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Isaiah's Messianic Vision

"And she shall bring forth a Son, and than shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." -- Matt. 1:21.

THE STORY of Jesus' birth is not new; it is "the old, old story of gracious heavenly love." We hear again in carol, hymn, and sacred song the glad tidings of great joy announced centuries ago by an angel of the Lord to shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock by night. Although more than nineteen hundred years have passed since the announcement of the Heavenly Message, the good news concerning the coming of the "Christ Child" continues to inspire hope in all who put their trust in God, and whose thankful hearts echo the praise of the heavenly host: "Glory to God in the highest, -- and on earth peace, good will toward men." -- Luke 2:14.

The Prophet Isaiah, whose name signifies "the salvation of Jehovah," has been styled "the Evangelical Prophet," because his many and varied prophecies are replete in their graphic description of the various aspects of the work of Christ., It is a remarkable circumstance that the significance of the Prophet's name coincides so entirely, with the mighty work of restoration to be wrought by the Messiah -- the recovery of the human family from the blight of sin and death.

This great Prophet, seeing in a vision the coming Messiah, spoke as he was moved by the holy spirit, saying, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6.) As the vision unfolded before Isaiah, he designated the character and work of the Messiah by revealing the appropriate names which he would bear. This great prophetic vision was one of changing scenes, which, like a panorama, passed before the gaze of the Seer and pictured progressively the birth, life, death, exaltation, and glorious Millennial reign of Christ, who, as Prophet, Priest, and King, was acclaimed "Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

With great joy must the Prophet have beheld the promised Seed of Abraham dispensing blessings of health, security, life, and peace to all the families of the earth. If we would share his joy, we

must also share his vision; so let us turn the pages of the Sacred Word to discover there the past scenes narrated and the future ones pictured in language fair.

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

The opening scene of the prophetic vision was fulfilled in the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem; and so we find recorded that "Mary brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7.) This was the first step in God's great plan of redemption to restore mankind to the perfection of Eden's Paradise. For more than four thousand years the human family had been dying as a result of the just sentence of death passed upon Father Adam; for "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12.) But now a ray of hope was shining; the long awaited Messiah was born; for "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son; made of a woman," and "The Word was made flesh." (Gal. 4:4; John 1:14.) The Logos, the Firstborn, of every creature, the Beginning of the creation of God, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN

We turn next to the Consecration scene, in which Jesus came to John to be baptized by him in the Jordan. As we picture Jesus standing before John with head bowed in the attitude of complete submission to his Heavenly Father, the words of the Psalmist come to our mind: "Lo, I come ∴ I delight to do thy will, O my God: Yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psa. 40:7, 8.) "For the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Mark 10:45; John 3:16.) Then Jesus symbolized his consecration by being baptized by John: "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the spirit like a dove descending, upon, him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mark 1:10, 11.) This was he of whom the Baptist spoke, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." -- John 1:29

Isaiah, in another of his matchless prophecies (Isa. 53:3-5), depicts Jesus as he faithfully carried out his covenant of sacrifice to "pour out his soul unto death." "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Thus the Logos "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:7, 8.) Then "bearing our sins in his own body on the tree," he cried, "It is finished," and "tasted death for every man."

AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER

This scene revealed the Messiah in the glory of his Kingdom, with all authority and power vested in him. Daniel the Beloved also saw this scene in his vision of the Messiah's dominion and

kingdom, and set it down for our learning: "Behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him 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.) The Psalmist also prophesied concerning Messiah's world wide Kingdom, saying, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba, and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." - Psa. 72:8-11.

AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL

This word, wonderful, is derived from the verb *pala*, to separate, to distinguish, or to be great. "It is a word which expresses with surprising accuracy everything in relation to the Redeemer." Jesus was

God's great Gift to man; the Light of the World. He was the Logos, or Word of God; because he revealed or manifested God. He was the Beginning of the creation of God; the Firstborn of every creature. All things were created by him, and for him. He left the glory which he had with the Father, and was made flesh and dwelt among us in order that he might redeem mankind. He was Wonderful in his birth, life, death, and resurrection. He will be Wonderful, too, in the office of Prophet, Priest, and King; for "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." - Phil. 2:9-11.

COUNSELOR

"The name Counselor here denotes one of honorable rank; one who is fitted to stand near princes and kings as their adviser. It is expressive of great wisdom, and of qualifications to guide and direct the human race." Thus during the great Reconstruction Period -- The Times of Restitution - - the Messiah will guide the redeemed over the highway of, holiness, and "a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." Then directed, by the wise Counselor, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"; for "The meek will he guide in judgment: and, the meek will he teach his way." -- Isa. 35:10; Psa. 25:9.

THE MIGHTY GOD

This scene of the vision will meet its fulfilment when the Messiah comes in the glory of his Kingdom to judge the earth; for "he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth""Then "times of refreshing shall come out from the face of Jehovah"; and Christ, as Immanuel (God with us) shall be acclaimed "The Mighty -- God." The Apostle Paul also spoke of that day, 'saying, "He [God] hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:31.) And to this may be added the testimony of Jesus: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." - John 5:22.

Again "the Evangelical Prophet" pictures for us another view of the Messiah; this time in the role of "The Mighty God": "And in this mountain [kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts [through our Lord Jesus Christ] make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation," for "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm [Christ] in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." -- Isa. 25:6-9; Isa. 52:10.

THE EVERLASTING FATHER

The Vulgate renders the expression, The Everlasting Father, "The Father of the future Age." Literally it is "The Father of eternity." Both renderings are correct, for the title, "The Everlasting Father," will be ascribed, to Christ in his Millennial Kingdom; for then the blessing of everlasting life will be offered to all of the human family who will "heed that Prophet" and take of the water of life provided by the precious sacrifice of Jesus. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
-- John 3:16

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

The closing scene of the vision revealed the Messiah as "The Prince of Peace." In this great role he shall make wars to cease unto the end of the earth and break in pieces the oppressor; then shall he usher in the era of eternal peace among men, and the desire of all nations shall come. For the God of Heaven shall set his King (Christ) on his holy hill (Kingdom) of Zion, "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." (Micah 4:3, 4.) "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break -- in *pieces* the oppressor. They shall fear *thee* as long as the sun and *moon* endure; throughout all generations' He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his (lays shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." -- Psa. 72:4-7.

We have come to the end of the vision, and have shared Isaiah's joy as we hearkened to inspired New Testament Prophets blend their voices with those of holy men of old to tell "The Message of salvation from God's own holy Word."

It is particularly fitting at this season of the year that we steal away in the spirit from the world with its cares and distractions, and in the quietness of our own soul tune in again the Heavenly Message: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Then let us join with the heavenly host in praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

"All hail the power of Jesus" name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

"Let every kindred, *every*, tribe,
On this terrestrial bail,
To him all, majesty ascribe,
And, crown him Lord of *all*."

