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What Doth the Lord Require?

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? -- He has showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" -- Micah 6:6-8.

THE QUESTION of our text has often been asked, and many and varied have been the answers. In spirit and principle all may be reduced to three, which in these verses are tacitly rejected, that the fourth may be established for all time.

The first answer is, Levitical sacrifices will not suffice. "Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?" Shall I do some outward act or acts to please God? Men are ever tempted to believe in the virtue of doing something -- to ask, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

There have been attempts in all ages to put one's trust in ceremonials, the easy, outward way to pacify and appease the perverted conscience. But God's Word about all such is plain; they perish in the using; they cannot sanctify. In so far as they are substituted for a heart religion, in so far as they furnish an excuse for selfishness, faultfinding, and party spirit, they are displeasing to God. External observance, without inward holiness is but the whiteness of the sepulcher. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to me?" (Isa. 1:11.) What is it to me; what profit or pleasure can I have in them? What good end do they serve? God thus replies in this and the following verses, that all of these would be of no use, and meet with no acceptance unless they were the offering of the heart. He demanded righteousness, and without that, all external offerings would be vain.

There was no deficiency in the amount of the offerings. It was admitted that Israel fully complied in this respect with the requirements of the law; that they offered an abundance of sacrifices, so numerous as to be called a "multitude." It is known that hypocrites abound in outward religious observances just in proportion to their neglect of the spiritual requirements of God.

"I am full," etc. (Isa. 1:11.) The Hebrew word here is *shaba*, meaning to be or become filled, satiated.

The primary idea is that of an abundance or superabundance; to be sated, glutted, tired or weary of anything. The same expression is found in Proverbs 25:17: "Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbor's house lest he be weary (Heb. *shaba*) of thee and hate thee.

In Psalms 50:13, the Lord asks: "Will I eat the Flesh of bulls, and drink the blood of goats?" and in Psa. 50:9-10, he says: "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat out of thy folds. For every beast in the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulness thereof." Then he adds: "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High." David and Isaiah were anxious to impress the people that sacrifice by itself was nothing -- that self dedication, self renunciation and true devotion of the heart with obedience must accompany the sacrifice to be pleasing to God.

Hence we see that an outward form of religion, without inward piety, is an offense to God. It is strange how deeply ingrained the idea is in man; that formal acts of worship, outward acknowledgment, ritual, ceremony, pageantry, constitute religion, and will be accepted by God in lieu of the inward devotion of the heart. Heathenism was full of his notion. Plato tells us that the Greeks thought they might commit any kind and number of sins and crimes, and still obtain pardon at the hands of the gods, if they but offered sufficient sacrifices.

It is evident that the Jews of Isaiah's time were possessed with a similar idea. They tried to compensate for their unrighteous lives by sumptuous, even extravagant, performances of ceremonial observances. So did the Pharisees of the Lord's day: "Ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

OUTWARD FORMS INEFFECTIVE

This outward form of religion without inward piety, is not only not pleasing to God, but an offense to him. It implies an unworthy conception of God. To imagine that God will be content with external obedience is to suppose, either that he cannot read our hearts, or that he does not care how we are disposed toward him. It is either to question his omniscience or to deny his moral nature. A good father does care whether his sons render him mere formal obedience or are heartily bent on obeying him through love and gratitude. Only one unworthy of the name father is careless on this point, and content so long as that which he commands is done.

The outward acts of religion -- prayer, praise, observance of fasts or festivals, attendance at meetings and the like -- constitute a profession of certain inward feelings -- love, gratitude, faith, reverence -- and if these are absent, the performance of such acts is deceptive and hypocritical, making a pretense that we are what we are not. It is bad enough if it is done to deceive man; but it is worse if we think thereby to deceive God. God hates hypocrisy, and is revolted by the conduct of such as "honor him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him." Repetition of unmeaning acts hardens the heart, dulls the perceptions, and accumulates guilt. It is in a degree a

desecration of things sacred. The observances of religion have something sacred about them. They are suggested by their nature or are formally ordained by God for a holy use; and if practiced in an irreligious or even a non-religious spirit, are desecrated. It is a mockery to bend the knee and repeat words of formulas while our thoughts are straying to other matters; it is emptying things of their holiness and bringing them down to a lower level. We injure ourselves by so doing, and give occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme. Better not to tread God's courts at all than to do so without a reverent and prayerful spirit.

Isaiah 1:12 asks: "When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" It was the duty of the Jews to appear at the temple to worship God, but it was not required that they should appear with the wrong spirit and temper. The courts of the temple were the open spaces which surrounded it. None entered the temple itself but the priests. The people worshiped God in the courts assigned to them around the temple. In one of these courts was the altar of burnt offering; and the sacrifices were all made there. To tread his courts was an expression equivalent to worship. "Who hath required you to tread these courts?" with this hollow, heartless service, is the thought. Reverential manner and sacred solemnities of speech may deceive others, but with God all hearts are open, all desires known. We resent the false man. Nothing offends even the better instincts of humanity so much as deceitful mannerisms.

Jeremiah 7:22, 23 tells the Jews: "I [God] spake not to your fathers, . . . concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice. The phraseology proves that he had, in mind the promulgation of the Ten Commandments on Sinai. Now among these we find no direction concerning sacrifice; and be it noted, they were the only precepts which had the honor of being treasured up in the ark. Thus they from the first received first place. The ark we understand to be a type of Christ, and since the law of God was in his heart it was fitting that the tables of the law should be in the ark.

One of the earliest injunctions that God gave to Israel is found in Exod. 15:26: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians." In Berry's word for word translation it is: "If hearkening thou hearkenest to the voice of Jehovah thy God, and the right in his eyes thou doest, and thou givest ear to his commandments and keepest all his statutes; all the diseases I put upon Egypt I will not put upon thee." "Diligently hearken" is from the Hebrew word *shama*, meaning to hear intelligently, to obey or to understand. "Ear" in the same verse is *azan*, meaning to be pointed like an animal's ear, to point or prick up the ears, hence to give ear, to listen, to hear. Samuel's words in 1 Samuel 15:22 are a keynote of the long remonstrance of the Prophets in subsequent ages against the too common error of supposing that external ceremonies can be of any value in the sight of God when separated from the true devotion of the worshiper's heart.

Jesus had the same thought in mind when he answered the Scribe in Mark 12:28-34. The Scribe had said that to love God with all one's heart, understanding, soul and strength, and his neighbor as himself, is of more importance and value than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifice. Jesus told him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. In other words, those who prefer the internal to the external worship of God, who have so just a view of the requirements of the law, can easily become followers of Me, and are almost fit to be numbered among my disciples. This shows that a proper understanding of the Old Testament, of its laws and requirements, would prepare the mind for Christianity, and fit a man at once to receive it. Jesus expresses much the same thought in Matthew 9:23.

IS THERE MERIT IN FASTINGS AND SELF INFLICTED SUFFERINGS?

If not by giving can we please God, may it be done by doing? Some regard fasting as meritorious. It may be helpful at times, if by so doing we increase our religious earnestness and strengthen our moral life; but not if we think fasting is an end, instead of a means; not if it renders us more self-satisfied, less active in good words and less lenient toward others.

Isaiah 58:4 says to ancient Israel: "Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: Is it such a fast that I have chosen? to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" This implies that Israel was divided into parties and factions and made their fastings an occasion of augmented contention and strife. How often has this been seen! Contending factions in the church have fasted in order to strengthen their 'party with the solemn sanctions of religion. The idea is plain, that even when fasting they were guilty of strife and personal combat. Then, too, they regarded their fastings as laying the foundation of a claim to God's favor, and were disposed to complain when that claim was not acknowledged. Fasting, like other religious duties, is proper in its place; but in that, as in all other services of religion, there is danger of supposing that we bring God under obligation, and that we are laying the foundation of a claim to his favor.

