "we which are alive and remain" into the "parousia" period "shall be caught up" so that we might be *together with* Christ and those who have slept.

As during our Lord's first, Advent there was a harvest period in which those who claimed to be God's people were dealt with, so also during his second Advent according to the Scriptures, separating work is to take place among the professed followers of Christ. In the parable of the "Wheat and Tares, recorded in Matthew 13, the Lord of the harvest says -- "*In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers,*" etc. -- "*I will say to the reapers*" -- He will be present during that time, and not until that "harvest work" is complete will "*the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.*" (Matt. 13:43.) Thus it will be seen that the Lord will be present for a period prior to the shining forth of the righteous.

There are many Scriptures which exhort the Lord's people to watchfulness in connection with the return of our Lord, and it is appropriate to ask -- "What is the object of watching, if he is already present?" It will be our endeavor to show how important it is that the Lord's people should be ever watchful if they would be aware of his return. The fact that so many who once rejoiced in the doctrine concerning our Lord's "parousia" have now rejected this truth, gives added weight and solemnity to this exhortation to watchfulness.

What is it that the Lord's people are to watch for? We would suggest that we are not exhorted to watch for the moment of his arrival, for the Scriptures indicate that the coming or arrival of the Lord would be undiscerned by any. "*Ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.. .In such an hour AS YE THINK NOT, the Son of man cometh.*" (Matt. 24:42, 44.) The parable of "The Wise and Foolish Virgins" teaches that *they all* were unaware of the bridegroom's arrival -- "*they all slumbered and slept*" until the cry went forth, "Behold the bridegroom!" (The word "cometh" in the Authorized Version, is omitted by Rotherham and the Diaglott.) We are exhorted to watch because the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.

Many have made the mistake of thinking that only the commencement or the moment of arrival is referred to, whereas a period of time subsequent to the arrival is spoken of. An illustration of this

is seen in 2 Peter 3:10: *"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night."* The Apostle did not use the Greek word "erchomai," which means to come or "to arrive." He used the word "heko," which is translated "come" in the Authorized Version, but which means *"to have come" or "to be here."* The word has in it the thought not only of the arrival, but of the period which follows it. Peter is therefore saying that the day of the Lord *will be here* as a thief in the night. Again, in Rev. 3:3, our Lord says, *"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will COME on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will COME upon thee."* Both of the words here translated "come" are taken from the same Greek word "heko," and our Lord warns us concerning the need for watchfulness -- for he will be here as a thief, and those not watching will be unaware of his presence.

This Greek word "heko'." is used 27 times in the New Testament, and in order to get its meaning clear we will refer to one or two other Scriptures where it is used. In Hebrews 10:7, 9 we read *"Lo, I COME ["heko"] to do Thy will, O God."* Our Lord was *not* saying that *he* was coming to do God's will; no, he came to the Father in the spirit of full consecration and said: *"Father, I have come, I am here to do thy will."* The word has in it the thought, not of an anticipated event, but of an accomplished fact.

Already we have referred to our Lord's parable of the "Ten Virgins," which teaches that *all of them* were slumbering when the Bridegroom arrived. The opening verse of Matthew 25 says *"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be, likened unto ten virgins."* To understand just when this would apply, it is essential to note the closing verses of the previous chapter. There our Lord speaks of a faithful and wise servant whom he will make ruler over all his goods. Then he goes on to speak of an evil servant who says in his heart: "My Lord delayeth his coming," and proceeds to smite his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunken. A casual reading of Matt. 25:50 would seem to suggest that it is after this the Lord would come to, punish the evil servant. But the word translated "come" is the Greek word "heko" and refers not to something future but to that which has already taken place. With that thought in mind, let us read verses 48-50 (Matt. 25:48): *"But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord, delayeth his coming ["erchomai arrival]; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant SHALL HAVE COME ["heko" -- be here] in, a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of..."* It is at that time -- during the Lord's PRESENCE -- that the Kingdom shall be likened unto five wise and five foolish virgins. How necessary, therefore, that we should be watchful, in order that we might discern those signs which indicate that the Lord is here. We need continually to study God's Word and also to look around us to see whether the signs foretold are taking place in the heavens and in the earth.

