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Praise Is Comely

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name: bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not any of his dealings: who pardoneth all thine iniquities, and who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth from the pit thy life, who crowneth thee with kindness and compassions, who satisfieth with good thy desire, thy youth reneweth itself like an eagle." - Psalm 103:1-5, Rotherham.

DANGER HAS threatened the life, or sorrows have engulfed the one who could write or sing with the understanding such a Psalm as this one hundred and third. Perhaps it was inspired by the experience from which the Psalmist had prayed in the previous Psalm to be delivered. All who have their senses exercised by reason of righteous use to discern the contrast between the evil that is in themselves and the good that is in our Great Provider, in everything, at all times, will give thanks to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Such outpouring of gratitude may be made on bended knee or standing in the public market place, seated at the table furnished by his wisdom with natural or spiritual food, lying on the bed to rest from a day of weary toil or for hours of restlessness, or going about in the performance of the daily task.

We need not concern ourselves with the critics' contention that David did not write this Psalm. Whoever wrote it, the divine spirit was dictating phrases to fit the need of every suffering and repentant son of Adam, whether living in David's troubled age or in the age of grace. In this Age one of the manifestations of that grace is the permitting of Satan and his cohorts to turn the wheels that polish God's chosen ones, preparing them for the time of the greater grace, the time when true praise will be rendered to his holy name. That inestimable privilege is reserved for those who value the polishing enough to sing Psalms of praise while they daily submit to the grinding experiences without which the perfections of that reflected glory could never be manifested.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his *dealings*." To bless him for all that is apparent to the flesh as benefits, as the King James version renders it, is fairly easy; but blessing him for all his dealings, as Brother Rotherham has rendered it, takes us far down into the Christian life, takes us to the point where the Christian not merely quotes, "All things work together for good," but really believes it, and believing to that point where he can "in *everything* give thanks." To give thanks in everything without having faith to believe that God's hand is guiding in everything is a vapid substitute for the sparkling faith that "renews itself like the eagle." - Psalm 103:5.

To bless Jehovah implies affection as well as praise, all that is within one recognizing the holiness of his name, and giving the reverence that can never be satisfied with lip service, or even the giving of hours of one's time to the passing on to others that which delights us so. All that is within me is not enough to Praise his holiness as it deserves. To refrain from giving that much is robbery of the basest sort. Rotherham comments: "*Forget not any of his dealings: his benefits, if thou wilt-but have not all his 'dealings' been 'benefits,' though sometimes in disguise? Forget not any of his dealings, for whereas it would be difficult to forget them 'all,' be it thy care, as far as may be, that thou forget none, since the forgotten mercy or chastisement may be that which thou dost now most need to recall.*"

Though we multiply a hundred times the list of reasons for gratitude which the Psalmist gives in verses three to five, and who could not, our feeble appreciation would probably have left out more than it has added. Not until life's end has been reached will any of us be conscious of all the reasons for gratitude. Not until the grass has faded, the flower of the field has withered, the wind has passed over it and it is gone, its place knoweth it no more (Psa. 103:15-16), and the new place Jesus went to prepare for those thus represented is entered upon-not until then will that praise appropriately sound forth.

The Psalmist's praise flows on in unbroken phrase. No minor strain is dwelt upon. The fading flower is introduced only to make more vivid the "loving kindness of Jehovah from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." The stream broadens as it flows on, the benefits of the individual widening into gifts which are to fill the universe, "all places of his dominion."

The fallen human flesh, or even the new creature that dwells in this imperfect flesh, cannot be depended upon to be properly grateful for its experiences, but must be urged to "Bless the Lord." The Hebrew method of repetition indicates the urgency of the necessity of that plea for thanksgiving, and therefore the depravity, the natural ingratitude of the creature. Some limited gratitude there might be where there is any nobility of soul, but if all that is within us is to be marshalled for our Psalm of praise, it must be urged to it. Memory must be trained to retain the innumerable evidences of God's grace, the senses must be devoted to the proposition of discerning the kindness of the Hand that often seems rough. A few moments listening to the complaining tongue controlled by the flesh, makes painfully apparent the woeful habit of retaining in the memory all the disagreeable details of life with little or no attention to the benefits derived. These "light afflictions," not worthy to be compared with the glory to follow, are the least of experiences crowded into the life of any Christian. Until the experience comes, it is easy to speak thus about it, but let tomorrow see the hand of our dearest friend turned against us, or perhaps even that of a brother in the Lord, and if there is not the faith to be assured that all is of the Lord's permission, and essential for our eternal good, the lips that should be praising God, the life that should rise as sweetest of incense before him, will indicate that self has been exalted as a hideous idol occupying the niche that once we consecrated as devoted to the Lord, a hallowed dwelling place for him alone.

LIFE'S BLESSINGS CATALOGUED

Twice the name of Jehovah has been mentioned in our text. Now in listing some of his "benefits," the pronoun "who" carries us back five times to that name, the name of the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The supreme Gift of gifts is implied in the first benefit mentioned, the forgiveness of *all* our iniquities, It is no more possible for our feeble intellects to cope with the enormity of our transgressions than with the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's generosity. Since we are "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity," it is too familiar a companion for us to rightly appraise it. Hence the justification that covers all, cannot possibly be fully appreciated by us. Neither the blackness of the sin nor the purity of that white covering can be comprehended. It is Christ's righteousness that the Father sees when he looks at us. We therefore appear to him as white, as pure, as lovely as Jesus was when he walked this earth in his per section. Without his revelation such a claim would be blasphemous.

"God's work is perfect and not done by halves," so Matthew Henry comments in introducing the phrase, "Who healet.h all our diseases." Sad indeed would be the state of one whose sins were covered, but he himself left with soul-sickness, the putrifying power of sin still working in him. That our God could not do. Yea, further yet, the life that is redeemed from the pit is crowned with daily loving-kindness and compassion. The brow of every Christian is thus garlanded-every blessing, every compassion is a leaf resting there as an advance token of the victory to be theirs if their Thanksgiving Day can be extended to reach to the day of their change. "We are made partakers of Christ [Greek: "sharers in, partners of" Christ] if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," "if we hold the confidence *and the rejoicing* of the hope firm unto the end. " - Heb. 3:14.

This crown and "its adornment is not only a result of the divine attributes of loving-kindness and compassions, but the very things themselves, so that an effulgence from God beautifies the soul. Nor is even this all, for the same gifts which are beauty are also sustenance, and God satisfies the soul with good, especially with the only real good, himself. " (*A. Maclaren.*) "Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart," he will give thee himself, if he is the desire of thy heart. Without thankfulness for *all* that comes from his hand, there can be no evidence of delighting ourselves in him.