If we cannot please God by giving or doing, shall we do it by suffering? Shall we lacerate our heart in its tenderest affections, and "give our firstborn for our transgression, the fruit 'of our body for the sin of our soul?" This too, has been frequently, attempted. In all past ages and in all nations, men have invested God with attributes of terror and wrath. He, the all loving, the all merciful, has seemed to them cruel, wrathful, irresistible, delighting in smoking victims and streaming blood. Hence whether in Greece, Rome, apostatizing Israel, Africa or in the far islands of the sea, to some hideous emblem of some savage deity, a Moloch, an Odin or some other idol, in the rushing stream, the molten furnace, or on the blade of some consecrated sword, the blood of man has been shed, in abominable sacrifice; or his life robbed of all health and joy in horrible self torture. Nothing has seemed too sanguinary or revolting to appease the sense of sin in the consciousness of divine wrath. They fled from the society of their fellows to vast wildernesses, desolate hills, or caverns by the sea. Knowing their sins, but not knowing their Savior, life became to them an in. tolerable fear.

But no one has ever found these sufferings sufficient; no one has ever testified that he found forgiveness through voluntary torture. Has it not been true of them even as we read it was also true of the prophets of Baal? "They leaped upon the altar, and cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner. And it came to pass that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded." - 1 Kings 18:26, 28, 29.

If not by giving, doing, or suffering can we be acceptable to God, shall we please God by being? By being what? By being correct in our statement of belief in half a 'dozen doctrines? By being diligent in a few observances? By attending church services? By saying, Lord, Lord, when all the while the heart is unsanctified, the lips uncharitable, the, passions unsubdued? No -- but by being just, and merciful, and humble before our God, for thus speaks the Prophet: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

To do justly, is to respect the rights of others; their physical, moral, and intellectual rights, and their liberties. In appreciating these, we then shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. This is a strict following of the golden rule. We must not speak evil of friend, or foe or even insinuate evil. No! not even tell unnecessarily what we know to be the truth if it will harm our neighbor and discredit him in the eyes of others.. To do so would be to have injustice operating in our hearts and minds. For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Justice is the basis

of character. Love is a vague sentiment without it, and may work as much harm as good. Love strengthened and purified by justice is the ideal of a good man's character. This is seeking, to conform to the image of Christ. This is the essence of worship, the heart of piety.

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL"

The word mercy is from the Hebrew *cheched* or *chasid*, meaning kindness, favor, benevolence, mercy, compassion; by implication piety toward God, faithful, zeal for good.. To love mercy is to go beyond justice, and implies a readiness in yielding personal rights and privileges in the interest of others where no principles are involved. It signifies a readiness to overlook the faults of others, and a desire not to be too exacting in respect to others, as well as a desire to be very exacting in respect to our treatment of others. Many seeking to practice mercy do not love it, and are constrained to mercy only by the Jews of the land, public sentiment, or the Word of God.

Mercy is a practical exhibition of loving kindness toward our fellow man, whose only claim may be misfortune, and whom it is in our power to help, though perhaps at the expense of time, money, convenience, and even contrary to our religious and national prejudice. The word is often translated in the Authorized Version, kindness, mercy, piety, favor, goodness, and loving kindness. God is everywhere described as delighting in mercy. "His mercy endureth forever, but he requires that those to whom he shows it, should in their turn, and according to their opportunity, love mercy. - See Micah 7:18.

It is a remarkable fact that this word, whenever 'it is applied to man, has usually a possessive pronoun affixed to it, so as to indicate that the persons who are exercising this disposition belong in a special sense to God. They are "His merciful ones" (A.V. saints or godly ones). Merciful men may be very scarce (Psa. 12:1; Micah 7:2), but wherever they are found they are regarded as God's own. "He hath set apart him that is merciful (A.V, godly) for himself." (Psa. 4:3.) He gives his special protection *to* those who are merciful. (Psa. 32:6; 37:28.) *They show* their love to the Lord by hating evil (i.e., evil dealings against their neighbors) and the Lord in turn, preserves their souls. (Psa. 97:10.) The word "saints" in Psalm 50:5 should be "merciful ones." Rotherham translates it: "Gather yourselves unto me -- ye my men of loving kindness, who have solemnized my covenant over sacrifice.

In a word, mercy is the main characteristic of God's dealings with men; hence it is to be looked for as the distinguishing mark of every child of God. (Matt. 5:7, 44, 45, 48.) All should realize that the divine purpose is that only those who show mercy to others will themselves receive mercy at the hands of the Lord. The godly, are those who, having received mercy from him, are exercising it for him as his representatives.

It is owing to the fact, no doubt, that the word *Chasid* has been rendered by *hosios* in the Septuagint that we find it represented by *sanctus* in the Latin and by saint or godly in the English. It is unfortunate that the primary meaning of this Hebrew word should have almost disappeared from modern translations. The practical nature of godliness is thereby to some extent obscured, and the moral demands made upon man, by his having become the object of Divine loving kindness or mercy is thrown into the background.

There are several passages, in the Old Testament where the word mercy occurs particularly relating to David and his seed as in Psalm 89, which speaks of the sure mercies of David. The word mercy seems to, be used with peculiar significance in relation to God's promise to David and his seed, and it is constantly introduced in connection with God's faithfulness or truth. (See Isa. 55:3.) Paul quotes this verse in addressing the Jews at Antioch. - Acts 13:32-34.

With regard to the rendering of Psalm 16:10, "Thou wilt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption," we are so used to, the expression, "The Holy One," that it is not easy to make such a substitution as the sense requires. Some versions render this verse, "thy merciful One," although this excellent rendering seem is to have slipped out of modern versions. The meaning of this word, *chased*, representing mercy should be borne in mind in other, passages where its representative *hosios occurs* in the New Testament. In Hebrews 7:26, the Lord should be described as "merciful and without malice," instead of "holy and harmless." So in Rev. 15:4, and 16:5 the Lord's mercy and not his holiness is specially referred to. The word *hosios* is used of the Christian in 1 Timothy 2:8, where he is told to lift up "merciful hands without wrath and contention." It is significant that Rotherham gives much the same meaning either in the text or the footnote, in these verses.

"Humbly" is from the Hebrew *tsana*, meaning to be low, to be depressed, to be humble, modest, submissive. Rotherham in his footnote on this word in Micah 6:8, says that "the root meaning is evidently *in secret, or secretly*."

To humbly walk means having a proper conception of the greatness and goodness of God, and of our own littleness and insufficiency. It will mean seeking to walk in the path which the Lord has marked out in the footsteps of Jesus. To walk humbly is a difficult thing to do. It seems to be a peculiar weakness of those who are just and merciful, to very often find themselves possessed of a spirit of pride, a feeling of superiority to their fellows. This spirit of pride is in opposition to a humble walk with God. The most humble toward God are sometimes those who have had great sins or great weaknesses which have helped to keep them humble. Paul the Apostle was given a thorn in the flesh lest he should be exalted above measure.

A humble reverence toward God is the source of that true justice and mercy -- this is what God requires of us, and thus can we live acceptable to him; for to so live is to live in Christ.

God needs not our services, nor our gifts, and least of all does he need our anguish or suffering. But he does want our hearts, our lives, and our love; and even these he gives us by his gift of the holy spirit, which will enable us to become copies of his dear Son if we yield ourselves to his leadings.