-- R. W. Godfrey.

The Gift

What have I, Lord, to offer Thee?
A Can my poor gifts accepted be
When sun and moon and stars that shine
Are all Thine own, forever Thine?

With my dull oils what artist's view
Can my hand paint to offer You,
Who spreads before my eyes the grass
And tints each wayside flower I pass?

What songs can my voice trill for One
Who gave the bird song with the sun,
Then, when its last beams sink from sight
Tunes insect choirs for the night?

What glittering bauble could I bring,
What -- jeweled gift to that great King,
Who, in the secret of the earth
Stores rubies, diamonds of care worth?

A wave sheaf in my hand to bring?
This no fit emblem for that King --
My arm but flung the seed, His rain
And sunshine (brought the golden grain.

What meat oblation might I burn,
On high swept altar, bleak and stern?
What, sacrifice to One who still
Claims cattle all on thousand hill?;

A sculptured figure from the rock
Translucent, gleaming, fit to mock
The human body? Nay, but life
I could not give -- twill not suffice!

This, this my offering to Him,
Humble the gift He bids me bring,
Not to be bought in any mart -- Son, son,
He pleadeth, "Give thine *heart!*"

-- G. M. Harris,

Who Has Suffered Most?

HOW MUCH of all the sorrow and pain and suffering in this world have you seen? Only that small portion about your home; or if you have traveled, still it is only a small portion. While we know and see so little, God knows and sees all. His eyes are over all the evil and the good. He knows what pain and anguish burden all hearts, of homes robbed of dear ones. It is said that each heart knows its own bitterness, but God knows the bitterness of each heart.

How much grief does sin cause you? How much pain does an untruth give you? You have heard them so often that it does not hurt you much. How many tears have you shed for the sorrows and troubles in Europe and elsewhere? Very few, for none of your loved ones were there, none of those near and dear to you. We have become so selfish and hard -- hearted through the fall that it is only when these evils strike near us that we sorrow and are pained much. But God feels them. It was his loved one who sinned, it was his dear one who was killed, or whose heart was broken. While our heart is hardened and our views and sympathies narrow, God's heart is not hard. He who is the source of all that is good, has a heart infinitely more tender and sympathetic than ours. He feels every ache and pain and woe of all of us. He knows all the sorrow and the sin.

Every untruth, every sin, is terrible to God. Sin is more awful to God than to us. We suffer only a few years, thirty or fifty or seventy, but he has suffered six thousand years. We get used to it. He sees the awful sights; he hears the awful sounds and the children crying for bread; he sees the tears that are shed, all the woe and grief and misery. He reads that vast history of what transpires in the hidden world of human hearts, which is concealed to other human eyes; and it is a mercy that we are spared the sight of it. Mankind, professing themselves to be wise, became foolish and even changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like, to corruptible man, and to birds and beasts and creeping things. -- Rom. 1:23.

Yet in his great love he says, If enduring this will help my dear ones to enjoy the blessings of eternity, then I will go through it -- I will endure it. It cost him nothing to give blessings, but it is infinitely harder to withhold them. Sin now has cost God for the past six thousand years more than it will cost him to shower blessings throughout all eternity. Who, then, has suffered the most, who has endured the most?

-- Benjamin H. Barton.

"This Thing is from Me"

1 Kings 12:24

Have you ever thought that, everything concerning you concerns Me too? For "he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of Mine eye." Zech. 2:8.

"You are very precious in My sight." (Isa. 43:4.) Therefore it is My special delight to educate you.

I would have you learn that When temptations assail you, and "the enemy comes in like a flood" that "*This thing is from Me,*" that your weakness -- needs My might, and your safety lies in letting Me fight for you.

Are you in difficult circumstances, surrounded by people who do not understand you, who never consult your taste, who put you in the background? *This thing is from Me.* I am the God of circumstances. Thou earnest not to thy place by accident; it is the very place I meant for thee.

Have you asked to be made humble? See then, I have put you in the very place where this lesson is taught; *your* surroundings and companions are only working out My will.

Are you passing through a night of sorrow? *This thing is from Me.* Jesus was the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. I have let earthly comforters fail you that by turning to Me you may obtain everlasting consolation. - 2 Thess. 2:16, 17.

Has some friend disappointed you? One to whom you opened your heart? *This thing is from Me.* I have allowed this disappointment to come, that you may learn that

"The best Friend to have is Jesus, He will keep you lest you fall, He will hear you when *you* call, The best Friend to have is Jesus."

I want to be your confidant. Has some one repeated things about you that are untrue? Leave "them to Me and draw closer unto Me, thy shelter, out of reach of the strife of tongues, for, I will "bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgment as the noonday." -- Psa. 37:6.

Have your plans been all upset? Are you bowed down and weary? *This thing is from Me.* You made your plans and then came asking Me to bless them, but I would have *you* let Me plan for you, and then take the responsibility for, this thing is too heavy for thee. Thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. (Exodus 18:18.) You are only an instrument.

Have you longed to do some great work for Me, and instead been laid aside on a bed of pain and weakness? *This thing is from me.* I could not get your attention in your busy days, and I want to teach you some of My deepest lessons. They also serve who *only* stand and wait. I want you to learn to sing:

"I am not eager, bold and strong;
All that is past.
I am ready, not to do,
At last -- at last!"

Some of My greatest workers are those shut out from active service, that they may learn to wield the weapon of all -- prayer.

Are you suddenly called upon to occupy a difficult and responsible position? Launch out on Me. I am trusting you with the possession of difficulties, and for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works and in, all that thou putteth thy hand unto. (Deut. 15:10.) Remember the pot of Holy Oil -- ever interruption that would make you impatient, every word that pains you; every revelation of your own weakness, be anointed with it. Interruptions are Divine instructions, the sting will go as you learn, to see *Me in all things*.

-- *Author Unknown.*

"The Hidden Life"

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

PART I

PERHAPS there is no part of the Christian experience in which the "hidden life" realizes itself so fully, as in the act and manner of its devotions in its presentation of itself at the Throne of Grace. In this act of "drawing near" to the Holy Center of its faith; it is enabled to realize and understand its own personal relationship, as an individual, to the "High and Lofty One" who sits enthroned in his place apart. The act of "drawing near" presupposes the place apart in which a Holy Presence is awaiting us, expecting our approach, holding himself in readiness to accept us in audience and deigning graciously to hear and answer what we have to say.

That same act of "drawing near"; presupposes our separation and withdrawal away from every other engrossing or engaging interest, and, of deliberate intent, betaking ourselves to the appointed place where he, who is our soul's desire, awaits our coming.