SATISFACTION THAT SATISFIES

"Who satisfies thy mouth with good." The natural mouth, like the grave, is never satisfied; but he who feeds on God, he who eats the flesh of his Son, finds a nourishment that results in a growth into his likeness, and those who now feed on him alone must be made partakers of the divine nature; perpetual youth is his portion, and only the bird that makes its nest on the highest crags of the eternal mountains can be a fit symbol of the one who gives all that is within him to the praising of Jehovah, the one whose rejoicing is not slacked by "infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses *for Christ's sake,*" but whose praise of Jehovah rings only the louder as he realizes that in these things he is "filling up that which is [for his sake] left behind of the afflictions of Christ."

"Jehovah has established his throne in the heavens,
And his Kingdom rules over all,
Bless Jehovah, ye his angels,
Ye mighty in strength, who perform his word,
Harkening to the voice of his word!
Bless Jehovah, all his hosts,
Ye his ministers, who perform his will!

Bless Jehovah, all his works,
In all places of his dominion!
Bless Jehovah, my soul!"

- *P. E. Thomson.*

Wells of Salvation

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall he in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." - John 4:14.

WELLS OR springs have been marked with special significance and symbolism ever since the beginning of human history; partly because of their value to man in the waters they yield, and partly because of the typical significance given them in the Scriptures.

About the only difference between a well and a spring is that one breaks through the surface of the ground, while the other taps veins of water below the surface which have to be dug for. A like difference is manifest in mankind. Some overflow the goodness of their lives is manifest above ground, so to speak, where all can see and benefit from it. With others, you must dig below the surface; their goodness may be just as real, but you have to break through the outer crust of their reserve and lack of spontaneity to find that goodness.

A good spring or well is a valuable asset wherever found, but its qualities will depend largely upon the character of the rock and soil through which it filters. The same is more or less true of people; the character of our words and thoughts is determined largely by the contacts -- moral, mental and spiritual -- that we permit to influence our lives.

Need for the Cleansing Fountain

Some waters are neutral, conveying neither good nor bad elements; others are distinctly bad because of the impurities and germs of disease they convey through having come in contact with earthly defilements. When people manifest moral and mental defilements in their thoughts and deeds, it shows that either their source or contacts, perhaps both, are impure, and like waters that have to be filtered or boiled to make them safe, such people need to filter their lives through the discipline of God's law or else pass through experiences that will burn out the evil.

On the other hand, some waters are impregnated with elements that are curative and beneficial to man because of having come from a source that contained these elements, and having been filtered through rock free from impurities. Such waters become famous and are much sought after. People will seek them out from all over the world in the hope of having their bodies cleansed and renewed. When we come in contact with people whose words and acts minister to our moral and spiritual upbuilding, we do not need to be told the source of those characteristics, for we know that such an one has learned of the Lord, that he has come in contact with the Fountain of truth and righteousness.

Such draw others to them because of what they have to give. Our Lord Jesus was preeminent in this respect. It will be recalled that He said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." The reason why He will draw all men unto Him is that He has the power to cleanse and to give life. The waters that flow from Him are impregnated with truth, life, health, and happiness; and it is from and because of Him that "the desire of all nations shall come."

This characteristic of our Lord is very well illustrated in His experience with the woman of Samaria. The incident, it will be recalled, occurred early in the ministry of our Lord. Jesus had left Judea to go down into Galilee and on the way had to pass through Samaria, and so came to

the city called Sychar that was close by the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph, where the well that bears his name was located.

About noontime, Jesus, being weary and thirsty, sat down on the well to await the-coming of some one to draw water, for He had nothing with which to draw. The first person to come was a woman of Samaria, and Jesus asked her for a drink. She, evidently astonished, said unto Him, "How is it, that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" For the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans.

Her answer shows that aside from being surprised she was somewhat resentful that one of a race that considered her people beneath their notice should presume to ask of her a favor; nevertheless, the account shows that she was interested.

The Gift of Living Water

Jesus said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water."

What did Jesus mean by this statement? In Romans 6:23 the Apostle answers the question. He says, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee" -- here she had the opportunity and the privilege of serving the One in whose power was the gift above all gifts, the gift of life; she did not of course realize it, and so was inclined to be resentful that one of a race that considered themselves too good to associate with her people should ask of her a favor. And furthermore, why should she ask a drink of Him? She could draw her own water; and He had nothing with which to draw; and what did He mean by living water?

"Sir," said she, "Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence, then, bast Thou that living water? Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children and his cattle?"

In other words, she felt He was presumptuous in intimating that He could supply better water than she was able to draw for herself from the well of Jacob; still she was impressed with this stranger's words and demeanor, and so was in an attitude of mind to hear Him further.

Then Jesus said to her, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." That the woman still did not understand that Jesus was referring to a very different kind of water, is manifest by her reply when she said, "Give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

We still cannot be sure but that this was said in derision, but when Jesus proceeded to reveal His knowledge of her private life, she realized that He must be a seer or prophet and that He was not just talking nonsense. Then later on, in response to her declaration of belief in the coming of the Messiah, Jesus told her that He Himself was that Messiah.

Jesus, the Fountain of Truth and Life

The words of Jesus to this woman of Samaria may well constitute the essence of these thoughts: "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

We note here that there is no compulsion in the matter: one may drink or not drink, just as he chooses, but the water will be proffered him. What is this water that once partaken of becomes within a well of water springing up into eternal life?

Water, in the Scriptures, is used to typify both people and truth. First and foremost, Jesus Himself is the fountain from which all blessings flow, or perhaps, more properly speaking, through whom all blessings flow. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Then again He said, "The words I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Paul (Eph. 5:26) speaks of our being clean through the "washing of water by the Word." He also refers to Jesus as the rock from which living waters flow, and these waters are the truth, the Word of life. It is only the truth that can satisfy the craving of the heart that seeks to know God, for God's Word is truth; and if it is really absorbed, if we really drink it in, it becomes a refreshing, satisfying portion welling up within and springing up into life eternal.

Peter speaks of a certain class (2 Pet. 2:17) as being "wells without water." A well without water would be utterly useless, a danger-spot to man and beast. Evidently these of whom Peter speaks did know the truth at one time; the *lifegiving* waters of truth coming from God through Christ had drawn them, and they had become wells; but somehow the channels of truth and spirit had become clogged, and what water they had known had seeped away. Being leaky vessels, we, like wells of water, must be continually refilled from the great fountain of truth, else we become wells without water.