And so, may we all "Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God."

-- G. E. Lodge.

"The Hidden, Life"

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

IN OUR previous studies on this theme we have passed from the contemplation of the Shekinah Glory, representing a veiled and hidden. God, to the consideration of the called and anointed priesthood, separated out of Israel to stand before the Lord and minister in his Name. We have noted too, that because man is what he is, sin had to be permitted to make itself manifest, and thus become a separating barrier between the wayward sinner and the Holy God.

According to the pattern laid before us in the tabernacle it was to find the ways and means to remove that barrier that the anointed Priesthood was called and dedicated. That priestly house was composed of two distinct and separately called classes -- the, Levitical class and the Priestly class. We have noted the correspondencies to all these stages of development along New Testament lines in the call and anointing of the Christ company, and their separation out of the larger company of believers which constitute the household of faith. Also we have taken note of the fact that the anointing presupposes the personality of the many brethren, *called* to follow in his steps, and to become conformed in character likeness to the Lord.

QUALITIES OF HEART REQUISITE TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Having reached the stage where we can begin to visualize the presence of the priests, in a personal and individual sense, in attendance upon their duties and privileges in the holy place, we can now begin to give attention and consideration to the qualities and propensities of heart and mind requisite and essential to their sacred task. All of which means, when translated to the higher Christian sphere, that having premised and deduced the appearance of the individual new creature in Christ upon the actual plane of life, as a real and veritable personality, we can now begin to assess the things -- the qualities, the tendencies, the desires, etc., etc., that make the new creature what it is, and the experiences and developments which will fit it for its future reconciliation work in the *Age* to come.

Among the many qualities essential -- to the *new* creature's present growth and well being the quality of confidence -- a becoming reverential yet undoubting confidence -- stands well to the forefront. Many other qualities are dependent on this. How truly ill-prepared and unsuited to the task would the priest have been in Israel's day had a proper reverential boldness been lacking in This heart. Suppose there had been lacking the conviction that he had been "called," and that the ceremony of installation had been of no account. Or suppose that through undue familiarity with the routine task, a slip shod and inattentive attitude had developed in his mind. Suppose he had come to think that the lamps need not today be trimmed; or that the presence bread need not, on this occasion, be set up in its two fold pile, or that it mattered not at all whether strange or holy fire were taken in before the Lord, or whether the prescribed and special incense was presented at the threshold of the Holiest Place. What would have, been the consequence? Or suppose again, -- that, impressed with the serious solemnity of all these things, his heart quailed, while his mind faltered at the very magnitude of the task; and, the hour of incense being come, there was no rising cloud of fragrant smoke ascending in its spirals toward the wide winged Cherubim. What then? This was the *hour* and *act* of *drawing near* to the Source and Center of Israel's hope and life, and whole existence -- of drawing near to the exalted Throne whence came the "grace" that had caused Israel to *be* what it was, and called the priesthood from its midst to 'be the, tie that bound Israel's God to Israel's whole economy.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HOLY CONFIDENCE

A very grievous lesson had been inflicted once for priestly thoughtlessness and temerity. A wave of holy fire had flashed forth from the presence of the Lord and consumed the life of Aaron's sons. (Lev. 10:1-3.) Might it not do 'the same again? Was there not perpetual risk 'to this drawing near? To which the answer is Yes, and No. Yes, if arrogant presumption asserted itself in the least degree; No, if reverential obedience and holy courage actuated what they did. And why would they thus be safe and secure? Because, first, there was blood sprinkled in the Most Holy Place, and next they had in themselves the assurance of faith -- the *conviction of confidence*. With these safeguards and shields around their persons there could be no need to dread to touch things that involved so much.

Behind and beneath every priestly privilege, every ministry to God or man, must lie" the holy confidence betokening obedience to the Holy One in the midst of Israel -- in a word, "faith" expressing itself as "faithfulness."

And thus it is on the higher plane. When the point-on-point argument of Hebrews is drawing to its corresponding climax the writer says, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:19-21.) -- "Boldness" and a "full assurance of faith" -- exactly the spiritual counterparts to the priestly attitude in tabernacle days! With us, as with them, "faith" budding and maturing into "faithfulness" is the indispensable prerequisite. Hence the Apostle Peter can say "Add to your faith, virtue . . . love" or with the Revised Version: "In your faith supply, virtue ... love." - 2 Pet. 1:5-7.

An extreme caution in the approach to holy things is the hall mark of maturity in Christ. An overpowering sense of the unmeasurable difference between the holy and the profane (or secular) subdues both heart and mind, and precludes the hurried and rash approach before the Divine Presence, everywhere -- at home, or in the "ecclesia" fellowship. A deep, inborn dread lest we be unmindful of the Divine Majesty, or disrespectfully thoughtless concerning the sublime sanctity of the Great Name pervades the whole person through, and through. Yet, on the other hand, accompanying and balancing this due respect is the matured confidence -- the reverential boldness -- that hesitates not to approach the lofty Throne to ask for needed grace, for one and all; nor fails to speak with point and emphasis on behalf of the Holy Name. But such matured confidence, such full assurance of faith is not the product of the early days of Christian activity. It is the ripe mellow fruit of many days, days spent in failure and confession, and nights spent in watchfulness and prayer.

To live the Christian life at deeper than ordinary levels, calls for a deeper than ordinary "faith"; the deeper than ordinary devotional flame .must constantly and inevitably be fed by more than ordinary communion and fellowship with the holiest things. And such a "faith" and "flame" is the product of a whole life time's development. But this should not be measured by the count of years. John lived virtually threescore years and ten after Pentecost to reach the heights of venerable maturity. Paul too, had his onescore and ten to reach his rounded mellowness, but Stephen had to count his term in *months* -- still notwithstanding all 'this seeming disparity, a whole life time's development was concentrated into each respective span, and each in his own particular place and way, grew reverentially "faithful" and reverentially "bold."

STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAITH

Faith, like ripening fruit, must pass 'through many stages and many changes (imperceptible at times perhaps) ere it ripens into the full flavor of a "fully assured" faith. Perhaps in its early bud, its first impulse was learned at some pious mother's knee. "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, Look upon a little child; Pity my simplicity, Suffer me to come to Thee," may have been the measure of its primal exercise. Who this Jesus was, or why the prayer, was of small account to the winsome mind. An opening world of wonder and intensifying reality grew out of the simple prayer; and the devotional seed, dropped so patiently and expectantly by loving hands, grew oftentimes to sturdier confidence in the things of God.

Or perhaps, on the other hand, adult years were reached, ere the challenge of the Word made its impact on the mind. No patient mother's tongue had been at hand to teach wee lisping lips its simple prayer, but now, at last, some zealous servant of the Lord confronts an adult mind with Jesus' claim upon its life.

HISTORIC FAITH

"Who is this Jesus of whom you speak -- when did he live? where is he now? what might he mean to me?" may innocently be asked. The story told, the Good Book introduced, and, rightly received, "a historic faith" is born. "A historic faith" -- a credibility in the story of "the historic Jesus" is created. Oh! how many have no more faith in the life and death of Jesus than a mere admission that, way back in history, a Person of that name did once exist! Still, slender though it is, it has been for many fervent souls the starting point in "the way of faith, and, in our effort to compare the stages of that way, this initial step must not be overlooked. "Historic" credibility is better than no response at all, and, as mighty rivers often start from tiny springs, so mighty faith sometimes grows from such initial credibility.