That this thought lies deeply imbedded in the Apostolic words in Hebrews 10:19-23, ought scarcely to need words of proof. Here the enlightened writer is drawing sharply upon the tabernacle type, and shows us the nature of a privilege provided for as consequence of our Lord's death, resurrection, and appearance in the presence of God on our behalf. From the standpoint of the typical procedure Jesus has gone into the Most Holy Place as our High Priest, taking not the blood of bulls and goats, but his own sacrificial blood, securing thus an eternal redemption (or deliverance) for us from our sins. - Heb. 9:11, 12.

OPENED THE NEW AND LIVING WAY

In the performance of this priestly work, Jesus accomplished for us two things. The first of these two things has been referred to: He took with him, in a borrowed sense of the word, his precious blood into the antitypical Most Holy Place, into heaven itself. Every serious student of these deeper things should know exactly what is meant by statements such as that. It is a picture of a great "reality" stretched upon the framework of a typical procedure in such a way that deep fundamental spiritual truth may be deduced and inferred from a study of the type. It is as though a heavenly propitiatory, or mercy seat, had been sprinkled with his blood, and as a consequence, propitiation for sin has been made.

But Jesus also accomplished another thing. He opened up a way, a new, and living way into the "polies," and our author very specifically indicates that the privilege to "enter the sanctuary" (New Revised Version) is now open to those who have acquired the confidence to avail themselves of that privilege.

Now, in Israel, that privilege did not exist for each and all, but only for the anointed son of Aaron, -- the anointed priest. At no time subsequent -- to the high -- priestly entry with atonement blood was the sanctuary (or Holy Place) made -- accessible even to the consecrated Levite, much less to the uncalled members, of other tribes.

Entrance into the sanctuary was the unique and special privilege of none but the priestly house. Consequently, on the higher side, this passage can refer to none save those who have been "anointed together with him" (2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:27), those who have been called into fellowship with the Son. - 1 Cor. 1:9.

We must then note that the privilege of "entry into the sanctuary" is the prelude to the "drawing near," it is the open way of which the "drawing near" is the goal or terminus. We travel forward on: that "way" in order to "draw near."

It should also be noted that this way of approach was opened up for us, in some way or other, "through his flesh." Whatever construction we may be inclined to put upon that phrase, it most certainly implies, that the "way" was opened by him "in the days of his flesh," that is, during the period of his ministry and sacrifice. And in some way "his flesh" and the "hanging veil" are more or less synonymous features of the entrance to the newly opened way. Seeing also that it is our privilege to proceed only into the counterpart of the "Holy Place" -- not yet to the Most Holy -- it seems obvious that it is the "veil" at the entrance to the sanctuary to which reference is made, not to that leading to the Most Holy. With these particulars in mind it would seem to be a reasonable presumption that with the surrender of his flesh, his perfect humanity, in sacrifice, Jesus himself passed from the court to the Holy Place through this veil *on his* way to the Most Holy, and thus became the pioneer and pathfinder of this hitherto uncharted way -- to God. In other words, at the -- time he covenanted to surrender his humanity in sacrifice, he was begotten or created as the first new creature -- the first, and at the same time, the High Priest of his order -- and anointed with the holy spirit of God as a token of his installation in his priestly duties, and thenceforth passed on into the "Holy Place" as the sole participant in that privilege prior to, the descent of the holy spirit at Pentecost.

In full conformity with this we read in *Conybeare's* translation: But when, Christ appeared as High Priest of the good things to come, he passed through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands and entered by his own blood into the Holy Place... " (Heb 9:11, 12.): Added to that we read (Heb. 9:24) "For Christ entered not into the sanctuary made with hands, which is figure of the true, but into heaven itself, now, to appear in the presence of God for us." (*Conybeare.*) Thus, Jesus also passed through the outer veil himself, when surrendering his flesh to death, in order to open, up this new way into the sanctuary.

OUR PRIVILEGE OF DRAWING NEAR

And now, as a result of his sacrifice we too may also do the same thing and pass likewise through the first veil as (new creatures or) anointed under-priests into the Holy Place. We may say with our inspired author, "Therefore brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith,, with our hearts sprinkled clean .from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb. 10:19, 20, New Revised Version.) This suggestion that we have our bodies washed with pure water shows how closely the author is following the exact procedure in the type, and at the same time indicates how accurately the "better things" are stretched out upon the framework of the ancient patterns.

Let, us pay a little further attention to the passage just quoted, it will repay us to be sure of our ground, and as this is one of the great key passages of the Epistle, a little extra consideration can scarcely be out of place. Occasionally, in some of the former articles on this theme, we have made reference to the "Holy Place" privileges and conditions now open to us without presenting the actual Scriptures in proof thereof. Those proofs will now be presented here. It will be necessary to revert again to our Lord Jesus' entry into the sanctuary in order to show exactly how his brethren who follow him are linked with him in this privilege. First, then as to our Lord's entry In the Diaglott sublinear translation a rendering of Heb. 10:19-20 is given which is entirely

different from that of any other version which the writer has on hand. It reads "Having therefore, brethren, confidence for the entrance of the holies by the blood of Jesus, which he consecrated for us a way; recently killed and yet living, through the veil (that is, the flesh of himself.) . . ." As it stands, that rendering reads a little awkwardly, and it is a pity that the translator spoils the meaning by his desire to fit it into an unscriptural notion that Jesus still is in possession of his human flesh. It might be rendered more accurately and smoothly "Having, therefore brethren, confidence for the entrance of the holies by the blood of Jesus; a way recently killed and yet living, which he consecrated for us through the veil (that is, his flesh)." The Diaglott is the only version which translates the Greek *prospatos* in that way (so far as we have been able to verify) though, it is supported in that definition by both Professors Young and Strong in their concordances. It is also an accord with the usage of the old Greek poet, Homer, hence cannot therefore be lightly dismissed.

If, then, the rendering is to be accepted, it will be necessary to discover and explain the way whereby the blood of a man (the blood presupposes the, humanity of the, sacrifice) can be transported through the Holy Place, and be presented by himself in the antitypical Most Holy Place. To provide the blood the man must cease to exist; the "letting" of his blood must mean his death. Here we have the "recently killed" part of the transaction how about the new and living part of it? There seems only one way to account for that, and that is by the personality of the high priest (in the type) representing Jesus in a new light as a new creature, able at length to proceed into heaven itself and present there the higher, counterpart to his blood. In that case Jesus opened up this new way to life by passing to it through death. At the time when he consecrated himself to do the will of God even unto death, he was created, or begotten, as a new creature (and anointed by the holy spirit to his high priestly office) and began forthwith to put to death his perfect flesh his perfect humanity in order to provide; the blood to make, atonement possible. Looked at in that light it is possible to see how the "way" was recently killed and yet living a new way of living, and thereby the sacrificial virtue of the "killed" man's blood, could be transported and, presented where only a spiritual new creature could present it. In other words Jesus was represented in both the sacrificial victim and the sacrificing priest; his perfect humanity the victim, his new creature, the anointed priest.