Jesus told the woman of Samaria that the water which He gave, if properly received, would become a well-spring of water in us, so that not only would we ourselves be benefited but in turn would be able to minister the life-giving waters that others might drink also. In other words, we are not given the waters of truth merely to satisfy our own thirsty souls, but that, like the great Fountain of truth and life, we may minister refreshment to others in need.

Wells from which Rivers Flow

Springs may be of such wonderful volume that they become rivers. Two very significant streams springing from such a source are brought to our attention in the Bible. The first one is found in the beginning of Genesis, where we read of paradise lost, and the other one is found in the last of Revelation where it tells of paradise restored. In both accounts there is the tree of life; both speak of a river as flowing from a fountainhead; and both are evidently figurative.

The account in Genesis tells of a river that went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted into four branches. This is not stated according to the way rivers are formed since the time of the flood, for since then, rivers are due to rainfall and are formed by many little rivulets and streams coming together into a main stem that flows into the sea. But the main stem of this river starts in Eden and then, after leaving the garden, is divided into four branches to water the lands into which it flows, much as an irrigation system would do today. There being no rainfall before the flood, this river must have come from a wonderful spring.

As a symbol, this river pictures the race of mankind starting in Eden and eventuating in four classes whose characteristics are shown by the lands into which this river is said to flow. The first branch (Gen. 2:10-14) reaches its destiny in the land of Havilah. Havilah is described as being the place of gold and fine jewels, and so would picture the divine class. The second class ends up in Ethiopia, a land associated with servitude from earliest time and so symbolic of the great company class. The third branch flows into Assyria, which in Scripture symbology evidently represents an earthly class. And the fourth branch was Euphrates. It will be noticed that this branch is not said to have watered any land and so would fitly represent the second-death class. It is also significant that it was the river Euphrates that Cyrus (The Sun) dried up when he overthrew Babylon.

The second river to which we refer comes from a still more wonderful fountain. John the Revelator says, "And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it [the 'heavenly Jerusalem] and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing off the nations."

This river, it will be seen, has its source in God and in Christ, the source from which all blessings flow; but before it reaches the world of mankind it becomes a well-spring of living water in 144,000 other wells. And so we read in Revelation 7:17 that "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

A Digger of Wells

The Scriptures relate some very interesting and significant incidents centered about wells in the lives of the patriarchs of old. It is significant that Abraham is called a "digger of wells," and that Isaac is said to have "redug the wells of his father Abraham." Abraham in this respect pictures God, the fountainhead of all waters. He it is that has dug or provided all the well-springs of truth; but evil powers have usurped, blocked, and filled in many of these life-giving streams. And so, antitypical Isaac, the Son of God, must repossess and re-dig these wells that the sheep of His Father may drink and live.

The first spring or well of note, to be mentioned as such, is the one where the angel of the Lord found Hagar, who had fled and was in hiding from her mistress, Sarah. This fountain of water was in the wilderness on the way to Shur, and Hagar gave it the name of "Beer-lahai-roi"; the word "beer" meaning "well," and "lahai-roi" meaning "of him that liveth and seeth me." It was by this well that Isaac later on took up his place of abode. - Gen. 16:13, 14; 24:62.

Another well of note was the one called "Beersheba," signifying the "well of an oath." This was the well which, when Abraham had dug, he took oath of Abimelech, ruler over that territory, that he had dug it, because he had robbed him of several wells. It was close by this well that Hagar, not aware of its existence, gave up in her struggle to live; then the angel of the Lord opened her eyes to see the well that, as the account says, her son Ishmael might not die.

Significance of Wells

It would seem that these two wells and their names have a typical significance in connection with the events here cited. When Hagar conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes, and, not being the freewoman, she was forced to flee into the wilderness. At one time it looked as though the law would provide the promised seed and that God's promise through His original covenant was of no effect (despised), but soon it was seen ("Thou, God, seest me") that the law could not bring forth the promised seed, being weak because of slavery to sin, and so the law and its seed was forced to look to the original promise for life. Hagar was told to return and submit herself to Sarah.

The second incident occurs at the time of the birth of Isaac. Ishmael, a child of thirteen, is found mocking, and at the behest of Sarah, he and his mother are cast off. This pictures how the law covenant was not able to bring its seed to maturity before being cast off; and as it grieved Abraham to send Hagar and her child away, so the Scriptures tell us that it grieved God to have to cast off His people Israel. But the inheritance was promised to Isaac, and the eyes of Hagar (the law) and natural Israel are eventually opened, when about to die, to see the well (promise) of the oath-the well of "Beer-sheba."

Wells were places of meeting. It was by a well that the servant of Abraham, Eliezer, found Rebekah when he was seeking for a wife for Isaac. It was by this well that Rebekah first hears of Isaac. Also, it was by the well Lahai-roi that she first sees him. (Gen. 24:62.) Jacob also finds Rachel by a well, having come there to water her father's sheep. (Gen. 29:2-10.) Then too, Moses finds his Gentile bride by a well in the land of Midian.

Andrew Jukes, an English commentator on the "Types of Genesis" (1863) says: "By no chance are these wives found by wells of water. By no chance did Christ sit thus upon a well. (John 4:6.) Surely if we have been 'betrothed in righteousness,' (Hos. 2:19) it was by wells of water that the Lord's servant met us. For 'understanding is a well-spring of life to him that hath it.' (Prov, 16:22.) And what are means of grace but wells also. We may indeed sit by these wells in vain like mocking Ishmael, we may lie close beside them and yet see no water. But the soul which daily comes to draw, which comes empty, saying, 'My soul is athirst,' and is exercised to draw and carry home a full vessel, and which desires unasked to make others around who seem in need; partakers of this same water, and freely gives it them-such an one, like Rebekah, will find by the water a guide to lead her to purer and better lands."

This whole story of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Hagar, Ishmael, etc., is seemingly full of symbolism in its every detail. Eliezer, the eldest servant in Abraham's house, is, from Abraham's standpoint, a perfect servant; he can be trusted with the most particular and delicate things of his master's business and goes and does as directed. When sent to seek a bride for his master's son, he realizes the importance of his commission and tries to foresee every eventuality. Being wholeheartedly devoted to his master's interests, he does not delay; even when, later on, the bride's folks suggest that he tarry a bit, he insists upon immediate obedience to his master's will.

In all of this he very fitly represents the holy spirit, the eldest servant (so to speak) **in** the Father's house; and as Eliezer was told where to go to get a bride for Isaac, so the holy spirit presents God's invitation to His own people. Furthermore, He unerringly knows where to find the ones He wants, that is, by the well-spring of truth, where they bring their vessels empty to be filled and refreshed that in turn they may serve others with this same truth. And so the prospective bride of Isaac is found by the well. But there are other tests which must be put upon her before she can be recognized and acknowledged as the betrothed one. It is not just an angel or even an archangel for

whom she is intended, but the only-begotten Son of the Father, the heir of all that God hath, the heir of immortality; therefore, He must be particular.