Whether therefore the seed be sown at mother's knee, or by reference to the historic fact, faith once gendered, must develop and grow, if it is at last to serve the purpose of the heavenly call. It is not, a quality which comes full flowered in our early years. The Christian needs to grow from "faith" to "faith" -- from its early incipient forms to ripened maturer forms, as experience and deepening understanding lead to wider visions of the divine purpose. All forms and stages of faith must spring from contact with the Word of God, for "faith" comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) One version makes that Scripture even more precise -- "Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes from the preaching of Christ." (New Revised Version.) Any belief "therefore which does not spring from the data of the Word of God or from response to the preaching of Christ, is not a saving faith, but remains, and must remain, the merest credulity.

Living faith must first believe that God "is" and that he is also the rewarder of all that truly seek him. (Heb. 11:6.) Without an acknowledgement of these simple principles there is no foundation for faith to build upon. Even the advanced and mature believer of today had to begin there yesterday. In the Gospel story (of which Paul said he was not ashamed) one feature of the divine character stands expressly revealed -- His unchanging righteousness -- and this, says Paul, is revealed "to" faith, "for" faith; to a "reasoning" faith, for a "trusting" faith to rest upon. Thus as the understanding widens, the foundations broaden for the edifice of faith to be built thereon.

INTELLECTUAL FAITH

The hearing of the Word of God, and the consequent broadening of its foundation may rightly be styled an "intellectual faith." Supervening as this does on the "baby faith, or the "historical faith" (as the case may have been) it thus becomes a most essential phase of the development of faith. Acceding to the divine invitation to "Come, and let us reason together," it takes full cognizance of all the wide range of evidence relative to man's redemption and reconciliation to God -- of the very obvious "needs-be" for Jesus' death and resurrection, and of the needed restitution yet to come, as consequence of that Sacrifice. It will give attention to the historic and everywhere -- visible proofs that man has always been the slave of sin, and that none of earth's myriad millions have ever yet been able to release themselves from this state of slavery, and will then proceed to note that if God move not to man's release, release will forever be impossible! This is indeed the stage of faith that lends itself to full and deep indoctrination; that seeks and gives the "reason" for what it holds, that constructs and contemplates the Plan of God as a wide and satisfying philosophy of all the ways of life.

This phase is an absolute essential to every child of God, though not necessarily to the same degree in every case. Individual predilection will determine for each one "the more" or "the less" -- the less intellectual finding sufficient foundation to build upon in the few central truths centering in the Redeemer's blessed Personality; the more intellectual finding need to grapple with the many more abstruse problems that lie widely scattered on the sacred page -- yet each finding joy and satisfaction to his soul in what he thus acquires.

It is a blessed and satisfying experience to see the Word of God opening up; to see the Light of Truth illuminating, the sacred page, revealing stage by Stage its many mysteries. It brings all the exhilaration of spirit to the advancing student which new scenes and new horizons bring to the pioneer or the traveler. One feels it is good to be a student of such a wonderful and self-revealing Book.

But -- and there is another side to this -- this phase of faith can come to be looked upon as an "end" in itself. "Getting to know" can come to be the "be all" and "end all" of all Christian life. Evolving some "new truth," generating some "new light," can come to be the aim and objective of the whole round of religious experience. And that is a dangerous situation. It can tend towards an undue contentiousness -- a disposition to split theological hairs -- a tendency to define and redefine the point *ad nauseum*, until what should have conduced to continued progression has been made the occasion for calling a halt around some dead man's definitions, and the forward trek is at an end! It is thus that all the great denominations have become bedded down, and the church of God separated into this or that "ism" of differentiated thought. For generations the "defining" conflict has been "on" -- each section deeming it essential to fight to the death "for the truth it owns; for the little parcel of the field it has claimed for itself.

Occasionally, we may see this intellectual quest in an aggravated form, as when some poor restless mind, ever learning, yet never able to satisfy itself that it has come to a knowledge of the truth, flits like a bee, from group to group, from exposition to exposition, till at length it has buzzed its way throughout the whole theological garden, with neither satisfaction of mind nor rest of soul, as nectar from its quest.

Allowing, however, for all these improprieties or abnormalities of response, this intellectual phase of faith is a prime necessity for every one who hopes to find his hunger and thirst for righteousness; appeased and satisfied by the Word of God, but only if the intellectual quest is followed by the "introspective" phase of faith.

INTROSPECTIVE FAITH

The secret of this satisfaction is proportionate and commensurate with the degree, of dissatisfaction caused by turning the searchlight of the truth inwards to illuminate the darkened corners of his own heart and soul. He will segregate and separate himself from the universal mass, and see himself as an individual, standing lone and isolated before the righteous claims of God. His intellectual quest may well have assured him that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death *for every man*," that "the Man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom *for all*," but the universal aspect of redemption can leave him in unrepentant mood, a mere creature of intellectual calculations and equations, based upon a theoretical comprehension of "a corresponding price." The cold and critical calculator needs to remind himself that the "universal mass is made up of unitary individuals, of which he himself is one. Only in descending from the "universal" to the "individual" is the quest of faith sure of satisfaction and success. Only if, after I have insisted that Jesus "died for all," I can pass along and say, "He loved me and gave himself for *me*," will the quest of faith reach its goal. Then sharp upon the heels of an introspective faith will come

APPROPRIATING FAITH

Appropriating Faith is the faith that sees itself in its relationship to God, on the one hand, and to inborn sin on the other. It speaks forthwith in the first person singular, and says "I am by nature born in sin; I need a Savior to free me from its guilt and stain: I gladly take to myself, and for myself, the Salvation which God, for Christ's sake offers me. I not only say that Jesus died for the, sins of the whole world but *I* can also most gratefully say that *Jesus loved me and gave himself for me.*"

Thus, however inadequately one may be able to explain how the righteousness of God has accomplished this, it has now become a fact of experience that a revelation of that righteousness has been made *to* faith (intellectual and introspective faith) for appropriating and trusting faith to accept and build upon. At this stage faith becomes a participant with the grace of God and the Blood of Christ in establishing our justification. First in the partnership came the grace of God. We are "justified freely by his grace." (Rom. 3:23.) He in deed and truth "is the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. (Rom. 3:26. R.V.) But the basis of that justification is provided by Jesus blood -- "Being now justified by for "in"] his blood" (Rom. 5:9) because God set him forth to be a propitiation (a propitiatory sacrifice) by his blood. (Rom. 3:25.) Here faith reaches; out its hand and takes, on simple faith, the good gift that has been provided by grace (and by Jesus blood. "Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.) Henceforth, though we may be far short of righteousness and sinlessness in ourselves, God now begins to treat and deal with us as though we were righteous and had no sin. Faith having progressed through all its grades, now reaches the first of its goals -- perhaps, to many its only goal. -- It has been a wonderful journey from its simple "baby" faith (or its primal historic faith) to this appropriation stage of growth, aptly prefigured and outlined in a journey from the camp to the brazen altar in tabernacle days.

Starting from his tent amid the stir of converging crowds on an annual Atonement Day, an inquiring son of Israel stands at the stage of the "baby" faith. "What is this that is done this day -- and why?" asks the child. "This is the thing the Lord our God commands to be done to make atonement for our souls" comes the paternal reply. Henceforth there -- is an understanding (an intellectual) faith. "For whom is all this done at the Lords command?" again queries the child. "It is for the whole host of Israel," paterfamilias replies -- the comprehensive universal faith. "Is it then done for Mme?" asks the little innocent. "Yes, my child, it is done for thee." Having gained a

vantage point from which to see the smoking sacrifice, the happy youthful mind rejoices and says, "Then am I now in at-one-ment with the Lord my God."

After this fashion every father and son in Israel could look thither on the, rising spiral of smoke and take and appropriate to himself, and for himself, the blessing that had been won for "all Israel."