That there is another meaning to the Greek *prospatos* is evident from the context where the only other occurrence (slightly modified) is found. This is in Acts 18:1, 2, where, we read: "After these things he departed from Athens and came to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila. . . lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla." Even the Diaglott here translates the word to mean "recently. All other versions give the same meaning to it. There is no possibility of the "killed" idea here. Obviously its meaning is "recently, "lately," "newly, or other equivalent word. This definition also has ancient Greek usage from Eschylus downwards in support of it.

In spite of this little difference, however, the plain inference to be drawn from the passage in Hebrews 10:19, 20 (as per all the versions except the, Diaglott) is that this way to life was but recently opened up by the Lord in passing underneath the first veil, and was represented in his covenant of sacrifice and the surrender of his flesh. The new and living way is a way to life closely, intertwined with a sacrificial death.

Now as it is not possible for us in this late day to say with certainty which definition of *prospatos* (Homer's, or that of later date) was in the writer's, mind, it seems better far to accept both, and use them harmoniously, thus permitting each to contribute its own shade of thought to our text.

Perhaps, at this point, we may safely pass on from its application to our Lord, persuaded and convinced that he has "passed through the heavens," with the tokens of his precious blood, and that he has opened up a new and living way to God, so that there is now a privilege and a "right of way" for those who follow him to "draw near."

The various versions have each their own way of speaking of this privilege. The Revised Version says: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter the holy place." Others are very similar. The New Revised Version is particularly clear and good. It says: "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the Sanctuary." There can scarcely be any ambiguity or misunderstanding about the meaning of this. There is a privilege and opportunity available to some those who have acquired the necessary confidence and authorization to enter into the sanctuary in the same way that Jesus did. They enter in on exactly the same terms and in exactly the same way. Otherwise these words have no meaning at all. There is no need to labor them or unduly insist on the obvious! There is a "way" opened for us, and an invitation to use it in order to "draw near."

PARTICIPATION WITH CHRIST AN APPEAL TO HIGHER LIFE

It may seem rather strange "to us at this end of the Age that, a doctrine of such outstanding importance was not built up more systematically and presented to us point by point, in proper consecutive order, and in great detail by this most talented author and teacher. It would then have been "easier for our comprehension today, and might not have caused the diversity of thought which now exists. But this is not the only case of its kind. The same sort of thing occurs also in Romans 6:3-11. Paul does not argue out the basic truth of our association with Christ in his baptism unto death, and his later resurrection unto life. He simply asserts it as a fact, a bald "and bold assertion of what to him was undoubted and unchallengeable truth. He then proceeds to use that truth as the basis of appeal to his brethren to live that new and higher type of life which ought, of simple necessity, to follow in natural sequence from, such a close and unmistakable association with him. The doctrine of joint-participation with Christ, in his calling and sacrifice, was accepted by the early Church as established truth, requiring neither argument nor amplification to support it. Every one of the great Apostolic writers, Peter, Paul, John, and this present writer also (if other than Paul, as some suppose) not only accepted this joint -- participation with Christ as truth, but all used it as their basis of appeal to exhort brethren to live the higher life.

And it is because we also have counted that joint participation. with Christ as established bed rock truth, that the suggestions in former articles were so confidently made, on the very simple grounds that we found our Apostolic teachers doing this very thing, and felt ourselves justified in doing exactly as they did, and for the same end and purpose, too.

Thus, in the passage before us (Heb. 10:19, 20) participation with Christ in his priesthood (with all that it implies) is stated by its writer as an undoubted fact, not requiring to be argued to the point of proof. To his understanding the "better priesthood" had a bond of union not less close and orderly than that of the "high" and "under" priesthood of the Aaronic order, and the existence of that, as type, was to him, proof of the other as antitype. Also, as in all other instances of this kind of assertive utterances, it was used by him as the basis for a strong persuasive appeal; hence the nature of the words which follow in Heb. 10:23-25 and onwards.

OUR CONFESSION

Furthermore, this same relationship in joint-participation, but from another point of view, is set forth with the same kind of assertive emphasis in Hebrews 3:1 in the words: "Therefore, holy

brethren, associates of a heavenly calling, attentively regard Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession." (Diaglott.) The choice of that last word "confession" has been taken by some students to indicate the follower's dissociation from his Lord, in that he had no need to make confession (as do we) of sins and weaknesses and frailties.

But the word as here used in the Greek text does not need to be interpreted of sins and weaknesses exclusively. It means "to say the same thing;" and this could be as true of virtuous things as of self-condemnatory things. Moreover, the word "confession, As used by the Diaglott, has but small advantage over the word "profession," as used by the Authorized Version -- the word "confession" meaning "to declare fully," "profession," "to declare openly and voluntarily." In either case it requires that all concerned shall "say the same thing." What was it they all had to say?

Let us note that Jesus is not only called the High Priest of our confession but the Apostle also. And as *we* did not elect and install him in the office of High Priest, no more did we constitute him the Apostle of our confession! It was within the prerogative of God alone to designate Jesus as our High Priest; likewise only God could constitute and send him forth as an Apostle, that is, as "one sent" on his behalf. On this point we have Jesus' own words in evidence." "As thou didst send me" (John 17:18), and "as the Father hath sent me." (John 20:21.) Hence his Apostleship (exactly like his High-Priesthood) derived from God.

In the two passages just quoted Jesus associated his disciples with himself in the mission on which he had been sent: "As thou didst send me into the world, even, so sent I them into the world" (John 17:18), and "As the Father hath sent me even so send I you. (John 20:21.) There is here expressed the ground of the kinship and association in the Lord's special mission to the world. He was the "One" entrusted with the Message; we are the associates who take it up from him. Jesus witnessed before Pilate "the good confession", (1 Tim. 6:13) concerning the purpose of his coming as a King into this world, and concerning the divine ability to keep and protect him while remaining in this world; so also Timothy (and all who like him had been called of God) had likewise confessed "the good confession" in the presence of many witnesses.

Jesus had also testified to Israel that a new and better order was about to begin (John 4:23) his associates also were doing just the same thing, as this very Epistle testifies. The outstanding implication of this text (Heb. 3:1) is that both "he" and "his associates" are "all saying the same thing"; first, that "lie" and "they" had all been "called" of God; next, that "he" and "they" would be preserved and kept by God till his priestly-perfecting work in them was carried through to its' completion.

It is to this confidence the Apostle makes reference when he says, "Having then a great High Priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession." (Heb. 4:14.) And again, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised." -- Heb. 10:23.

Let us seek to have that full assurance of faith *in* the great truth that there is indeed an association and joint-participation in Christ between Jesus, who opened up the *new* and living way, and those who in full confidence seek to enter into the sanctuary so that they may then "draw near" to God in deeper worship and devotion than theretofore.