THREE PHASES OF HIS PRESENCE

Much of the confusion in the minds of Christian people concerning the subject of our Lord's Return is due to a failure to appreciate that there are three distinct phases of our Lord's Second Presence spoken of in the Scriptures. First, there is the thief like aspect of his Presence; second, there is the "bright shining" or manifestation; and, third, there is the revelation or uncovering.

The Scriptures teach clearly that his arrival and the immediate period following that event will be thief-like; only the watchers will be aware of his presence as they discern those signs in the earth and among the Lord's people which indicate his return. All others will be in darkness concerning this matter, troubled and perplexed by the unusual and unprecedented happenings about them. The "manifestation" of his presence will be to the watching ones and is referred to in the Scriptures as the "appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." In Titus 2:13 we read of those who are *"looking for that blessed hope, and the, glorious APPEARING of our Lord and Savior Jesus*

Christ." The Apostle is not referring to the coming or arrival of the Lord, but to one particular aspect of his *presence* -- to his *appearance or manifestation*. The Greek word used is not "parousia" but "epiphania" and refers to an appearance or "bright shining" which is associated with his presence. This Greek word is also used in 2 Thess. 2:8, and is translated "brightness." It refers to a brightness associated with the "parousia" or presence of our Lord. "Then shall that Wicked One be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the epiphania of his parousia" -- "the *bright shining of his presence.*"

We are reminded of our Lord's, words concerning, the signs of his presence, as recorded in Matthew 24: ""For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the PRESENCE [not -- coming] of the Son of man be." The word "lightning" is taken from a Greek word which means "brightness" or "bright - shiner." In Luke 10:18 it clearly refers to lightning -- "*I beheld Satan AS LIGHTNING fall from heaven*"; in Luke 11:36 it refers to the shining of a candle, while in Matthew 24:27 it refers to the sun or other bright object -- the - context must help us to decide. The picture in Matthew 24 is a beautiful and convincing one, and comprehends both the "epiphania" -- and the "apokalupsis" of the Lord's "parousia." The reference is to the rising of the sun at the dawn of a new day and is one -- with which those disciples of Jesus were very familiar.

In Palestine, dawn is an entirely different thing from anything we know in this land. The first indication that another day is commencing, is a grayness in the eastern sky, which within a few minutes is streaked with shafts of pink. Then, quite rapidly, from the east a brilliant light can be seen moving across the sky, illuminating the clouds with pink and white and beautifying the whole landscape. It is this emergence of light from the east toward the west to which our Lord drew the attention of the disciples. Only the watchers were aware of the dawning of another day. In Israel of old, the Temple priests and the city watchmen eagerly watched and waited for the first indications of dawn, while all others slept in ignorance until the dazzling beams of sunshine were over all the land.

How full of meaning are the words of Isa. 21:11-12: "*How far has the night gone, watchman? How far has the night gone, watchman? The watchman answers, Morning comes, morning -- and night.*" (Moffatt.) The French version is very forceful -- "*The morning cometh, BUT IT IS YET DARK.*" -- "*So shall also the presence of the Son of man be.*" Only the watchers will discern the signs of his presence *while it is yet dark*; only such will appreciate the true meaning of the seemingly strange events which are transpiring in the world about and in the Church. During our Lord's First Advent, John said of him: "*The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not*"; so it will be during our Lord's Second Presence -- only the children of the light will discern his "bright-shining."