Happy they, who take with open heart the gift provided by grace divine, the gift procured and insured by Jesus blood, the gift that turns, a hostile law into an assuring friend!

"My soul looks back to see
The burden He did bear,
While pouring out His life for me,
And sees her ransom there."

FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH

But is this the end and climax to the growth of faith? Is there nothing more than an appropriating faith? Is there not a faith that ventures forth *with* Jesus into the "way of sacrifice"? If this be so, it must surely start its journey where the former faith reached its goal! Jesus needed not to grow from historic faith to appropriating faith -- He needed not to be redeemed and justified from sin! His faith was the perfect faith -- the faith of implicit trust and unwavering confidence -- that full assurance of faith which hesitated not to "draw near" to the holiest of all. It was a priestly faith -- indeed it was a High priestly faith which kept him peaceful and unperturbed when handling the holy things. In spite of the incalculable risk that lay within the range of possibility, the Anointed of the Lord, kept right onwards on his steady way, "walking in the light, eating daily of his Fathers "presence bread"; and consuming on the Golden Altar life's choicest powers, till at last, his perfect faith brought the priestly perfection he so much desired! He was made perfect (complete and matured for his priestly work) by his sufferings and through all this, the anchor of his faith held good and true. And now, at Gods right hand, henceforth expecting the advent of a better day, sits one who was the Leader of our Faith, in whom Faiths work has been perfected (Heb. 12:2), unto whom we are advised to look for our Pattern and Exemplar. "*With Christ*"! yes, "buried *with Christ*," "united *with Christ*," "dead *with Christ*, and risen *with Christ*" (Rom. 6:4, 5, 8; Col. 3:1), and surely faith *with Christ*! Is it not for this reason Paul could say, "I am crucified with Christ; it is no more I that live, but Christ is living in me; and my outward life which still remains, I live in the faith Of the Son of God, Who loved Me and gave Himself: for me." (Gal. 2:20, Conybeares Version.) "I live in the faith of the Son of God. Look at that how we may, it betokens much more than Paul's own personal faith in Jesus as his Savior and Redeemer. It indicates a true kinship in faith between the Son of God while in his own cross bearing state, and Paul, in the later day of his crucifixion and death to the world. The same kind of faith which, sustained the despised and rejected Lord also sustained the likewise despised and rejected follower as he attempted to walk in "his steps." And that "with Christ" faith, thus found possible in Paul, is the faith which is possible for all.

But this "with Christ" faith -- this full assurance of faith -- is not a faith in us divorced from what has gone before. It is no more separated from each preliminary phase, than the rich, ripened, luscious fruit is -- separated from the former undeveloped, fibrous, bitter stub from which it grew. Assurance of faith has absorbed and integrated into itself all that was good and right of the "baby" (or the alternative historical) faith, of the intellectual faith, of the introspective faith, and of the appropriating faith. It still believes with all the old vigor of each, successive phase, but something akin to nature's ripening processes -- the action of sun and air and wind and rain and soil -- has taken place and, brought ripeness and maturity into the developed faith, which, in Scripture is defined as a "full assurance of faith."

Now we have to note that this is a faith with a God-ward inclination. It is the faith of the "Holy Place." It is the deeper and more spiritualized side of the faith which can "believe" with other men, which can "witness" with other men, and which can "serve" with other men, exactly as the priest in olden days could show his "faith" and could "witness" and "serve" with the whole company of Levitical attendants in the court, or at the altar of the burnt offering. He had all that they possessed, plus that portion more which maintained his assurance when serving in the holy place.

Now herein is much ground for comfort and peace of mind for those perhaps grown old in years, or who have been laid aside by frailty and suffering, who, in spite of every desire to witness to the truth, are unable even to give out a simple tract or sell a single book or move from their fireside or their sick room. There is a God-ward side to their lives; a side into which man cannot intrude, and in which all service and ministry is rendered to God. Herein lies the higher side of the word of God to Moses concerning Aaron and his sons, "Aaron also and his sons will I sanctify *to minister unto Me* in the priests office." - Exod. 29:44.

Of that ministry we shall write another day, but, it is well, for the peace of our souls, that we can remind ourselves that the whole Christian life is not expected to be spent on its man-ward side. There is indeed a hidden side -- hidden from the sight of men -- which is open exclusively to God and to those of the deeper mind. Let all, therefore, whose life is enriched with the tokens of a deeper experience, fret not, nor be unduly perturbed, if opportunity to serve, with tract or voice, on the man-ward side, is *unavoidably* withheld. Let such live much with the Lord, and seek day by day to emulate Paul, and get to "know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings," more and more being thereby "conformed to His death," even in the fragility of declining years, or in the quiet solitude of a long tenanted abode of suffering and pain. Let but the Anointing of the Lord be upon us, and the deeper response of assuring faith be in our hearts, and there the "holy place" ministry unto *the Lord* is open to every, one of us. This is a privilege none may deny or withhold from the very weakest, and frailest of all the children of the Lord. Let us thank God that we do not need to be intellectual giants to become joint participants in this richer, deeper, assuring degree of faith, nor do we, of necessity, need to be contending always for the faith by pen, by voice or radio. These are the outer things of our Christian faith -- the ministry of the candlesticks and are made incumbent on us only when health, strength, ability and other suitable provision agree together to find and fit us for the opportunity. But this should not be pressed to the exclusion of the deeper "inner" things. Let us make no mistake on this momentous point -- it is on its "inner" God-ward side that faith (and all its associated graces) reaches perfectness. The fully trusting conviction comes mainly in our walk with God, our knowledge of his Son and the ordering of our life by Divine Providence. It is in very deed and truth "holy place" experience! It comes by "drawing near"! And what is that? In its simplest and primal sense, it betokens the attitude and state of unceasing prayer -- formal prayer at stated times; informal prayer at un-arranged and un-planned times, but prayer nevertheless!

But it has another deeper sense -- it means the constantly growing attainment towards the likeness of Him whose Presence -- token indwelt "the most Holy Place." Drawing near to God means an approximation of heart and mind a little nearer to his own great heart of love -- so that we become more completely dominated with his own gracious attitude to a world lost in sin.

And to attain to this glorious altitude it needs a more than ordinary degree of faith to live with God, above and apart from the common round of life and religious experience. That deeper "faith" is the mainspring of the "Hidden Life" which we live with Christ in God.

-- T. Holmes, Eng.

The Privilege of Consecration

This is a copy of an original letter. It is hoped that it may help others to gain a richer appreciation of our High Calling.*

"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. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." -- Romans 12:1, 2.

Dear Friend,

I thought that I would like to write to you about the very thrilling privilege of consecration. Yes, thrilling is the right word, for when God invites us to consecrate our lives to his service, he does, I am sure, hope that we will be thrilled to receive so great an honor from the Almighty God of the universe. God does not want us to regard our consecration as a duty, although in one sense that is so, but rather to respond to the spirit of his Call and to recognize how great a privilege it is to become sons of the Heavenly Father. For *this* reason consecration is a matter for the mind as well as for the heart.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

Before we can really have any faith in God at all, we must have some knowledge. Paul referred to this in the first chapter of his letter to the Christians at Rome. He said in effect that men really have no excuse for, their opposition to God when, his power and glory are evidenced in the wonders of creation. Now Paul did not mean that all are called to be sons of God, of course, but he was showing that apart from mans original inherited sin there is a large measure of willful ignoring of God. Paul wrote that men were not thankful, but vain in their imaginations and, as a result, their foolish hearts were darkened. In other words the Apostle tells us that any knowledge of God which we possess gives us a measure of responsibility. If we have had any extra privilege due to birth or circumstances which has enabled us to learn more of Gods great plan, our responsibility is increased accordingly. If we do not realize how privileged we are to learn something in advance of Gods secret purpose, we run the danger that he will allow our "foolish hearts to be darkened." On the other hand, if we do recognize that the Almighty God has been very gracious to us, and show our practical appreciation by consecration, he promises to do most marvelous things for us through his holy spirit, which he, has promised shall thenceforth live within us.