Essential Characteristic for Bride

Eliezer is quite sure that Rebekah is the one he seeks, for she has come to the well, as in prayer he requested of God, to fill her pitcher and minister to her father's sheep. But will she minister to a stranger and his thirsty camels? Antitypically, will she have enough of the Christ-like spirit to be willing to spend and be spent for those from whom she expects no return?

Rebekah's promptness in meeting the test put upon her illustrates what we may look for in those whom God recognizes as being suitable ones to receive gifts leading to betrothal: for as soon as Rebekah demonstrated this essential characteristic, Eliezer gave her the golden earring and bracelets, symbols of divine (gold) approval and blessing upon her readiness to hear and to serve. But still there is a further test before she is actually betrothed: At the earnest invitation of Rebekah and her family, Eliezer repairs to their home and breaks bread with them; but before he consents to abide with them for the night, he tells them of his mission to seek a bride for Isaac, the son of his master Abraham, and how Rebekah has met all of the predetermined requirements; and in order that the proposition he is about to make may be as attractive as possible, he tells of the greatness and wealth of Abraham, and how Isaac is the heir to all that his father bath; then he asks their consent for Rebekah to accompany him to the realm of Abraham in order to become the wife of Isaac.

This pictures how the holy spirit came unto the family of God at the beginning of this Gospel Age to select a bride for Christ, and when it revealed its mission, it told of the predetermined requirements which must be met. Then before putting the final test, it reveals something of the wonders of God and tells 'how all the glory and riches of His realm will be the inheritance of His Son and, through the Son, of the bride that will be chosen. The prospect is made wholly entrancing to those who display the proper faith, for the thing that God is about to propose as the final test is the most momentous decision of life. Will Rebekah leave her home and kindred and journey under the care and guidance of this servant of Abraham to this unknown land to become the bride of Isaac?

It is worthy of notice here that though at that time and in that country it was customary for the daughter's parents to give such a decision, in this instance they would neither consent nor oppose but said that Rebekah must answer. for herself.

The same thing is true of the antitypical Rebekah class. Membership therein requires that we make an individual or a personal decision. Furthermore, we must be old enough and have sufficient understanding for that decision to be an intelligent response to the invitation that is extended. This was shown in the type by the remark of Rebekah's folks, "She is of age," meaning that she was old enough to know her own mind. Rebekah's response was immediate and unhesitating: she would go. Then Eliezer lifted up his voice in praise to God and showered gifts upon Rebekah and her family, but chiefly upon Rebekah.

Holy Spirit not Independent of God's Will

As Eliezer did not seek a bride for Isaac on his own initiative but was sent by Abraham, so the holy spirit came in accordance with the will of the Father and the Son. And the gifts it brought were not its own, but as Jesus said, "He shall glorify Me, for he shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you."

When the betrothal is made and the gifts of the holy spirit have been received, there still remains the journey under the care and guidance of the holy spirit. It might be thought that all decisions are now over with and nothing left but the journey, but not so; Rebekah has still to make another decision, and this time against the wishes of her people who think that she should take a little time to prepare for such a journey and for such an event; but Eliezer urges that there be no delay and that they start their journey forthwith; and when Rebekah's folks agree to let her decide the matter, she promptly acquiesces in the desire of Eliezer, and they start their journey at once.

Likewise, there are many things that seek to hinder and cause delay in the wilderness journey of prospective members of the Bride of Christ. Having once made the decision which, being accepted, brings the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must promptly and whole-heartedly follow its guidance, otherwise we may not prove acceptable. Then too, those who put off starting, or feel that they have to be better prepared, show a lack of appreciation of the robe provided by their Lord and Master, the only garment that can render them acceptable to Him.

In some Scriptures the members of the Christ are pictured as wells, and then in others they are pictured as men, sheep, or trees watered by wells. An illustration of this latter thought is found in the prophecy of Jacob concerning his twelve sons. In that prophecy, Joseph is said to be "a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall." Joseph, when viewed in the light of all the circumstances of his birth and life, would seem to typify Jesus and in a sense His body also. Jesus certainly was a fruitful bough watered from a wonderful spring, and we, His body-members in order to be like Him, must be well watered by that same spring.

In Exodus 15:27 we have an instance which seemingly illustrates both thoughts of typical significance. When the children of Israel left the Red Sea, over which they had crossed to escape from Egypt, they passed into the wilderness of Shur, but went several days journey without finding water. When they did finally come to water at a place called Marah, the waters were bitter, and they could not drink. "And the Lord showed Moses a tree, which when he had cast into the water, the waters were made sweet."

Marah waters would seem to represent conditions under the law which, for the Jews, was a bitter drink, for though there were promises of life, it brought only bitterness and death because of their inability to comply with its requirements. But the antitypical Moses made the waters sweet with the tree of His cross; so the apostle says "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in **us**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

Following Marah, the next point of their journey was Elim (trees or grove). It was named this because there were seventy palm-trees beside twelve wells of water. Natural Israel had twelve tribes and seventy elders, a continuation of the twelve sons of Jacob and the seventy souls that came with him into the land of Egypt. As a partial fulfilment of this type, our Lord sent out first twelve apostles and then seventy evangelists. The twelve wells here would seem to represent the

twelve apostles, by whose waters the righteous ones of the Church (palm-trees) have been watered.

Another instance where wells seem to represent the Christ, head and body, is found in Isaiah 12:3. Verse one of the chapter says: "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise Thee; though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me." The reference here is to natural Israel, who were cast off in God's displeasure; but the time is coming when, as we read in verse three, "with joy shall ye draw water out of the walls of salvation." The glorified Christ will be the wells of salvation from which the Jews, and eventually the world of mankind, will be refreshed in the next age.

In Proverbs 16:22 we read: "Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it." Here understanding is likened to the kind of well that typifies life springing up within oneself. Understanding means much more than just knowledge; it is knowledge plus ripe experience or the proper use of the knowledge that one obtains from the Word of God.

"This is Life Eternal that They might Know Thee"

A student of singing may know all about the theory of tone production and be able to recognize the right tone in others, but until he himself can produce the right tone in his own voice, he does not have a proper understanding of the matter. In the Word we are told that knowledge puffeth up but that love buildeth up, because love is knowledge rightly applied. There is no question as to the desirability of knowledge, but unless knowledge is rightly applied, it does not benefit the individual.