THE APOKALUPSIS -- UNVEILING

The third phase of our Lord's presence is the revelation or uncovering, and it is this aspect which is so frequently confused with the coming or arrival of our Lord. Every faithful follower of Christ looks forward with joyful anticipation to the time when the Lord shall be revealed. This great and glorious event is spoken of by Peter in 1 Peter 1:13 where the Apostle exhorts us to "*hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the REVELATION of Jesus Christ.*" The Greek word "apokalupsis" is used here and refers to an unveiling of that which is already present. The Scriptures teach that it is this phase of our Lord's presence in which the Church are to be so closely associated with the Lord in glory. Peter prays "*that the trial of your faith . . . might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the [apokalupsis] appearing of Jesus Christ,*" Paul tells us that *the whole creation is waiting for the "apokalupsis"* -- the manifestation of the sons of God.

We are exhorted to rejoice that we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be *uncovered or revealed* we may be glad also with exceeding joy. For us there is reserved in heaven, "*an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled and that fadeth not away, ready to be UNCOVERED or REVEALED in the last time.*"

It has been our endeavor in this consideration, to show from the Word of God, the object and manner of our Lord's Return. He is now testing all those who have taken his Name to themselves and who profess to be his followers. In view of all the privileges of knowledge and understanding we enjoy at his time, how great is the responsibility which rests upon each child of God! The work of shaking and sifting is going on as never before; we live in a time when *everything* is being tested and proved. All the signs portend that we are living very, *near* to the time when the Lord *will be revealed from* heaven with all his saints. What manner *of* persons ought we to be! How diligent we should be to see that we are putting on those graces of the spirit which will make us acceptable in the Father's sight and earn us those welcome words: "*Come up, higher, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler, over many things.*" If we are faithful even unto death, then "*when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.*" "**THEN SHALL THE RIGHTEOUS SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN IN THE KINGDOM OF THEIR FATHER.**" -- Col. 3:4; Matt. 13:43.

- E. Allbon, Eng.

Are Wars to Cease or Will They Continue to the End of Time?

"The desire of all nations shall come." -- Hag. 2:7.

THOSE OF US who were privileged to visit the New York World's Fair twelve years ago, well remember seeing embodied in structural picturization "The World of Tomorrow." We beheld the anticipated advancement of human achievement in multifarious forms. Our minds, after first being -- satiated with the sight of man's present accomplishments, were directed to the future, and by the aid of the thrilling spectacle which art and science and \$150,000,000 had combined to produce, we endeavored to visualize an age that shall far transcend the present one. As our powers of imagination were brought into play, we were led to wonder if there is to be any limit to the progress and development which encompass us on every hand.

But what of man himself? Will his ethical progress keep step with discovery and invention? Will he have the same social, political, and economic problems that he has today? And will they seem as impossible of solution then as now? Will unemployment continue to be a menace to human happiness? Will crime increase, or will it be stamped out? Are wars to cease, or is permanent peace never to be established? Will disease disappear, will death itself be abolished, or is the joy of living always to be marred by pain and disaster, sin and sorrow, ruined prospects, shattered hopes, crushed hearts -- the grave forever triumphant? Such questions as these cannot but present themselves, insistently, to every thinking mind.

These questions, we asked, and to them we attempted to find a satisfactory answer, in an article published in the Herald in October 1939, under the caption "The World of Tomorrow"; an article which we subsequently condensed in the form of a pamphlet. Therein we endeavored to show that the Scriptures do hold out the hope indeed that they are quite clear and specific on the subject -- that in due time, as the text at the head of this article states, "The desire of all nations shall come." Surely no one will question that, amidst all the clanging and the clashing of a world in arms, most men of every nation earnestly desire nothing so much as peace. If, therefore, their desire is to be met, wars must -- cease. Indeed, it seems axiomatic that, when God's will is done in earth as it is done in heaven, wars will no longer take place.

Not all men, however (not all good, sincere, consecrated Christian men), share our belief and hopes. Indeed, we were forcibly reminded of this only, a few months ago, when, on glancing at the newspaper report of an address by a prominent religious leader before a Reformation Day gathering of some 8,000 people, -- we read the following words:

"The New Testament has given us no hope that all men will eventually come to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why, I suppose, there will be wars and rumors of wars to the end of time."