When we start to learn of his plan to save mankind from the horrible calamity which has befallen them, he desires that our hearts will grow warm towards him. We have, of course, heard of Gods love from our childhood, but the set phrases of Christendom have tended to conceal the beauty and the overwhelming loving kindness of our Father. Jesus told us that "he is kind unto the unthankful" -- and what amazing loving kindness that is! For thousands of years he has allowed men to run riot in their own sinful devices and to impugn his holy Name with vile blasphemies, just so that they may learn by experience of the futility of living their own selfish way out of harmony with him. But this was only a trifle compared with his supreme act of love. For he sent his *own* Son, his *only* Son to earth, and allowed men to put him to a cruel death as part of the plan that divine wisdom had chosen to save men from themselves.

*Further copies are available upon request. Postage two cents per copy.

But you do not need me to tell you how Jesus gave his life as a ransom, nor of the wonderful love of the Father and of the amazing demonstration he has given of his constancy of purpose. Still it does us good to remind ourselves of this, the keynote of our faith and the basis of all our hopes.

OUR REASONABLE SERVICE

This knowledge is wonderful in itself. If God did not intend us to know any more than this it should make us deeply grateful, but he has much more for us to know. This further knowledge, however, can be had only on one condition. That condition is *that* we "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God." (Rom. 12:1 R.V., margin.), *This*, the Apostle added, "is your *reasonable* service."

A TREASURED POSSESSION

But even this is only a small part of the wonderful offer he makes to us. The Apostles told us that before the world began God "foreordained" that Christ should come to redeem mankind (1 Pet. 1:20), and that we should be invited to share with Christ in the Working of the Divine Plan of Atonement. In the 13th chapter of Matthew Jesus told us that his consecrated followers were very precious to him and he illustrated it in the beautiful parable of the Hidden Treasure. It reads: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field." From the explanation which Jesus gave of other parables it is clear that the "man" represents Christ, and in an earlier parable Jesus had explained that "the field is the world." It is also clear that the various metaphors for the Kingdom of Heaven used in these parables (including that of the Hidden Treasure) refer to the beginnings of the Kingdom as represented in the true Church, made up of Christ's consecrated followers. This parable therefore shows us one more remarkable feature of God's invitation to us. In short he tells us that we are a treasured possession and that the gathering of his saints out of the world was a prime reason for Christ's great sacrifice and for which he gave "all that he hath."

A NEW CREATION

The Apostle Paul introduces us to another thrilling feature of this great privilege for he shows that we are called to become part of a *new* creation. (2 Cor. 5:17 R.V., margin.) When God created the angels and men, they had *of* course no say in the matter themselves, but God has arranged that his *new* creation shall be made up of those who wish to become so of their own free choice. God wanted *new* creatures, who would love him because they were drawn towards him; who would do his Will from choice and have complete trust in him. Even in this wicked world his wisdom could foresee that there would be a few who would, answer that invitation, "a little flock," a treasured few whom it would give his Son "joy" to bring to the Heavenly Father. Gradually the complex wonder of his Plan unfolds. The mission of his Son was to be the foundation of this great scheme. He too, the first creation of God, was also to become the first of this new creation, "the firstborn among many (brethren)" (Rom. 8:29), and so he was tested and tried so that he could qualify to be our forerunner, to set us an example so that we too might qualify to become sons of God, his new creatures.

SHARERS IN THE BLESSING OF MANKIND

The next feature takes us still further into the hidden mysteries of the Divine Plan. God knew that even if men were ransomed from death and freed from the sentence inherited from Adam, none would survive an individual trial. There was a work of atonement to be done if mankind was to be saved. An offering was to be made for mankind's sins, i.e., a sin offering. This voluntary sin offering was given by Jesus through his suffering and sacrifice. God invites his saints to share in Jesus suffering, and in so doing to build up their own characters. (Col. 1:24; 1 Pet. 4:13.) This accumulation of sacrifice from Jesus and all his footstep followers is an offering of thanks to God for his mercy, and is accepted by him as the beginning of his plan for all men to be brought not merely *out* of the grave but *into* harmony or at-one-ment with him. But this is still only part of the privilege God offers us. If we become truly consecrated followers of our Lord and make our calling and election sure, he has promised that we shall share with his Son in the great work of blessing all mankind. We are, in fact, to help to train all men to come back into harmony with God so that they may live in a perfect earth for ever.

HOW GOD PREPARES US

This is the climax of God's great loving kindness to mankind, and as he invites us to share in this *loving* work he requires us to become suitably qualified for the task. The qualification he requires is *perfect love*. (1 Cor. 13.) Fortunately for us we are not to be judged by our achievements, for our Father understands how the weaknesses of our old nature war against our new will. He is also aware of the campaign which the Devil wages against us. He has promised to work in us if we will only let him, and to give us strength to meet all our difficulties so that we may "go on unto perfection." (Phil. 2:12, 13; Heb. 6:1.) Paul understood this when he wrote, "I can do all things through *Christ* which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13.) Nevertheless: God requires whole hearted loyalty and absolute sincerity of heart. No wonder Paul called it our "reasonable service." Could any service be more reasonable? -- glory, honor, and privilege greater than that offered to any creature in the universe, and all he asks in return is our undivided love -- a love to which he is in fact entitled even on grounds of common gratitude.

Now this is where sacrifice comes in. Sacrifice means giving up those things which tend to draw us away from the Heavenly Father, and which tend to dull our appreciation of his love. Of course we cannot give everything up immediately. In fact it is only as we grow in spiritual stature that we fully realize what things we need to shed. Sometimes we may find it difficult, but we are to remember that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver." The various issues usually arise after this fashion: We begin to realize that "something" is diverting our thoughts too much. It is almost certain to be something that is not in the least bit harmful in itself, but is nevertheless claiming too much of our time and thought. Now when we dedicate our life to the Lord, we give him all our time, possessions, energies, and thoughts, -- and so we have to face a "sacrifice. In practice it becomes a choice between something we would *rather not* give up and Christ whom we *cannot* give up, and so it has to go. With practice and the help of the Holy Spirit (without which we can do nothing) we can learn to follow Jesus example, of whom the Psalmist prophesied "*I delight to do thy will, O God.*"

A life of consecration has been described as a narrow way. God called us to it through Jesus, and when we accept his call by dedicating our lives to him, he sets us apart, or sanctifies us. At the outset we need to have a special standing with God, for until Christ applies the merit of his sacrifice to us we are still "enemies of God." We know that Christ died for all men, but during this Gospel Age he has applied the merit of his sacrifice to his consecrated followers alone. In other words those whose consecration has been accepted by God have been released from the

sentence of death in advance of the rest of the world. His work for the rest of mankind will follow in the next Age. We thus have the opportunity in advance of all the rest of the world to come into harmony with God. He regards us as being part of Christ, and on that basis he begets us as sons together with Christ. If we are to continue as sons, we must remain *in* Christ and must go Christ's way, the narrow way "which leadeth unto life." God can carry out his work in us, to perfect us as new creatures, only so long as we remain *in* Christ and walk along the narrow way which he walked before us. Perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a "narrowing" way, for as we progress along, we find that there is progressively less room for us to carry with us the things of this life. Gradually as our strength and knowledge increase, the Lord shows us how we can continue to shed encumbrances to our spiritual life until we reach a point when, as one writer put it, "there is only room for Jesus and me." Sanctification is primarily God's work, but in his Word he has said: "Sanctify yourselves therefore and be ye holy. (Lev. 20:7.) Our part in this sanctifying work is to keep ourselves set apart by progressively divesting ourselves of those things or interests which tend to draw us from the narrow way. As this narrow way is contrary to the way of the world, it is, of course, beset with many difficulties and trials. These are necessary for the development of our Christian characters; and by the resolution with which we face them we are able to demonstrate our loyalty to our Heavenly Father. The Apostle left us under no illusion that these trials are often "grievous, but he assures us that they are "light afflictions" not worthy to be compared with the "eternal weight of glory" which awaits those who, like our Lord and Master, "overcome this world." -- 2 Cor. 4:17; John 16:33.