The writer of Proverbs says, "With all thy getting, get understanding." Jesus calls our attention to this same understanding when He says (John 17:3): "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The only way we can know God is to experience within ourselves the same excellence of character (love) that motivates all His thoughts and acts. Until we do have this love, we may know much about God theoretically but cannot know Him actually.

Elsewhere in the Word we read: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But here in Proverbs 14:27 it says: "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life." In other words, a man who has the true wisdom has the fountain of life, for "understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it."

In Proverbs 18:4 we read: "The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook. There must be understanding in the **heart** before the words of a man's mouth can give forth such living qualities. James says (James 3:9-12): "With the tongue we bless the Lord and Father, and with the tongue we curse men who are made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth there proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, this ought not to be. In a fountain, are fresh water and bitter sent out from the same opening? Can a fig-tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine yield figs? No; and neither can a salt spring yield sweet water."

Here is a wonderful lesson for us: one that we should take well to heart as a guide to our way in the experiences so prevalent among the Lord's people. Everywhere there seem to be differences that cause trouble and division; but the vital question to each of us is, How are we meeting these tests? Are bitter waters flowing from lips that claim to love God? According to James, a sweet fountain does not send forth bitter waters. It is quite evident that this was the trouble in the early church, and that it has been more or less true all during the history of the church; but, as James

says, such a state should not exist, and unless we get at the root of the matter-rectify our hearts if they are causing our mouths to give forth bitter waters-we will fail to have the Lord's approval, the one thing above everything else that we should value and strive for. Let us, then, dearly beloved, weed from our hearts every slightest tendency toward bitterness, or judging, or fault finding. If we love our brethren, we will tend rather to excuse than to find fault; and we will want to cover up a brother's imperfections rather than to expose them.

Let us then carefully and prayerfully take heed to James' words found in the remaining verses of this chapter: "Which of you is a wise and well instructed man? Let him prove it by a right life with conduct guided by a wisely teachable spirit. But if in your hearts you have bitter feelings of envy and rivalry, do not speak boastfully and falsely, in defiance of the truth. That is not the wisdom which comes down from above: it belongs to earth, to the unspiritual nature, and to evil spirits. For where envy and rivalry are, there also are unrest and every vile deed. The wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceful, courteous, not self-willed, full of compassion and kind actions; free from favoritism and from all insincerity. And peace, for those who strive for peace, is the seed of which the harvest is righteousness." - James 3:13-18, Weymouth.

"Whoever shall drink of the water [absorb the spirit of the truth into his heart and being] that I shall give him, shall never thirst; for the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

We know of no better thought with which to conclude this subject than the words of our Lord as recorded in John 7:37-39. - Weymouth.

"On the last day of the Festival-the great day -Jesus stood up and cried aloud. 'Whoever is thirsty,' He said, 'let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, from within him-as the Scripture has said--rivers of living water shall flow.' He referred to the Spirit which those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not bestowed as yet, because Jesus had not yet been *glorified.*"

- J. T. Read

"WHAT IS FAITH'S FOUNDATION STRONG?"

"Be content with such things as ye have, for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." - Heb. 13:5-6.

In our text, after the Apostle has urged us to be "content with such things as ye have," he adds the reason or ground upon which this advice is given, saying "For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Yes; this is the true ground of contentment the realization of the Lord's care, and that the Lord's wisdom and grace are being exercised towards us, -- and that such things as he grants are the things which are best for us, and which we would choose for ourselves, if we had sufficient wisdom and insight into all the circumstances of the case.

The Apostle adds, "So then we may boldly say The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." The whole world has wondered at the intelligent courage of the humble ones of the Lord's people. The secret of their courage and of their strength is in their confidence that the Lord is their helper, that he, with wisdom and love which are infinite is both able and willing to make all things work together for their good.

Possibly some may be inclined to wonder why so much attention has been given in these columns of late to themes similar to the one here discussed, and kindred topics calculated to develop more and more the spirit of love and the various fruits of that spirit, and to counteract the spirit of selfishness, and the evil fruits of that spirit. We answer, it is because we believe these lessons to be specially opportune at the present time. The Lord, by his grace, has removed many blinding errors from our minds, and given us clearer insight of his glorious plans, and revealed to us his glorious character in connection with his plan; and there has perhaps been more or less danger, that in such a study of theology the real object of all this knowledge, the object of the Gospel, may be lost sight of. It is not God's object to merely find an intellectual people, nor to instruct a people with reference to his plans, but to sanctify a people with the truth, and thus to make them "meet [fit] for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are of the opinion that the testings which the Lord designs for his people are not merely doctrinal tests and consequently we expect more and more, that the harvest siftings and separations amongst those who come to a knowledge of the truth, will be considerably along the lines of character and of the fruits of the spirit.

The Lord's final decision is not, If you be ignorant of certain things you are none of mine; nor, If you have certain knowledge you are mine; but, "If any man have not the spirit [disposition, mind] of Christ he is none of his." And if we are right in this, dear readers, it is of paramount importance that we, as soldiers of the cross, put on not only the intellectual covering, the helmet of salvation, but also the heart covering, love of righteousness and truth and goodness and purity, with the shield of faith. The breastplate of righteousness will be found to be one of the most important pieces of armor in the battle which is upon us, and respecting which we are told that thousands shall fall at our side. -- Psa. 91:7; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:11.

Not only so, but we believe that the lesson foregoing is of great importance, because the time is short and those of the Lord's people who do not soon start to cultivate a spirit of contentment and thankfulness will not only not be fit for the Kingdom, but will as sharers of the world's spirit of discontent be in sore distress with the world very shortly, in the great time of trouble. Contentment and the faith which it implies are necessary to godliness: and whoever is attempting godliness without striving for cultivation of contentment will surely make a failure of it. Godliness and the fruits of the spirit, meekness, patience gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-

kindness, love will not grow in the garden of the soul, where the weeds of discontent are permitted to sap the strength and vitiate the air with their noxious presence and influence.

The sentiment of one of our precious hymns is quite to the point, and we desire, for ourselves and for all of the Lord's people, that condition of faith and consecration and contentment which will permit us to sing from the heart, with the spirit and with the understanding also, the words: --

"Content with beholding his face
My all to his pleasure resigned
No changes of season or place
Can make any change in my mind.

"While blest with the sense of his love
A palace a toy would appear
And prisons would palaces prove
If Jesus still dwelt with me there."