The view here expressed is so different from what we personally believe, that our first thought was that the speaker had not reported. Inquiry, however, disclosed the fact that the newspaper had quoted the speaker correctly.

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES?

That wars and rumors of wars will *not* continue to the end of time is, we submit, the united testimony of both Old and New Testaments.

In the Old Testament, from amongst many verses, may be cited these three:

- (1) Isaiah 2:4;
- (2) Micah 4:3;
- (3) Psalms 46:9.

In the first two of these verses the prophetic spirit speaks of a time ("the last days") when, "having beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks, *nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*"

In the other verse the inspired prediction is also precisely to the point: "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth."

When we turn to the New Testament we find passages equally clear. According to the Revelator a time is coming when "there shall be no, more death" (whether resulting from wars, accidents, disease or old age). These words, moreover (including their blessed context that God will "wipe away all tears"; and that there shall be, "neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain") are specifically declared to be "true and faithful. (Rev. 21:1-5.) In full agreement the Apostle Paul declares in 1 Cor. 15:26 that "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Again, the statement that "The New Testament has given us no hope that all men will eventually come to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, is very difficult to harmonize with the words of the Apostle in 1 Tim. 2:4, where it is said that God, our Savior, "will have all, men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,"In the context (1 Tim. 2:6) we learn that it was for "all" that Christ Jesus "gave himself a ransom" -- not for a chosen few. It was for "every man" that he "tasted death." (Heb. 2:9.) In 1 John 2:2 the statement appears: "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Those who hold the views to which we here take exception, sometimes explain their position as follows:

"The statement in 1 Tim. 2:4, that 'God will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth,' merely means that this is God's universal will for mankind. His will only underlines the fact that God cannot be blamed when men reject his truth. Jesus Christ certainly did die for all. It is not Jesus Christ's responsibility that some men have rejected his great redemption. The farthest that the Scriptures go in this direction is to state that 'this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.' -- Matt. 24:14."

We quite agree with the statement "that God cannot be blamed when men reject his truth"; and with the further statement that "It is not Jesus Christ's responsibility that some men have rejected his great redemption."

WHAT OF THE HEATHEN?

There is, however a very important question in connection with 1 Tim. 2:4 which, if candidly considered, and given proper weight, must affect one's understanding of this text. We refer to the fate of those members of Adam's family who have lived and died without either accepting or rejecting the great redemption provided by our Lord. These, by the way, constituted the great majority of Adam's race. At no time in their lives did they so much as hear the name of Jesus mentioned, much less did they 'reject the salvation to be had only through him. Their opportunity "to come unto the knowledge of the truth their opportunity to accept Christ, therefore, must be in the future or never. It cannot be never, or 1 Tim. 2:4 would prove false. It must, therefore, be future.

Confusion of thought sometimes results from a, misunderstanding of the word "saved" in 1 Tim. 2:4, where it says: "God will have all men to be *saved*." Here the reference is not to the eternal salvation which will be the final reward of believers -- of those who accept our Lord's great redemption. Rather it is salvation from the condemnation to death which passed upon Adam and all his race as the result of his disobedience. (Rom. 5:12.) From this Adamic death sentence God will have all to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. This is not a pious wish on God's, part, uncertain of fulfillment because contingent on man's performance. It is a vital part of God's plan *and sure to take place*. (Isa. 46: 10.)

In the Age to follow the Gospel Age all these members of Adam's race above mentioned, who died in ignorance of our Lord, will be raised from the dead (John 5:28, 29) and be given every opportunity to develop characters and to conduct themselves in harmony with the righteous laws of Christ's Kingdom then in operation. Having been required (willy nilly) to share in the death sentence which passed upon Adam because of his transgression, and having been required (willy nilly) to share in the ransom provided for Adam, they will be put on trial to test their fitness for everlasting life. In that day it shall not be said (as today it may truthfully be said) "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." Instead it shall be said: "The soul that sinneth it [not its children] shall die." (Ezek. 18:1-4.) They will not be tried again in Adam, the federal head of the race; neither will they be tried nationally. The trial will *be an individual matter*. -- "The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die."*

* See our, free tract, "What is the Soul?"