-- T. Holmes, Eng.

"To Live is Christ

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." -- Phil. 1:21. (Continued from last issue)

THE NEW. Testament sets before us a new life in Christ -- a life in which "old things have passed away, all things have become new." We read of the contrast between the flesh and the spirit, that they are "contrary the one to the other." (Gal. 5:16-18.) This is clearly shown in Romans 8:4-9, and in other passages. The writings, of the Apostles show that there is an inexorable conflict, the "flesh warring against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh," which continues with the child of God until the course is run. Jesus waged this conflict while in the flesh (but apart from sin) from Jordan until Calvary. The temptations which were presented to our Lord throughout his earthly walk as a new creature, particularly in the wilderness experience, furnish an illustration of this. -- See 1 John 2:16, 17.

A NEW CREATION -- OF THE SPIRIT

Because this life in Christ, this "living Christ, is something so completely new, so foreign to all that we know by nature, the Scriptures speak of those who experience it as *a new creation*. They have been "raised to walk in newness of life." It involves something much more than purity of conduct, holiness of thought, a reformation of character, *or* of living a good life of mercy, kindness, and love. None of these things, however laudable in themselves, constitute the life of the new creature -- none of them, and yet *all* of them, with much more. -- Gal. 6:15.

This fact is clearly demonstrated *in* the incident of the "rich young ruler," who came to, our Lord with great eagerness and apparent earnestness of spirit. We well know the story, and in the account given by Mark we read: "Then Jesus, beholding him, *loved* him." He must have been a very noble and lovable character for Jesus the perfect One,

to, have thus loved him. Notwithstanding this -- the beauty and loveliness, the obvious virtue and goodness of his character -- when he heard the requirements of discipleship, he went away sorrowful. And notice: Jesus let him go. He did nothing to persuade him to stay or to reconsider the issue.

No, this *new life*, this "living Christ" that *is* realized by some, is something outside the province *or* power of any individual to achieve. No effort or striving on our part, will, gain it. Natural goodness possessed by some, *or* a noble disposition, are *not* the prime requisites for discipleship any more than they were sufficient for the young ruler to gain life. There must, during this dispensation when the Lord is gathering out the heirs of the Kingdom, be first God's *call* and his drawing power (John 6:44, 37); then the begetting to an entirely new life, a spiritual life as compared with the natural, earthly life -- a life, as Jesus declared to Nicodemus, which will reach, its completion when "born from above," born in the spirit -- the divine nature -- in the First Resurrection. (John 3:3, Moffatt.) God in his foreknowledge and wisdom, by his grace and power, sets aside, sanctifies certain ones unto himself and for this purpose it *is* not of ourselves and never could be.

GODS WORKMANSHIP

It is a work begun by God as stated by the Apostle James (James 1:18) "*Of his own will* begat he us with the Word of Truth" and again (John 1:13), "begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, *but of God*." Thus we can take assurance and comfort to ourselves

that, if we, by God's grace, find ourselves in vital relationship to him as his children -- "the spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are children of God" -- that we belong to him -- then God has done this for us, and -- it is of his own sovereign will and grace, as we sometimes sing -- "Thou who hast inspired the cry, Thou alone canst satisfy." Having this confidence -- sure of our calling and election -- we may have quietness and rest of heart and press forward.

And so Christ lives today, not necessarily in the lives of good, noble characters, for many are predisposed to virtue; many are born with beneficent, kind dispositions. The Scriptures imply that in the main, the Father has not called such. But Christ lives in the lives of those who have died with Christ and who no longer live in and for the flesh, to fulfill its desires: It is through these the will of God and his purpose during this Christian era is being worked out and exemplified -- in those who like Paul, have been inducted into a ministry. -- 2 Cor. 3:6-18; 2 Cor. 5:14-20.

THE MINISTRY OF THE CHRIST

There is a work, a ministry, a dispensation of service centered in the Christ of God. It began with Jesus when he commenced his life as a new creature, front, Jordan onwards, and has continued in the members of his Body who "follow in his steps." Of this the Apostle writes in the passages above referred to in his second letter to the Church at Corinth. In considering his words it is wise for us to notice how he, is careful first to lay down that "All things are of God." This ministry, this word of reconciliation is peculiar to the Christ company (2 Cor. 5:17-18), so that, as the Apostle concludes in 2 Cor. 6:1, since Christ came to fulfill the will of his Father and to do the works of God, and the faithful disciple carries on that work, receiving and bearing the word and ministry of reconciliation, "We then, are workers together with God. Thus we should see ourselves, with all humbleness of mind, yet realizing the great honor the Father has bestowed upon us as the Anointed of the Lord, and so serve.

While in the passages mentioned immediately foregoing, Paul doubtless writes in the first instance of his Apostleship, it is equally clear that he sees the whole Church of God, the Anointed, as sharers in the same work and high privilege -- "ambassadors for Christ." Such work has continued from his day until now, and will remain until the Church is taken from the earth to further fulfill the divine purpose in glory throughout the "ages of the ages." Those who are new creatures, are "also "ambassadors for Christ"; these have been reconciled to God, and in turn have had committed to them the word and ministry of reconciliation.

FOR A DIVINE PURPOSE

This "living Christ," this Christ life, is, then, a completely new life, possible only by the operation of God's own will in his power toward us through the Word of Truth. It is therefore, a life set apart, sanctified for a divine purpose -- the purpose of God in Christ, The Christ. Hence the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 4:1, 2) writes: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind that we should, no longer live for human desires but for a divine purpose." The critical renderings present the thought in these verses as follows: "Christ then having suffered in flesh, do ye also with the same purpose, arm yourselves. Because he that hath suffered in flesh hath done with sin. So that he no longer lives for human desires but to fulfill a divine purpose."

The thought suggested in these words and the immediate context would appear to be that we having become participators in the sufferings of Christ (from this particular aspect of those sufferings), in that having yielded ourselves up to God entirely; having renounced completely and forever all that appertains to the flesh -- all that is embraced in our human life as justified --

having presented our bodies a living sacrifice, and God having accepted our offering; our whole course in life, its aims and aspirations, is changed. We live no longer to fulfill human desires, legitimate withal, but to fulfill the will of God daily -- to live as Christ lived -- for a divine purpose. In this light it can be seen that every member of the Body shares in the same experience with Jesus. Indeed, it must be an experience voluntarily entered into and vitalized by the sovereign will of God, before one can become part of the Body of Christ, and it continues just as necessary for the standing in that Body to be maintained. In this respect, Jesus set us an example that we should follow in his steps. The experience meant suffering for him: "Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered in the flesh arm yourselves with the same mind." This inevitably leads to the course in life mentioned in verse two. In this way, every member of the Body is seen to suffer with the Head, and as he did. Furthermore, Peter reveals, in harmony with the Apostle Paul's explanation in Romans 6, through the means there set forth, that we have thus, and from this standpoint, God's viewpoint, ceased from sin. See verse 1 (Rom. 6:1).