Who can tell that the Lord may not ultimately put some such tests to us, as these mentioned by the poet which were applied to himself and to others of the faithful in the past? Let us remember that we will not be faithful in large things unless we have learned to be faithful in little things. Let each, therefore begin, and faithfully continue, a transformation of his life along these lines of godliness with contentment in the most trifling affairs of life. He will thus not only be making himself and others the happier in the present time, but he will be preparing himself for greater trials and tests that the Lord may be pleased to impose later, to prove to what extent we are overcomers of the world and of its spirit.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world even your faith;" because faith lies at the foundation of all loyalty to God and his cause. Faith in the divine supervision of all our affairs not only gives peace and content, but it saps the root of all selfish ambitions and vain gloryings and boastings; because of our faith in the Lord's Word, that "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." Faith in the Lord's supervision prefers the Lord's arrangement to any other as respects the sufferings of this present time and the glory that is to follow; and hence it doth not puff up but builds up in the character-likeness of our Redeemer.

- *Reprints, R2353*

Unwaning Treasure

Midst all the things which change and pass and perish,
The blessings which so oft seem growing dim,
How good it is to calmly, truly cherish
The treasure which is ours in having Him.

His love unchanged throughout the years abideth,
When other loves have changed or passed away;
No aching, breaking heart in Him confideth
But finds its night of sorrow turned to day.

His care, His wondrous care, is wrapped around us;
Nor grows He weary though we oftentimes fall;
His mercies, like His mercy, they surround us;
He bends a listening ear whene'er we call.

Ah, yes, we have in Him unwaning treasure --
Forgiveness, love, compassion, matchless grace;
May it be ours to give Him back some pleasure,
As daily in His will our steps we trace.

- J. Danson Smith.

Recently Deceased

Brother George F. Zirges, Granite City, Ill. - (Sept.).
Sister G. W. Robertson, Hantsport, N. S., Canada - (Sept.).
Sister J. L. Cooke, Brooklyn, N. Y. - (Oct.).

Character Reflecting a Knowledge of God

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and I to inquire in His temple." - Psa. 27:4.

THERE is a pathetic note manifest in the words of Jesus as in his prayer he makes mention of the absence of a knowledge of God on the part of some whom he designates as the world. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee." (John 17:25.) It seems evident that the world to which he more particularly refers is not the Gentile world then outside divine favor, but rather that portion of humanity among whom he had gone *in* and out bearing testimony to his Messiahship and mission in the earth. He had been sent to a nation which had enjoyed extraordinary advantages over all other peoples, a nation "to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the services of God, and the promises," and yet he is obliged to say to them, "Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also." "Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." - John 8:19, 44.

THE DEPTHS OF CHRIST

It to be wondered at that Jesus' heart was saddened by facts, manifest to himself, though because of their blindness, unperceived by the Jews themselves. To find the Gentile world in gross darkness, and ignorant of God, was no surprise to our Lord, but to find so little of the knowledge of God among a people so highly privileged 'was surely cause for his frequent expressions of lament and disappointment. To a sensitive nature, perfectly informed as Jesus was in the blessedness of what a knowledge of God really meant, the deplorable absence of that knowledge must have been a very painful experience indeed. The real depth of his lament could not possibly be understood by the "world" that Jesus found so lacking in acquaintanceship with God; only, those who know God could ever experience and share this, the Savior's sorrow, with him. In his own unbroken, intimate fellowship with God, living as he did in the undimmed light and joy of the Father's presence and approval, who can describe the great empty chasm he saw spread out before those professedly seeing yet blind leaders and people of Israel. Oh what a world of difference in the viewpoint of those whose meager knowledge of God shrouded him in the garments of "vain imaginations," "vain traditions" and "commandments of men," and the vision of Jesus, before whom the knowledge of God was spread out over all the principles, mysteries, and powers of eternal life! How vast the scope of his definition of eternal life, when he declares, "This is life eternal, that they might *know thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3.) In the light of such a statement of what eternal life consists, how few at any time have known its underlying verities.

Surely then the words of David in our text are such as should be constantly upon our own lips. The delight he experienced in being permitted to abide in the house of God, and the exalted purposes constraining him to take full advantage of his opportunity to seek a greater knowledge of the Lord, should never be absent in our lives today. This fact seems wonderfully emphasize also in the statement of the Apostle. Perhaps it was as the typical representative of such a Paul that David was caused to give us our text. Harken then to the Apostle as he too determines to dwell continually within the circle of these great eternal-life influences -- knowing God "and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." "Yea, doubtless, and I count all thing but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." - Phil. 3:8, 10.

For David, dwelling in the house of the Lord, and spending all the days of life within its holy environments, there was the one great objective, namely "to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." His heart was particularly sensitive to the known delight that the Lord experiences when receptive minds truly seek his face. We therefore experience no surprise when we find the Psalmist saying, "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my *heart* said unto thee, thy face, Lord, will I seek." (Psa. 27:8.) His was that longing after God best described as, and being as real and present as the thirst of the hart for the water brooks. No wonder his night watches were so frequently filled with sweet communion with God, and his days occupied with meditations on the law of God, in which he delighted. To him the Lord's Word was surely fulfilled: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Similar was the experience of Paul, whose great purpose was "that I might know him, and the power of his resurrection." Worthy examples they are for us to follow, and to us of the house of sons, their singleness of purpose becomes an outstanding incentive to reach the plane where Jesus stands, and to testify with him, "O righteous Father, . . . I have known thee."

GOD IS LOVE

Well has the poet written into song the happy discovery of those who follow on to know the Lord:

"But what to those who find? Ah! this,
Nor tongue nor pen can show!
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but His loved ones know."

These words deem to breathe the same deep knowledge that is contained in the expression of Jesus: "The world hath not known, . . . but I know." Some hart emotions can be clothed in language and in considerable measure transmitted to others. Some, reactions of joy may find suitable and adequate expression in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," or in some other form of testimony, but to *know him*, and have the mysteries of eternal life flowing through our souls from him, requires more than we now possess of language properly to express. How vain the boast of a knowledge of God unless the heart is wholly devoted to him. Some may know enough *about God* to preach the Gospel in contention, but never *know* him. Knowledge of his purposes for Church and world there can be -- "the devils believe and tremble," but to only one class can come the fulfillment of his promise: "I will manifest myself to him." It is not, therefore, our knowledge about God on which we rest, but knowing him in the deep responsive understanding of the heart affections.

This is the knowledge which is full of energy, full of power to work out all the needed transformation we must experience. This is the knowledge of God that Jesus rejoiced to fully possess in his perfect accord with the Father, and into which he longs to lead us through all the progressive stages of sanctification. Then it is that the great mystery of spiritual growth is made clear to us, of how we are "*created in Christ Jesus*, unto good works." Then the life of God flows in, and in "actions speaking louder than words," "the life also of Jesus" is "made manifest in our mortal flesh." - 2 Cor. 4:11.