With the experience of the past six thousand years of sin and death conditions, they will be much better equipped (than was Adam) to choose righteousness. They will know by experience (something, Adam lacked) the bitter fruit of sin and, with the stumbling stones taken out of their way (Isa. 57:14), should find it easy to choose righteousness. Under the favorable conditions of Christ's Kingdom (as contrasted with the unfavorable conditions of this and prior ages) all mankind will be required (no longer requested, but required) to make progress in the knowledge of the Lord and in the bringing of their own hearts and lives into accord with his law of love. In that day it will no longer be necessary for any one to undertake the instruction of another concerning the glorious character, plan, and purpose of God, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest; the knowledge of the Lord will then fill the earth as the waters cover the mighty deep. (Jer. 31:34; Isa. 11:9.) It is reasonable to suppose that most people when put on final test under such favorable conditions, would choose Christ and righteousness. However, the Scriptures do show that not all will do so. The wicked God will destroy. (Psa. 145:20.) Since those destroyed (in the Second Death -- Rev. 21:8) will have previously demonstrated, individually, that under the most favorable conditions they prove incorrigible, and always prefer

unrighteousness, no useful purpose would be served by granting them any further trial. Consequently we are not surprised to find that the Scriptures hold out no hope of a resurrection from the Second Death.

If Luther were with us today, and had continued; to walk in the light, we believe he, would be nailing a few theses on the doors of Protestantism, as he did on those of Rome long centuries ago. Surely he would be calling attention to the fact that it was a message of "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all* people," (and not a message of bad tidings of great misery which shall be to most people) which the angel announced at the birth of Jesus. - Luke 2:10.

THE END OF TIME

In the newspaper report previously mentioned, reference is made to "the end of time." As we understand it, time will never come to an end. At least, such a thing as the beginning or ending of time is beyond mankind's comprehension. It is the same with the Almighty who, we read, is "from everlasting to everlasting." Unless used in a figurative or in an accommodated sense, the phrase "end of time" is incomprehensible.

In regard to Matt. 25:14 the words of our Lord here have no reference to "the end of time," but refer to the end of the Gospel Age. They are quite evidently in reply to the question raised by the disciples in Matt. 24:3: Tell us, what shall be the sign of thy (second) presence (mistranslated "coming") and of the end of the Age (mistranslated "world")?"

How does our Lord reply to this question? He does so in Matt. 24:14 by telling them that his second presence would not occur, and the end of the Age (the Age in which they then were, the Gospel Age) would not come, until the Gospel of the Kingdom had been preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.

We fully agree with the thought that this text contains no suggestion that all men would accept the message. As a matter of fact there is in this text no hint that before the end of the Gospel Age it would be preached *to every individual* within -- all nations. It merely says that the end of the Age would not be reached until that *witness* had been given *unto all nations*. Again: Not the end of *time*, but the end of the *age* is under discussion.

It is of more than ordinary' interest to note that since Christ uttered these words the Gospel *has been preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations* Consequently if we are to accept our Lord's words, as accept them *we surely must, the end of the Age has been reached, as has also the time for our Lord's Second Presence*. Not too soon, either, if *we* are to judge by today's headlines! Unless we greatly err, "the days art: at hand, and the effect of every vision" -- particularly that vision for which Christians everywhere have long prayed "Thy Kingdom come." (Ezek. 12:23; Matt. 6:10.) Yes -- unless all signs' fail "one like the Son of Man" is about due to receive at the hand of the "Ancient of Days dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." -- Dan. 7:13-14.