GOD'S WONDROUS GRACE

There is no thought here that such do not sin, for elsewhere we read: "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." (1 John 1:8.) How lamentably we know that to be true. But the thought rather is that God having declared them righteous, and he seeing them in that condition in Christ, "accepted in the Beloved," they have been lifted out of the realm of sin and delivered from its power and dominion. They are no longer under condemnation. (ROM. 8:1.) This is the wondrous grace and glorious inheritance now of those who in truth and in fact are God's sons. - 1 John 3.1 9

"Now righteous through Thy grace I am;
No condemnation now I dread;
I taste salvation in Thy Name,
Alive in Thee, my living Head."

The close association of the Church with her Lord in the course pursued here on the earth, the complete identity of interest and purpose and the consequent reaction of the world, is clearly stated by the Apostle John when he writes: "As he is *so are we in this world.*" (1 John 4:17.) Men did not admire the perfection of character in Jesus, his purity and grace, the truth in his life, his unselfish service, his loving kindness. On the contrary, they "*saw no beauty* in him. They "*esteemed him not.*" "He was despised and rejected of men."

Likewise with the great Apostle Paul. The moral strength he showed, the virtue and godliness, the complete sincerity of his life, were not appreciated. Instead, Paul says: "As *deceivers.*" Yes, that is how they viewed him as he sought faithfully to follow his Lord. Jesus said: "Marvel not if the world hate you." So then, the Christ life -- "Jesus being *made manifest* in our mortal :bodies," in yours and in mine, is realized, -- not so much in the living of -- a good life, but essentially in doing the Father's will as centered in *The Christ* -- faithfulness *in* a ministry, yea indeed, in suffering, sacrifice, and finally a voluntary death -- all through, a daily dying -- "Bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."

THE TRANSFORMATION -- HOW WROUGHT

What *is* the effect in ourselves of faithfulness in this devotion to the Father's will, in the service of this ministry committed to us? Perforce we must become *changed*, transformed into the Divine likeness; made more and more like our Father in heaven and our dear Lord and Master, whom we follow. Hence in 2 Cor. 3:18, the Apostle writes: "We all, with open face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, *are changed* into the same image from glory to glory, *even as by the spirit*

of the Lord. This is how the change, the transformation, takes place, and the power by which it is brought about.

Previous to these words the Apostle had referred to the experience of Moses in the Mount with God, when he received the tables of the Law. The effect of that experience upon Moses, the experience of being in the presence of God and working with him in the dispensation of the Law when "God wrote with his fingers" (Exod. 31:18), was to *cause* a radiance and glory *to* transform his countenance. His face *shone*. The people when they saw him could not steadfastly look upon that glory.

Now, says; the Apostle, we like Moses have been brought into a ministry far more glorious. That of Moses was -- to be done away, but this abides. The former was a ministration of death, and could never take away sin. The latter, in which we, by God's gracious invitation have come to share, is a ministry of the spirit; of life and power and has a "glory that excelleth." What then is the effect -- upon us? Inevitably it must *change* us as we receive the radiance of the Divine Glory and reflect the same. How is this wrought? By any effort or striving on our part? Is it possible that we could so transform ourselves?

No, for the *Apostle declares* -- "*Even* as, by the *spirit of the Lord.*" That is *how* this transformation is brought about in the lives of those who are chosen and called of God; this "change into the same image [something more than perfection of character is intended here surely], from glory to glory."

This does not mean, nor indeed could it be, that the child of God brought into such vital relationship and association with the Father and his Lord, lives carelessly; neither that he seeks to do other than to walk well pleasing before the Lord. His very *love* for the Father and for righteousness impels him (for "Every one that hath this hope within him purifies himself") to bring his own life into harmony, with and constantly under the influence of those means of grace which are provided and which aid in the work of purifying. But it does mean that the power which transforms and makes possible the Divine Glory is the *spirit of God*, God's *power* -- "*even* as, by the spirit of the Lord," without which such a change into glory could never be attained.

THROUGH ALL ETERNITY

For me to live, says the Apostle, is for *Christ to live*. Then what of death? Paul replies: "That is *gain*." Even death, whether it meant a rest in the sleep of death or to be "caught up to be forever [and immediately] with the Lord," since Christ was his life, *then all is gain*. Blest indeed are we, *if* we can from the heart join with Paul in the confidence and realization of these deep and vital truths as affecting our own personal lives and experience. So that, whether in life or death, we belong to him, and his Name *is glorified* in all. Above *all*, like *Paul*, we *long* for the this third thing -- we long for the appearing of our Lord, and to be *with him*, which is very much to be preferred. And for the reason, let us read Col. 3:1-3, "If ye, then be *risen with Christ*, *seek* -- those things which are above. . . . For ye are dead [notice it does *not* say, ye ought to be dead] . *When Christ who is our life* [when he who is *our, life*]; shall appear, *we also* shall appear *with him* in glory." That glorious day is very near at hand, and, it behooves us to "Watch and be sober," to wait upon him and for him that we be not ashamed before him. Then great will be our peace, and we shall enter that fulness of life and joy in his own Presence.

-- G. H. Jennings, Eng.

The Question Box

Luke 16:1-13

In our discussion of the Parable, of the Unjust Steward, Luke 16:1-13, ("Herald," March 1951, pages 47, 48) we summarized our understanding of its lesson as follows:

"In this parable, our Lord is teaching his disciples the proper, that is to say, the Christian, use of earthly goods."

That discussion was not intended to be exhaustive (indeed, it did; not go beyond Luke 16:8), but was directed chiefly to an examination of the quality for which the lord in the parable commended the unjust steward, and for which *our* Lord seemed to be (and for which, indeed, within limitations, he actually was) commending him. We did not mean, or say,, that the parable could not be properly interpreted otherwise; we did, however, point out what to us seems to be *the* lesson of the parable: *the Christian use of earthly goods*. Let us now consider a few related questions.

Question No. 1:

Where does the parable end and our Lord's interpretation begin?

Answer:

The parable ends in the middle of Luke 16:8, with the words: "because he had done wisely."

Our Lord's interpretation commences with the words which immediately follow: "for the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

Question No. 2:

To whom is the parable addressed?

Answer:

To our Lord's disciples. "And he said also unto his disciples." -- Luke 16:1.

The circumstances were these:

(a) Publicans and sinners were being drawn to Jesus (Luke 15:1) because they were finding in him (not that, righteousness, lull of pride and contempt, with which the Pharisees assailed them, but) a holiness which was associated with tenderest love.