"God is love," therefore to know him and his beloved Son, is to find oneself truly "lost in wonder, love, and praise," in the realization of what it means to have been made the object of his condescending love -- his blessed personal love. Is it a wonderful love concerned with a world of sinners lost? Indeed it is! Is it a wonderful story of salvation for the Church of this "accepted time" and of a "paradise restored to the children of men? Yes indeed! But oh how sweet and precious and personal to every one of us is the love of God, and of Jesus. "He loved *me* and gave

himself for *me*." "He gave himself a ransom for all," but he also "died and paid it all, yes all the debt I owed." And how blessed it is to feel the power of this love of God shed abroad in our hearts, impregnated with a sense of overpowering gratitude.

We do thank God for the tongues and pens of a multitude of thankful souls, who have sought to express their reactions and ours to the Apostle's three spirit-inspired words, "God is love." We share with them their sense of limitation as they survey the boundless wideness of his grace, and cry, "O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise." "Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were an offering far so small." "Love so amazing, so Divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all." "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'Tis all that I can do." These are but a few of the confessions of the hopeless inability experienced by devoted hearts, who "for such love would make some return." Blessed sense is this of the greatness of his unspeakable Gift, and blessed assurance and promise it is of our some day possessing the powers to praise him with perfect adoration. To live in the enjoyment of this heart knowledge of the love of God is, then, to live a life of grateful praise, reflecting our knowledge of him in the melodies of joy and thanksgiving, by which we may fill his courts with praise.

God is love. To know him is to find oneself influenced by that "Love divine all love excelling, to scatter love wherever the daily path may lead. With that love abounding in the heart, its reflection will not be absent. The ever ready word in season, like apples of gold in pictures of silver, will surely reveal it. Leaving beauty where ashes have been found, and replacing the cup of sorrow with one of joy, will testify to its presence in the character. Lifting up the hands which hang down, giving renewed strength to the feeble knees, fulfilling the law of Christ by bearing another's burden, will all bear witness to an intimate knowledge of God, for "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." (1 John 4:16.) "Be imitators of God as dear children," says the Apostle, but such we can never be unless we *know him*. Knowing him as Jesus intended his words to mean, will insure our being "rooted and grounded" in the love of Christ. Then we will realize the fulfillment of the law which says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Mark 12:30, 31.) There is therefore no greater demonstration of our knowledge of God's love, than this-our whole-hearted recognition of our indebtedness to his grace, and the spontaneous outpourings of our love toward him in devotion, and toward our neighbor in helpfulness. And our nearest neighbor, according to Jesus, is whoever needs our active love most.

GOD IS LIGHT

God is light, therefore to *know him* is to "walk in the light as he is in the light." It will mean walking in a pathway that shines with, increasing brilliancy as growth in the knowledge of God progresses. It is not promised that the path of all will shine more and more unto the perfect day. The Scriptures are here, as everywhere, careful to limit such experiences to the few whom God has determined beforehand shall have them. It is the path of the *just ones* alone that can thus shine. "The secret of the Lord is [only] with them that fear him." "The *meek* will he guide in judgment: and the *meek* will he teach his way." (Psa. 25:9.) This is a pathway wherein the light of divine revelation will increase as the righteous individual moves onward in his acquaintanceship with God. It will mean clearer visions of God's truth as it progressively unfolds, up to the full dawn of the new Day. But in a real sense it will represent a path of light leading onward to an increasing nearness to God, and an increasing reflection of his character likeness in the one thus walking in the light. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6.) Only when that light is permitted to shine "in our hearts," our innermost being, our deepest

affections, our enraptured minds, can we experience the real" joy of walking in the light of his face, and know the power of that undimmed countenance to make one holy.

"If we walk in the light as he is in the light"-What a demand! Are we not taught to think of God as "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see"? (1 Tim. 6:16.) How then can we now walk in such unapproachable light, and live in the environment of such glory? Surely it can be only by being "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." (Rom. 6:11.) The old man has been crucified with Christ, and the new creature can dwell with Christ in God. "Ye are not in the flesh," saith the Scriptures, "but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you." (Rom. 8:9.) The pure in heart *see* God, and earth-born clouds are not permitted to hide him from their eyes. To have this access into the holy of holies where saints may enter with "boldness," and to know God as "light" in this way, will therefore result in a character reflecting his holiness. Professions of knowing him, and the daily walk will agree. Confessing this knowledge will not be vitiated by works which deny him. The cross of Christ bearing its victim, who was made sin for us, receiving in his own body the punishment we deserved, will be visualized with deeper realization of how God hates sin. It will make real to us the need of an increasing hatred of the unrighteousness inherent in ourselves, and it will result in giving us a clearer understanding of our holiness in Christ, and increase our gratitude accordingly. Only those who fully comprehend their utter unprofitableness, and the sinfulness inherent-in themselves, can really appreciate the provision for holiness through grace. Oh how effectual the light from that blessed cross which reveals that he who was "made sin for us" has now, in God's clove, made it possible "that we might be made the *righteousness of God* in him." (2 Cor. 5:21.) , Surely "the love of Christ constraineth us" to accept by faith these blessed facts of justification, and to diligently put off the old man, who because of his deeds is shut out from the light of the spirit, and to put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him." (Col. 3:10.) Such knowledge of God as "light," *does* give an impetus and zest to the desire to be cleansed from "*all* filthiness of the flesh and spirit" until the holiness, without which none shall see him, has been fully realized.

GOD IS LIFE

God is the supreme Fountain of life. To *know him* therefore will mean a present experience of the life which is life indeed. Living in vital union with him cannot fail to, produce evidences that we have indeed "passed from death unto life." There will not be just "a *name* to live," but the results of the knowledge of him will be seen in fruits and graces utterly impossible unless we are "alive unto God." To know the great Fountain of life in the sense Jesus rejoiced to know him, will therefore mean the possession of energizing, spiritual forces definitely at work in the heart. This is the clear, unmistakable teaching of the following Scriptures, and others: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling.... and what is the *exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe*, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." - Eph. 1:19, 20; Rom. 8:11; John 10:10; 4:14.