These "times of restitution of all things", due to commence at the Second Advent of Christ, so clearly predicted by the Prophet Daniel, were not foretold by him only, but, according to a New Testament writer, were "spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.) Yes, the day is not far off when "the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace." - Isa. 9:6.

- P. L. Read

God's Foreknowledge in the Permission of Evil - Part III

God's Prescience

"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.

PRIOR TO the Gospel Age, none of God's creatures had been perfected in love; Christ was the first one to be so, perfected. (Heb. 2:10; Col. 1:17; Acts 26:23 1 Cor. 15:20.) Up to that time God's love had not been sufficiently revealed for the perfecting of any creature in his love. (1 John 4:9.) Even our Lord, prior to his baptism by the Holy Spirit at Jordan, could not claim perfection as respects the wondrous depths of Divine love; it was therefore necessary for him to endure sufferings (brought about by the permission of evil) that he might be made perfect. (Heb. 2: 10; 5:8, 9, *Diaglott.*) It is also evident from the statement made at the time of his baptism, namely, "The heavens were opened unto him," that there were certain things in connection with the outworking of God's Plan which he did not understand. This was graphically pictured in the type that God caused Abraham to enact with his son Isaac. Abraham, fully aware of the purpose of the three day journey to Mount Moriah, must needs contemplate the sacrificial death of his beloved son every foot of the way; but that Isaac was in total ignorance of his own participation in that offering is proved by the fact that, as they drew near the appointed place of sacrifice he said: "My father, . . . Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Quite evidently it was not until he was bound and placed upon the altar that Isaac knew that he himself was to be that lamb. Likewise, it was not until *bound* by his consecration to the doing of the Father's will (Heb. 10:5-9), that our Lord was given to understand his own part in the plan of salvation. It required forty days in absorbed study of 'Scripture testimony in the solitude of the wilderness, under the influence of God's spirit, for him to gain the essential knowledge needed to qualify him for his ministry.

God's purpose in the permission of evil was not revealed to Jesus by his study alone: it required the enduring of temptation to awaken him to the need of perfect love as the only means of obviating the possibility of temptation. God's method of revealing this to him is made clear by the testimony of Matt. 4:1: "Then was Jesus led of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." While Jesus had always proved loyal to God, yet it was a matter of special importance that the fact of his own deficiency in a knowledge of and attainment to perfect, love be made known to him by his temptation in the wilderness. (Matt. 4:1-10; Heb. 2:18.) And so we have the inspired testimony that Christ was "tempted in all points like as we [new creatures] are." (Heb. 4:15.) God cannot be tempted of evil. (James 1:13.) Therefore, since our Lord was tempted of evil, though without sin, it is positive proof that he was not yet perfected in love. A perfect creature, one perfected in love, is beyond any temptation of disloyalty to God, even under the extreme incentive of the avoidance of suffering in a situation such as Jesus endured. This recognized deficiency in love perfection was later testified to by Jesus in an incident in the course of his ministry. On being addressed as, "Good Master, Jesus replied, "Why Tallest thou me good, there is none good but one, that is God." We have his own word, therefore, that none of God's creatures up to that time, including himself, had been perfected in love. But it is God's purpose that all his willing creatures be made perfect in love; and in this state of love perfection, all will be in God's own image of perfect love. (2 Cor. 3:18) Love is not inherent and so must be learned; and so the Apostle declared of Christ: "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 5:8.

Christ was the first of God's creatures to attain to love perfection; hence the first to be awarded actual eternal life. The depths of God's great love, first revealed in part through the ransom, and in a continued revealing of it in his dealings with spiritual Israel, has been an object lesson, to the angels, who no doubt have profited thereby. But Christ was without an object lesson for his instruction; therefore, his perfecting in love was through the sacrificial sufferings of his ministry and death. Spiritual Israel has had the advantage of both example and precept, yet as fallen human creatures they have been to a more or less degree dull of understanding; hence the added privilege of suffering with, Christ in the process of their love development.