During the whole of our progress our Heavenly Father continuously bestows on us many great favors. He and his Son go with us, guiding our feet, strengthening us and helping us in a multitude of ways to recognize, his loving care over us. He has promised that our "steps shall be ordered" (or arranged) by him provided we let him lead us and that "all things" will "work together for good" not only because we love him but also because we are "called according to his purpose." -- Rom. 8:28.

Like Christian in "Pilgrims Progress," we have God's Word as our guide book to help us on our sanctified way, and from his Word we learn how to continue in that way. "Sanctify them through thy truth," Jesus prayed to the Father, and added for our guidance, "Thy word is truth." - John 17:17.

We are set apart not only for God's purpose but our hearts are also protected from the disturbing influences of this world. He gives us a spirit of contentment and "a peace which passeth all understanding." What a blessing this is in a world in which "men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." - Luke 21:26.

This briefly is what we mean by the, wonderful and thrilling privilege of consecration. Whatever difficulties may face us we know that if we trust our Heavenly Father he will bring us safely to our journey's end. "Being confident of this very thing," Paul wrote, "that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it," that is, complete it. - Phil. 1: 6.

Your brother in His service,
L. B. -- Eng.

The Question Box

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in, the book." -- Daniel 12:1.

Question No. 1:

Have you noticed, in both *Strong* and *Young*, that the meaning of "Michael" is stated in question form, thus: "Who is like God?"

You omit the, question mark in your answer to Question No. 3, in the "Herald" for October, 1950, page 142, paragraph 2. Does it belong there?

Answer:

The question mark was omitted in error. It does belong there.

When that "Question Box" was prepared (July, 1950) we were not aware that the question mark was required to properly translate the Hebrew word. This fact was brought to our attention by a "Herald" subscriber last February. Since then we have had opportunity to refer not only to the two concordances mentioned, but also to three Bible dictionaries (*Hastings, Smith, and Westminster*). In all five of these works (of undisputed scholarship) the question mark appears. It appears also in an article (on the subject of angels) by the learned commentator, Godet, in which he states that "The meaning of the word Michael is: Who is like unto God?" The *Newberry Bible*, too, includes the question mark in the meaning of the word Michael, given in the margin of Daniel 10:13.

No question mark appears in the *Diaglott* Alphabetical Appendix. Why it was omitted by Benjamin Wilson, in this valuable work, we do not know. We can only suppose that the omission was one of those errors from which (as he, himself, was careful to admit in the preface) his work could not be entirely free (notwithstanding the great pains he took to make it so).

Question No. 2:

It was held, in the October, 1950 "Herald" that the meaning of Michael confirmed the view that the Michael of Daniel 12:1 is properly identified as our Lord Jesus. Does this confirmation still hold, now that the meaning is seen to be in the form of a question?

Answer:

That, of course, is a matter of opinion. In our judgment the confirmation *does* still hold, although the line of reasoning (by which this conclusion is reached) changes slightly, as follows:

Without the question mark, the meaning "Who is like God" seemed to us to very fittingly describe the *personality or character* of our Lord, and we so expressed the matter in the October, 1950 "Herald." *With* the question mark, the meaning "Who is like God?" seems to us to very fittingly describe the *office and work* (or at least a very important part of the office and work) of our Lord.

Consider a moment: In the one to whom this name is given, we behold a being at the very summit of the scale of all living creatures -- the archangel (*or chief angel*) Michael. One thought and

feeling alone absorbs him -- the immeasurable distance which separates him from the Creator. "Who is like God?" he asks; and to this question his own heart responds: "No one -- certainly not I." Himself at the summit of all creation, he feels more -- than all others his own nothingness. Zeal for the glory of God is the spring of his activity, the very principle of his existence.

From this feeling arises the nature of the work he has to do, which is to challenge and to overthrow everything that dares to make itself equal with God; everything that opposes itself to God (Paganism in particular, under all its various forms). In the Old Testament as in the New, Michael appears as the protector of Israel, and the champion of Monotheism (of which Israel was the depositary); and as the vanquisher of Satan and the destroyer of his works. Could any one less than Messiah be expected to successfully accomplish so mighty an undertaking?

It will, of course, be realized, that the viewpoint expressed in the October, 1950 "Herald" (that the Michael of Daniel 12:1 is properly identified as our Lord Jesus) *does not depend on* (but is merely *confirmed by*) the meaning of "Michael"; that viewpoint was (and is) held, *because of the events associated with his name*; events described in some detail in that issue of this journal. To us those events seem sufficient to establish the viewpoint submitted, quite apart from the meaning of "Michael."

Question No. 3:

In your answer to Question No. 5 in the "Herald" for October, 1950, page 143, you quote the margin of Daniel 10:13 as reading "the first of the chief princes." Will you please say what translation you are quoting here?

Answer:

This question came from a member of the Editorial Committee too late for consideration before publication of the October, 1950 "Herald." Our reference was to the Variorum Teachers Edition. In the *text* Daniel 10:13 reads:

"but, lo, Michael,* one of the chief princes." The *marginal* note reads:

"*Or, *the first.*"

In the conversation of last February previously mentioned, a brother (who has some knowledge of Hebrew) expressed his belief that the margin should have read:

"*Or, *one of the first princes.*"

The margin of the Authorized King James Version supports his view. Note the following:

In the text, Daniel 10:13 reads:

"but, lo, Michael, one of* the chief princes."

The *marginal* note reads: "*Or, *the first.*"

Question No. 4:

In your answer to Question No. 5 in the "Herald" for October, 1950; page 143, you make the statement, "The Scriptures speak of only one archangel." Some Bible scholars believe there are seven. Have you any comments?

Answer:

The statement, "The Scriptures speak of only one archangel," is correct. He is named Michael in Jude 9. He is referred to, we think, in 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

One other angel is mentioned by name in the Scriptures, the angel Gabriel. He however, is not spoken of as an archangel.

The idea that there are seven archangels is based on a statement in the Old Testament Apocrypha (Tobias 12:15) which reads: "I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven, who stand before the Lord."

-- P. L. Read.

The Willing Hearted

Quoted from the June, 1951 issue of "Jerusalem"

TAKE YE from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever is of a *willing heart*, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord." -- Exod. 35:5.

"And every *wise- hearted* among you, shall come, and *make* all that the Lord hath commanded." - Exod. 35:10.

"And they came, every one *whose heart stirred him up*, and every one *whom his spirit made willing*, and they brought the Lords offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all His service and for the holy garments." - Exod. 35:21.

"And they spoke unto Moses saying, The people bring *much more than enough* for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. So the people -- were restrained from bringing." - Exod. 36:5, 6.

"Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." - Exod. 40:34.

It is very important for us to know that the only offerings acceptable and well pleasing to God are those made with an eager and willing spirit. "Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring...."

The tabernacle of the Most High was not made from taxes imposed on the people, but from voluntary offerings of the willing -- hearted. The spirit that went into the making of the tabernacle was the spirit of love and devotion. What joy! What interest! Yea, what zeal!

"The women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands." They *wanted* to spin. Bezaleel was filled with the spirit of the Lord, he and Aholiab were filled with "wisdom of heart" to "work all manner of work, of the engraver and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue and in purple, in scarlet and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work."

Inspired workmanship! The spirit must inspire both our offerings and our service. Either we have this spirit in our movement or it becomes barren and uninspiring. Let us bring into the "tabernacle" of our community, such willing-hearted offerings, such wise -- hearted service, love, devotion, and prayers that the Lord may be pleased to "dwell in our midst."

Let our enthusiasm mark us as "a people zealous of good works."

How vastly different is the spirit prevalent in the world today -- poor workmanship, lack of interest, go slow, work to rule, less hours and less work for more money and more leisure, absenteeism and growing discontent. No vision, no incentive.

What a contrast to Exodus 35!

How different will be the spirit in the Messianic Age when righteousness and praise will fill the earth, and men and, women will sing and work for sheer joy in the interest of one another, and

with love toward God. The imagination can hardly visualize the "Paradise this earth will become in such circumstances.

Our zeal for the Lord must be the devouring passion of our souls. We must be men and women .of vision, of prayer, of action, fully surrendered to his will, for we have a "calling" and a "mission" to fulfill.

All that we have belongs to God; to offer to him that which we value least and would not miss is an insult to the Most High. That which costs us little is worth little. It is not a sacrifice. But to offer to him that which costs us. much and which we would miss is a sacrifice. We must offer our "Isaac" if called upon to do so.

This was the spirit that inspired the Macedonian Christians, and brought them to the notice of all the churches. Paul boasted in them and held them up as an example to provoke a like spirit in the Corinthian Church. Paul says of them:

"Amid a severe ordeal of trouble, their overflowing joy and their deep poverty together have poured out a flood of rich generosity; I can testify that up to their means, aye and beyond their means, they have given -- begging me of their own accord, most urgently, for the favor of contributing to the support of the saints. They have clone more than I expected; they gave themselves to the Lord, to begin with, and then (for so God willed it) they put themselves at my disposal." - 2 Cor. 8:5, *Moffatt*.

Christians who are moved to this extent are roused by a great vision. They become "dynamic." Their enthusiasm becomes contagious. "Overflowing joy" in an "ordeal of trouble"! "A flood of rich generosity" out of "deep poverty"! What amazing words! Can we read them and not be moved?

No greater example of this spirit can be found than that of Epaphroditus of the Church of Philippi. This great hearted Macedonian, delirious with fever and having privations and perils, came near to death with illness in his endeavor to reach the Apostle in Rome and deliver to him much needed gifts, from the Philippians.

In sending him back quickly to allay the fears of the brethren at Philippi, for they had heard of the sickness of Epaphroditus and of how he "longed after them" -- Paul writes:

"Receive him therefore in the Lord with all glad ness; and hold such in reputation: because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply the lack of service you were not able to render." (Phil 2:29, 30.) And in the fourth chapter:

"Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity." -- Phil. 2:15, 16.

Do we "long" for each other in the love of Christ? Are we anxious for each others welfare? Do we send "once and again" to meet "the necessities of Gods servants?

Paul also wrote: "Mark this; he *who* sows sparingly will reap sparingly and he *who* sows generously. will reap a generous harvest . . . for God *loves* the giver who gives cheerfully." - 2 Cor. 9:6, 7, *Moffatt*.

"Not that others be eased and ye be burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a -- supply. for your want: that there may be equality." - 2 Cor. 8:13, 14.

We are to *give according to the need*, and "accord cording to what a man hath" but there must first be the "willing mind" before it can be acceptable to God.

If we deny ourselves and become channels of blessing, our unselfishness will fit us for the divine bounty, for a great promise is ours.

"God is able to bless you with ample means, so that you may always have quite enough for any emergency of your own and ample besides for any kind act to others; as it is written, He scatters his gifts to the poor broadcast, his charity lasts for ever.

"He who furnishes the sower with seed and with bread to eat, will supply seed for you and multiply it, he will increase the crop of your charities -- you will be enriched on all hands, *so that you can be generous on all occasions.*" -- 2 Cor. 9:8-11, *Moffatt*.

And the fruitage?

Men will praise God because of your genuine and practical godliness, in the Gospel. They will be drawn to you, for they will see and know what the grace of God is, and what it has done to you.

-- *H. Panteny*.

Encouraging Messages

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

Just about two hours ago my two boys came to my working place telling me to come home at once. On doing so I found my wife waiting to show me the contents of a Care package, she had just received, and was so delighted. At first she thought the package contained books, but on opening found that you dear brethren had thought even of our material needs. We feel free to ask brethren for spiritual help, though it may be often perhaps expensive for them to send books we cannot get here, but it is quite another thing to ask for material things. We had often heard of Care packages, but it is the first we had received. It is wonderful, especially for the housewife and children, and a great relief. We cannot buy such good things here. The living costs are climbing up these days again -- sugar, bread, butter, leather for shoes for "the children. It is very hard to buy things other than the necessities of daily life.

Our hearts are full of joy and gratitude, first to the Lord, then to you, whom the faithful Master used to bring the blessing to brethren across the sea. Please be sure we are grateful for your -- love and efforts toward us. Our daily prayers will be for more grace for you all in your ministry with the "Herald" and in making your calling and election sure. Often I have mentioned to Sr. H. how much I appreciate the contents of the "Herald" and the spiritual depth of its articles. Last week we had a study with another brother and sister, and I translated one of the articles in the last "Herald." ... At the close of this letter I wish to say that I trust the "Herald" will continue its depth of spirituality. That is its outstanding feature, and gives its contents that ripeness that every consecrated reader recognizes... . With 2 Thess. 1:11, 12, and earnest prayers for you,

Your brother and sister by His grace,
G. and I. H. -- Germany.

Dear Brethren:

I just finished reading that very inspiring article in the July issue of the "Herald," "Our Lords Return," and was prompted to sit right down and write you to enter the two following on your mailing list, beginning with this July issue.

I am enclosing \$3.00 for the two subscriptions and my own renewal.

Your sister in Him,
Mrs. J. H. J. -- Minn.

Dear Sir:

Thank you kindly for the "Herald." Today, I received my first copy. Your magazine is a fine, spiritual book, which is, greatly needed.

I just recently found the "Divine Plan" by Pastor Russell. After searching for years for more truth, I feel I have found it.

You mention some books -- "The Revelation of Jesus Christ (Vols. I and 11) -- also "Daniel the Beloved of Jehovah. " If you have these books, I would like to order them.

Sincerely,
B. L. F. -- Calif.

Recently Deceased

Brother Rudolph Ady, Jamaica, L. I., N. Y. -- (August).
Sister Flora Babb, Dayton, Ohio -- (July).
Brother William D. Campbell, Boston, Mass. -- (August).
Sister Mary Carpenter, Centralia, Mo. -- (July).
Sister Phoebe, Harrison, Cromwell, Conn. -- (July).
Sister Jahn Ivarson, Aurora, Ill. -- (August).
Sister Frances L. Maitland, New York, N. Y. -- (July).
Sister Elizabeth B. Raftery, Brooklyn, N. Y. -- (August).