These are thrilling statements indeed. They by no means teach that such results must await our glorification beyond the veil. Here and now we may enter into larger and larger fulfillments of them. "He that hath the Son hath life" as a present possession. "The life I now live I [now] live by the faith of the Son of God." He who enjoys the verification of these assurances in his life, *knows*

God. He has passed from ineffectual efforts and questionable hopes into an experience that maketh not ashamed. God is working in him to will and to do his good pleasure. May he who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we as or think, continue to impart his life to us, and make us living witnesses of the "life more abundant." Thus we shall be characters reflecting a vital contact with God, who to know is life eternal. Then there will be the fruitage of love, joy, and peace, definitely promised to all who live in Christ the Vine; not the artificial the imitation of these graces which so often deceive us, and leave us humiliated in the hour of trial by the discovery that they were not real, but the genuine fruitage that will abide, come what may.

THE PEACE OF GOD

"The very God of peace sanctify you wholly," prays the Apostle -- the God of peace -- the great Reservoir of the peace "which passeth understanding." Surely if we *know him*, such a prayer will not have been in vain, and such a peace as this will always pervade our lives. But alas, how many of us have sung all too truthfully, "Of peace I only knew the name, nor found my soul its rest." The sin of worry, of fretting over the reverses that frequently overtake us, and our growing restless under the things that disturb the even tenor of our own preferred plans and preferences is so present with us, that peace, real peace, permanent peace is not known.

This "peace of God" is not only a blessed boon that he willingly waits to impart to us when faith is prepared to claim it, but as he would have us realize, his peace is essential to our full fellowship with him, and to our attainment of his will concerning us. "They that believe do enter into rest" -- the rest reserved for the people of God. Blessed rest from our own works, which can never justify us, nor give peace to our awakened spirits, rest from foreboding fears lest our temporal needs are forgotten and we suffer want; rest from fretting lest evil-doers prospering in their way, defeat the plans we cherish; rest, sweet trusting assurance that God is in his heaven and all is well. As a dear saint of not so long ago expressed it: "If you trust you do not worry, if you worry you do not trust." Only let our faith be true and simple, ready to take him at his word, and our lives will surely be full of the sunshine of his peace, however overcast our skies may be. Surely we too can say,

"Faith came singing into my room,
And other guests took flight;
Fear and anxiety, grief and gloom
Sped out into the night.
I wondered that such peace could be:
But faith said gently, 'Don't you see
They really cannot live with me.'"

CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM

"O righteous Father, I have known Thee," we can surely say today, after our years of fellowship with Jesus. In what a multitude of ways he has demonstrated his love and power active on our behalf. Never one trial too much, never a temptation without its way of escape, never a burden laid upon us to test our happy accord with his will, without the sweet assurance whispered into our hearts, "My grace is sufficient for thee." In days of a less perfect knowledge of his full provision for us in Christ, a day we trust now gone, never to return, we were deprived of much of his peace because we failed to recognize that it was solely a gift, and believing it could come only by our efforts, we needed to learn the futility of our struggle:

"I struggled and wrestled to win it,
The blessing that setteth me free;
But when I had ceased from my struggles,
His peace Jesus *gave* unto me."

And oh! what peace the Savior can *give!* Peace from the things mentioned foregoing, and a peace that passeth understanding when we have really learned to put the emphasis not on *our Do*, but on his *Done*. Ah, then, in so many ways he truly becomes our peace. And is it not God's will for us that our experiences even now shall be like the fulfillment of a prophecy, which in its real setting is still future for the world: "Of the increase of his government and *peace*, there shall be no end." Only let his *government*, his entire will, be fully recognized in our life, and his peace will surely follow. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." And in what an unlimited measure that peace will come if we really *know Cod*, "or rather," as Paul beautifully expresses it, know that we "are, known of him." - Gal. 4:9.

THE JOY OF THE LORD

There is a beautiful rendering of Psalm 119:32 (Douay Bible) that is true, in the lives of resting, trusting saints: "*I will run* the way of thy commandments, when thou halt set my heart at liberty." They cannot run with joyous heart and fleet feet who are not made "free indeed." Let there be bondage to the fear of man, or bondage to unconquered sin, and our feet are heavy. If there be some weight permitted to slacken our steps, some command of God "grievous," or hard to obey, it will mean a heart far from joyful liberty, for "if our hearts condemn us God is greater than our hearts," and his judgment we know. We know full well then why we are weak -- delight in his will is absent.

Would we be strong in the Lord and in the power of his knight? Would we gladly lay hold of every source of strength calculated to turn our defeats into triumphs and our "groaning within ourselves" into "always' rejoicing"? Would we give much to be able to testify in truth,

"Of victory *now* o'er Satan's power,
Let all the ransomed sing,
And triumph now in every hour,
Through Christ, the Lord, our King."

If we would be thus enriched, let us remember the words which are blessedly true: "The *joy of the Lord* shall be your strength;" for a heart joyful in the Lord, is a strong conquering heart.

The Scriptures abound with references to the joy of the Lord, and they frequently stress the fact that he wants us to now enter into his joy. And what is the joy of God? Is it not a joy in his beloved Son, and in all the plan of redemption centered and completed in him? Is it not a joy in those things "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived," those things amidst which he dwells and has now revealed unto us by his spirit, and which, when we are made meet for his holy presence, he will fully unfold and give to us? Is not his joy wholly occupied with the things that are "pure, and just, and good," and in the knowledge that ere long all impurity, injustice, and evil will pass away, never to rise a second time? And is his joy not unspeakably great in seeing us, his children, become more and more like him in these things? Who can fathom the joy of the Father as he beholds our acceptance of his grace, and as we throw off the shackles that bind us to a world like this, and lay hold of all the privileges of sonship he

has made possible to us, among which is "fulness of joy at his right hand." Truly, "we can not have too many rejoicing Christians, if they rejoice in the Lord." We must agree that this is so. If we *know him* intimately, as closer than any earthly tie, our lives will radiate his joy. We will then *run* in the way of his commandments, with a heart at liberty, treading on resurrection ground, unfettered by the opinions and doings of others, living above the blighting, constraining, and joy - - destroying, faultfinding tendencies of the fallen nature. Have we not been made strong in loving sympathy for all who love our Lord, just through the joy and gladness with which he fills our own hearts, as we meditate on his loving kindness to us? Are we not today becoming more and more blessedly conscious of the fact that we seem drawing so near the veil that even now we are tasting of the joys of the Lord into which ere long we shall be fully ushered? If we are to know how strong love makes us to believe and claim all that he can be made to us, and we know how empowered such love can make us to fulfill his every command. Of all the evidences that we have walked with God and have learned to *know him*, none so beautifully manifests this as a character reflecting so much of the love of God that unloveliness, bitterness, an discord, are rebuked and silenced. Shall we not the henceforth demonstrate that we really know him.

"So let our daily lives express
The beauties of true holiness;
So let the Christian graces shine,
That all may *know* the Power Divine."

- *J. J. Blackburn.*