Strong evidence in support of this thought is seen in God's covenant with Abraham. There appears to have been a hidden meaning in God's statement to Abraham that he would multiply his seed as "the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is Upon the seashore." This would appear to be a gross exaggeration if applied merely to spiritual Israel and the future righteous population of the earth. The unwavering faith manifested by Abraham must be the faith foundation of every individual ever to be awarded eternal life in Jehovah's great domain. As Abraham, in the circumstances of the test of faith to which he was subjected, was a type of Jehovah God offering up his dearly beloved Son as man's ransom price, it is quite clear that Abraham's seed of the covenant promise includes the entire righteous population present and future of both heaven and the material universe. This evident fact could not be seen until God's real purpose in permitted evil was revealed. It is the obedient faith of those who have had God's law written in their hearts that constitutes them of Abraham's seed.

The Bible is not silent on the universal benefits to God's creatures throughout his entire domain of the revealed knowledge of his attributes through the circumstances of permitted evil. Because of the fact that the great text book of knowledge and wisdom for the perfecting of God's creatures in love is being written in this way upon the earth, God declares the earth to be his footstool. Thus in Jehovah's use of the earth in the revealing of his attributes, upon which his law is founded, the earth is the schoolhouse of learning, where, in a figurative sense, all creatures will sit at Jehovah's feet in acquiring the necessary knowledge and wisdom for their perfecting in the glorious image of God. Not only is the earth to be the figurative place of learning, but in the same sense the place of worship also. As prophetically declared by the Psalmist: "We will go into his tabernacles, we will "worship at his footstool." "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool." The Lord declares through the Prophet: "I will make the place of my feet glorious." This does not mean merely that he will make the earth a paradise, but rather that his glory will emanate from it. -- Isa. 66:1; Psa. 132:7 Psa. 99:5.

DOCTRINAL DENIAL OF GOD'S LOVE

The Bible declares: "God is love. That is, love is the ruling trait of his, nature. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." But: in substance, some present teachings do not present Jehovah as a God of love. This fact is evidenced by the teaching that God has no love for the sin cursed world of mankind, and that, the great and unspeakable gift of his dearly beloved Son, was not because of compassionate love for them, but instead, love for the righteous "world to come," which, according to this teaching, is declared in substance to be a world that will be made up in part of a righteous, born stock of "Jonadab" posterity, to supplement in filling the earth for the comparatively few theoretically declared to be, redeemed to an earthly resurrection. The Bible teaching seems to be clear that the redeemed of mankind will be amply sufficient to fill the earth, and that the population will be entirely of those included under the Adamic condemnation. Aside from the eternal torment doctrine, there has not been such a far fetched denial of God's, love in the entire period of church history.

Because Bible teachings on love have been misinterpreted and ignored, a hard hearted influence has been very manifest in these erroneous doctrines and the attitude of many influenced by them. The Bible teaching on love for our enemies is obsolete and entirely ignored, and a spirit of hatred for them is fostered instead. In fact; these teachings limit the spirit of love as being operative only toward those who are in line with the doctrinal standards of these teachings, who alone are recognized as brethren. Such a standard of love is love merely for those who love us, and comes far short of "loving thy neighbor as thyself," which includes a compassionate love for even our enemies. If, we have reached the degree of love attainment in which we love our enemies, we will have no heart sentiment of ill will toward them in a desire to see suffering visited upon them any more than upon ourselves: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." (Rom. 13:10.) Our neighbor includes our enemies, and if we hate them, we work ill to them, which hatred is only too often expressed in word or action. Love for our enemies does not mean; silence in regard to their wicked course where necessary or wise for disapproval to be expressed. But it does mean a sentiment of compassion for them, which while not excusing their wickedness by covering it where it is wise to expose it, yet sorrows for them in the wicked trend of their walk and the fate to which they are headed.