(b) The Pharisees and scribes objected to this attitude of our Lord. They murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." - Luke 15:2.

(c) *To them* (the Pharisees and scribes) he spake three parables; intended to show that his conduct towards' these "outlaws" corresponded to God's own compassion; and that, therefore, if *God* could not be accused of secret sympathy with sin, neither could he. These three parables are (1) the lost sheep, (2), the lost coin, and (3) the lost son. - Luke 15:3-32.

(d) -- He next turns to his disciples with the parable of the unjust steward. (Luke 16 :1.) Why *this* parable to *them*? What makes it so appropriate to *their* case? We answer: Among the disciples surrounding our Lord were doubtless many of the publicans mentioned in Luke 15:1, who had only recently become his disciples. They, were therefore, people who had stained themselves with sin for the sake of earthly wealth and who consequently needed special admonition in their relationship to earthly wealth since *in this matter above all other matters*, the sincerity of *their* change, of heart must be shown. The parable was designed to give them this special admonition. The lesson of *this* parable is the *Christian* use of earthly goods.

Question No. 3:

What was the social status of a steward?

Answer:

Scholars are agreed that the steward of this parable was not a slave (such as the one described in Luke 12:42-46) but a freeman, enjoying very large administrative powers. As such, of course, he could be punished for specific acts of embezzlement. The accusation made against him, however, contains no hint of any such acts, but makes the more general statement that he wasted his master's property; doubtless by living an extravagant, luxurious life. No doubt he kept "within the law," and, therefore could not be punished for any definite acts of violation. However, he could be dismissed from office, and: this we learn from the parable was his master's decision.

His conduct after learning of his impending discharge fully supports the foregoing viewpoint. When he came to reduce the accounts of the debtors, he did so openly, not secretly. (Scholars tell us the Greek implies that they were all present when, one by, one, he dealt with them.) Moreover,, apparently he made no attempt to conceal his course from, his master, as he surely would have done if liable to punishment on discovery.

Question No. 4:

Was the steward called unjust because he had wasted his master's goods (Luke 16:1), or because of his later conduct, as recorded in Luke 16:3-7?

Answer:

He was called unjust because he had wasted (*was wasting*) *his* master's goods. -- Luke 16:1.

However, while doubtless "legal" (see answer to Question 3), his conduct as recorded in Luke 16:3-7, was fraudulent, indefensible on moral grounds. It was a further injustice to his master. As noted in the March Question Box, it was "an abuse of his ,powers on the part of the steward. Indeed, it was an additional wasting of his master's property, only in a way different from that alleged in Luke 16:1.

Question No. 5:

It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. In this parable the steward is seen to be unfaithful. How, then, was it possible for his lord to commend him?

Answer:

The steward was not commended by his master (nor by *our* Master) for being unfaithful or unjust, but "because he had done wisely [or prudently]."

It was possible for such commendation to be made, for the same reason that it is possible for us to speak approvingly of the *strength* of a wrestler, the *skill* of a baseball pitcher, the *sleight of hand* of a conjuror, the *voice* of a singer, the *ability* of a surgeon, the *genius* of an inventor, etc., without any one supposing us to be expressing our judgment as to their *moral worth*. We might quote an eminent skeptic as a very good model of *patience*, while at the same time deploring his *skepticism* (just as the lord, in the parable, commended the *prudence* of his steward while *in the same sentence* declaring him to be *unjust*). And if *we* may detach noble qualities from the base, with which they are blended, and offer the suggestion: "Imitate these men in what is, noble, pure and lovely," without being supposed to add: "and imitate them also in what is mean, weak and immoral," may not our Lord, in his parables, do the same?

That is precisely what the steward's lord, in the parable, and *our* Lord in his interpretation of it, does here. The one quality of *prudence* (not *wisdom*, which in Scripture is always associated with *goodness*, but *prudence*) is singled out for commendation by the lord of the steward, and urged upon his disciples by *our* Lord. "The lord commended the unjust steward and *I* say unto you. *Luke 16:8-9*."

Question No. 6:

What is mammon? Why is it termed unrighteous?

Answer:

Scholars tell us that mammon is -- the Syrian name for wealth -- for the god of wealth. And wealth becomes "unrighteous" directly we make a mammon, a god, of it. Is all wealth then, *all* property, a mammon of unrighteousness? Not necessarily; though few thoughts are sadder than this, that we can scarcely take any money into our hands which has not been used for an unfair or immoral purpose, or own a piece of land which has not, at some time, been polluted with fraud or legal trickery.

We, however, may hold our property by clear moral as well as by clear *legal* right. The little we have, may have been gained by honest toil. It may be no mammon to us, although it has been a most unrighteous mammon to others. Yet none the less we may make an idol of it. If at any moment we love it more than truth and honesty, or if *we* simply set our hearts on it as the supreme good -- the very moment it stands first with us, it becomes to us *a* mammon of unrighteousness.

Yet we are constantly tempted to put wealth first, to care for it more than for integrity and duty. This was especially true of the disciples addressed, as we have seen (Answer to Question 2, paragraph (d)). And who shall say that we of today are not in equal danger? Our Lord points both them and us to a more excellent use of wealth: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." -- *Luke 16:9*.

He invites us to look at this steward, after he learns that his master's property, still under his management and disposal, is shortly to be taken from him and he, in consequence, (be stripped of his previous means of support. What does he do under *these circumstances?* (Pay close attention, for these circumstances are analogous to yours.) He loses no time, while the property is still in his possession, to use it to gain friends, and thus to secure his future in the welcome they will accord him. Note the skill, the crafty forethought, with which, while still in full legal enjoyment of his stewardship, he directs his attention to his master's debtors, presenting himself to them as their friend and benefactor.

To his prudent course (but without any trace of the injustice or trickery, with which it is blended) the course of, the disciples must correspond. Like the steward, they too, must use the time during which mammon remains at their disposal (that is, for them, the period of earthly life) to secure beforehand, (through it) support for the future, lying beyond the present life, when mammon will be taken *from* them. *And, indeed, they must do this in the same way as the steward*, namely, by making friends to themselves, with mammon that, when it shall depart from them, these may afford them a place of refuge; that place of refuge for which they hope as those who are not children of this world (*Age*) -- admission into the eternal habitations of the Age to come.

So far the Lord goes *in* the comparison, *and farther we cannot go*. The course of action by which "the making to himself friends with mammon" was carried out, *must necessarily remain outside the comparison*. For, as it depended simply upon his worldly position as a steward, so also *its description merely serves to characterize the nature of the worldly prudence*, artfully calculating every detail, which the children of this Age practise among themselves.

In the next "Herald" we hope *to* submit a few more remarks on Luke 16:9, as well as some on the remaining verses -- Luke 16:10-13.

-- P. L. Read.

The Message in Italy

A report has been received from our Italian friends of Hartford Conn., from which we quote the following. -- Ed. Com.