David's statement that he hated the enemies of the Lord "with a perfect hatred," as recorded in Psalm 139:22, is no contradiction to the principle of the admonition to love our enemies. This perfect hatred is not of a vengeful nature, but merely a righteous disapproval of them in their attitude and conduct -- a disapproval devoid of any bitterness towards them. God's hatred of the wicked is of the same nature: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways and live?" (Ezek. 18:23.) Love's consent to the destruction of the wicked, is because they are a menace to their fellow creatures, and a curse to themselves, and a blot on creation. But the spirit of hatred with which fallen man hates those at enmity with him, is foreign to God and his law; and therefore none who entertain such hatred, have yet attained to perfect love. Jesus strongly denounced the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, but he uttered no word of hatred against them. Jesus prayed for those who clamored for and were responsible for his death, asking the Father to forgive them because they did it ignorantly. And we are admonished to pray for those who despitefully use us. - Matt. 5:44.

LEARNING GOD'S LOVE

Without a clear realization of, and a heart consent to the full *depths* of the compassion element of love, the justice of God's law is magnified in our eyes at the expense of love; and, our doctrinal understandings are perverted accordingly. This condition is clearly evident in the present doctrinal teachings on God's love and justice, in which a great host of well intentioned people of the present and of the past are in theory condemned to eternal destruction. It is not in a spirit of love that we in our self righteousness look with complacency upon the supposed fate of this great host, who figuratively speaking, "cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand." (Jonah 4:11.) Jonah's allegorical prophecy (Chap. 4) is a clear exposition of this unscriptural attitude.

At the beginning of our Christian experience, all of us come woefully short of the image of God in love. Hence, before we can qualify for eternal life, we must submit ourselves to God in a hearty cooperation with him in the transforming of our characters. It is necessary for us to awake to our lack in this respect before it is possible for us to make progress towards its attainment. Our heart development in love is a slow process, in like ratio to our ability to grasp its principles. In other words the depth of the principle of love is revealed to us step by step as we apply this knowledge in a cooperative spirit with the Lord in our heart perfecting. Because in our fallen state

we are dull of understanding and prone to wander, it becomes necessary at times for God to bring chastisements upon us for our correcting in righteousness to direct us in a continued progress toward heart perfection and its eternal reward. None of us have been free of this need; for it is written: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."
-- Heb: 12:6.

The affection element of love, through which we love the Lord, does not in itself fulfill the law of love. The fruits of love outlined in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthian have their basic foundation in the love element of compassion. The full recognition of this love element in the perfection to which it attains in Jehovah God, distinctly broadens and deepens our love for him. In fact, until we recognize the perfection to which it attains in God's attribute of love, we cannot love God with our whole heart, soul, and mind, for our love is otherwise not for God as he is, but for a perverted conception of his attribute of justice, in a distorted view of him foreign to his nature. -- *H. Sillaway*.

Greetings from Afar

Dear Brethren:
Christian love and greetings in our dear Lord's name.

It is my great pleasure to send you some lines from our new homeland, Australia:

Before all, I desire to thank you so very much for sending your "Herald" to 'my new address. It was a sweet welcome to find the first copy already waiting for us in our new home the day we arrived here. And with, the "Herald" we found a great many letters from the States and England, all containing good wishes and encouragement from the dear brethren. I find it impossible just now to answer all these very good letters, so I am coming to you with one further request. Perhaps you can make it possible just to publish a short note or a part of this letter to tell all the dear brethren, that they are not forgotten., This new start over here has brought many duties to me and I need sometime to bring my correspondence up to date, although I do not like to keep the brethren waiting for my reply. Your "Herald" has always been a means of contact between us and the brethren overseas, and I trust its circulation will bring the message of our sincere Christian greetings, and love to all of the Lord's people in America, England, and Germany very soon.

We are enjoying sweet fellowship with brethren of like precious faith here.... At our last meeting in Germany we sang, "Blest be the tie that binds," and here, our fellowship began with the same hymn.

Your brethren by His grace,
C. G. Smith and family -- Aus.

(Formerly K. G. Schmidt; Ger.)