Perhaps it will be news to many friends that in the last few years, an organized work has been carried on in Italy in an effort to bring a knowledge of the Truth to the Italian people. That the Lord has blessed this effort is evidenced by the following report which we give for the information of all those friends who rejoice in seeing the truth of the Divine Plan of Salvation spread abroad.

This work of the Lord has been carried on by a group of Italian Bible Student Ecclesias in America. These Ecclesias, in January, 1939, decided to publish a monthly periodical by the name of *L'Aurora Millenniale*; also a goodly number of tracts and booklets which would be supplied free upon request. All expenses of printing and shipping were to be borne by the Ecclesias in the group.

A desire to extend the message of truth to Italy was prevented by Fascist regulations, and later by the Second World War. However, at the conclusion of hostilities, contacts were re-established with a few friends in Italy, and quantities of literature were shipped to be distributed free. An advertisement was inserted for a time in an influential Italian-Protestant Journal in Italy, offering free truth literature, which created a deluge of requests and communications. Evidently, the war, besides destruction, had left in its wake also a hunger for spiritual values.

As the number of tracts, booklets, magazines, Divine Plans and Bibles being sent to Italy increased, so also the number of friends there increased. The Lord was opening the hearts of many young, intelligent and educated men, who, upon learning and accepting the Truth, were enthusiastic in spreading it to others. From North, Central, and South Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, requests kept coming. In a short time our supply of tracts and booklets was exhausted, and new ones had to be printed. Our circulation of a few hundred magazines per month climbed to two thousand, and more. Readers included office workers, doctors, lawyers, school teachers, university professors, engineers, shop people, farmers, etc.

Our large supply of *Divine Plan of the Ages* turned out to be a blessing for many who desired a larger and deeper knowledge of the Truth. Hundreds of volumes were sent and the supply is going, fast.

At present there are in Italy and Sicily twelve Bible Students' Ecclesias and groups. Some brethren are doing pilgrim and missionary work during their spare time, and the prospects are encouraging indeed. The tithe is ripe to bring (the blessed truth of the Divine Plan of Salvation to the attention of the mass of the Italian people while there is still an opportunity -- while it is yet day -- for surely the night is coming when nothing can be done until the Kingdom be set up on this earth.

Friends who have read with interest this report, and who wish to keep in touch with future developments of the Lord's work in Italy, may send us their names and addresses and from time to time new reports will be sent to them.

It is hoped that this year a larger number of Italian people may be brought to a knowledge of the truth. We ask the friends everywhere that their prayers be lifted in behalf of the Lord's work in Italy, that it, be directed and blessed by him through his humble servants in the field.

May the Lord be with you all. Christian Love.

Yours in His Service,
The Committee,
613 Capitol Avenue, Hartford 6, Conn.

A Message for Christmas

What shall I say of Christmastide?
A time of peace and cheer! --
When kindly souls stretch forth their hands
To those they hold most dear;
When heart meets heart with glad good will
And thankful trust and praise;
When cry goes forth to see God's earth
Enriched with fruitful days.

Peace and good will, the angels sang
Two thousand years ago;
And yet the drama still unfolds
Its scenes of sin and woe.
It tells of anger, blood, and strife,
And envy, pride, and tears;
Whilst teeming millions go to dust
Engulfed by hopeless fears.

And yet I know 'twas not in vain
That Jesus died for all;
'Tis peace on earth, good will to men,
Whatever shall befall.
This same old globe shall be refreshed .
Through Christ's triumphant reign;
The finest thing, the human form,
With Adam raised again!

At Jesus' birth, the shepherds heard
The tidings good and grand:
God's glory in the highest realm,
In sky, in sea and land!
They saw the Babe and were assured
In Him lay life and peace;
That glory in the golden age,
From thence shall never cease.

The angels sang with joy that night,
To strengthen faith on earth;
That same sweet song may still be heard
By those of sterling worth.
They know God's Word will be fulfilled
However long it seems;
That grace and love would bring at last
Fruition of their dreams.

The message tells of God's wise care
For things which He has made,
The Savior's right to perfect these
Because of justice paid.
The right to heal and then to bless
Each one upon His side;
The right to weave His great design,
In those for whom He died.

-- *Frederick Lardent.*

Encouraging Messages

Dear Brethren:

Often are *my* thoughts with you in gratefulness for your help in *our* great need after the war. Now you continue to send *food* for the soul. I cannot thank you enough for your ministry. May our Lord give you rich blessings.

We cannot agree with the new dogma of the physical ascension of Mary, the mother of our Lord, for there *is* no proof of it in the Scriptures. What is your understanding regarding it?

With my heartiest greetings,
Gratefully yours,
K. W. -- Germany.

Reply:

Dear Sister:

We fully agree with you that the Pope was showing his lack of knowledge of the *Bible* by teaching that the mother *of* Jesus had gone to heaven bodily. Any one who goes -- to heaven must be a spirit being, and Jesus said, "A spirit bath not flesh and bones." Paul said, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of heaven." But he also said *in* the same chapter that God "*giveth* a body such as pleaseth, Him." Poor Mary's body would be there without flesh or blood or bones! If the Pope can imagine a body of that kind, then he has the embarrassment of thinking of Mary with that body and *also* the one that Paul said would be given her. See Luke 24:39 and 1 Corinthians 15:38, 50.

Trusting that the day is not far distant when the Pope will be better informed, and *all* others who do not know of these Scriptures, *we remain*,
Your brethren in the love and service of truth,
Pastoral Bible Institute.

Dear Friends:

Forgive me for not writing you before. I have *many* friends, and if it were not for them we would have no way of living. Their gifts must be acknowledged; and *that is* the reason other writing is neglected. I am crippled, and *writing* is a difficult task for me.

Some time ago a friend subscribed for your paper *for* me. When it expired, she wrote me she thought I had better *take* advantage of your free offer, and sent the dollar to. me that she would have used to pay the subscription. She knew what a hard time *we* were having to get food and medicine. My husband is suffering from the dread disease of cancer of the stomach. I am a wheel chair cripple victim of tuberculosis of the bone, and of arthritis. Hospitals and doctors have taken all our, earthly possessions, but they cannot take the Lord Jesus from us. In Him do we put *our* trust,

If, you feel you can send me the "Herald" *another* year, I would deeply appreciate it. -- However I realize there is a limit to the free copies you can send: out. I enjoyed it while receiving it. . . .
Sincerely,
Mrs. H. M. -- N. S.

Dear Sirs:

I have just finished reading one of your books. It is *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. It interested me very much. Was this the first volume written or did *some* precede this? I understand there were some that followed.

Would some one give me this information and, a *list* price of each volume so I *may* send -- to you again for *them*.

Thanking you and for the work you are doing,

Yours truly,

G. H. -- Pa.