

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXXVI March, 1953 No. 3

What Say the Scriptures? Basic Bible Studies No. 1 - Creation

"He that built all things is God." - Hebrews 3:4.

THE human brain craves understanding. Thinking man ponders the riddle of Existence, the meaning of Life and Death, and the destiny of the world. The Unknown is bewildering, repellent, terrifying. Man longs for an assurance of security. Is he but a creature of chance, or has Mind called him into being? Is he a forgotten castaway on a lonely island of the Universe, or a direct object of superior Love and Benevolence? Is purposeful Intelligence responsible for all about him? These questions of necessity make the ultimate objective in the accumulation of knowledge -- *God!*

To this supreme comprehension, two different paths lead. The first, revelation, is a direct road and independent of rational thought. It is the pathway of the Bible and happy is the man who walks in its light. To its wonderful teachings we shall recur in succeeding studies.

But in this article we will consider especially the second path which is the path of science. It is strictly rational, requiring for its method an analysis of the Universe as it is perceived and conceived by the human brain, independent of revelation. It is the chosen path of our age. Whether this method has brought modern man to belief in a Deity, is what we wish to ascertain.

History records the courageous few who burst through the restrictions of thought and braved the frowns of priestly castes to rely on reason alone in search of truth. Pythagorus, Aristotle, Archimedes, Bacon, Galileo, Newton, and others marked the course of intellectual ascent. The way was difficult and progress slow, but in the seventeenth century, a world reeking with the dogmas of an ancient past brought stirrings of the great religious Reformation, and Intellectualism came into its own. Scientific knowledge increased marvelously, and reaching to modern times affected profound changes in the life of men. Continued research has penetrated into innermost secrets of nature, uncovering incredible phenomena of such technical complexity that even an educated layman is taxed in his effort to comprehend. Scientists themselves are compelled to de-

vote an entire lifetime to specialization in one small field of study. Great indeed have been the triumphs of the human intellect in resolving the wonders of creation, but, we ask, have they led into the presence of a Creator? We seek our answer in a consideration of three branches of knowledge -- Astronomy, Physics, and Biology.

WHAT IS ASTRONOMY'S ANSWER?

Consider the pageant of the heavens. Modern Astronomy, with its huge telescopes and delicate instruments, has expanded man's horizon wonderfully. The earth, his home, is only a small planet within a solar system itself but an insignificant part of a galaxy of untold billions of stars. And in the regions beyond our "island universe" are millions upon millions of similar galaxies. The Psalmist rhapsodized over a display of 3,000 stars, the perceptive limit of the unaided eye. What if his mind had absorbed the facts known today? Our sun, one million times larger than the earth, is lavishly radiating its energy into space at the mass equivalent of 4,000,000 tons per *second!* Even at this prodigious rate its mass will not be reduced one percent in 150 billion years. The total energy in all the stars is beyond imagination. A further and perhaps supreme discovery is -- the orderliness of the Universe. It is the largest of all certainties. No clock has ever approached in precision the motions of the heavenly bodies. They are systematic and invariable. Majestic order prevails universally.

Such are among the wonders the human intellect has sought out in Astronomy. Whence, we ask, this stupendous creation, and what its purpose, and whose this amazing scheme? Does not all this celestial phenomena betoken Intelligence? To these questions Rationalism answers: "All we know is that in obedience to the fundamental law of diminishing energy, the Universe is 'running down' and in the indeterminate future all activity will have ceased, total obscurity and absolute cold will reign, and the world will become dead." Thus Eddington, Jeans, Haldane, and others.

Recently, however, new voices have become articulate and new phenomena have been discovered. First, that the Universe is in a state of continuous expansion, and second and most remarkable, matter is being constantly created in space. This compensates for background material progressively being condensed into galaxies which at enormous speeds are moving beyond our observable sphere. The Universe is therefore not static but dynamic! This revolutionary concept which has been reduced to precise mathematical form, is causing a reversal in scientific thought. Without continuous creation the Universe must evolve toward a state in which all matter is condensed into dead stars. With continuous creation, the Universe has an infinite future in which all its large scale features will be preserved. The implication of these new discoveries is tremendous!

As we turn from these theories of men, memory recalls some words from another source of truth:

"O my God ... thy years are throughout all generations.
Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth.
And the heavens are the work of thy hands.
They shall perish, but thou shalt endure:
Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment;
As a vesture shalt thou change them,
And they shall be changed:
But thou art the same,
And thy years shall have no end.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER OF PHYSICS?

From Astronomy, which deals with the infinite, we turn to Physics, which deals with the infinitesimal, to consider its findings in the search for truth. The nuclear physicist is today the high priest of Science, for the determination of the inner structure of matter vitally affects all the branches of knowledge and reaches to the stars.

Twenty-three centuries ago Democritus theorized that everything was composed of atoms, or infinitely small elements, indestructible and indivisible, with powers of attraction and repulsion. Two thousand years later Sir Isaac Newton wrote: "It seems probable to me that God . . . formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, movable particles . . . so very hard as never to wear or break to pieces; no ordinary power being able to divide what God himself made in the first creation." These beginnings of apprehension have culminated in our day in conception of astounding complexity. The modern theory of matter has resolved the atom into an infinitely smaller nucleus of electrons, protons, neutrons, positrons, mesons, and other entities, all in a state of tremendous activity and generating enormous electrical forces. For centuries science taught that neither matter nor energy could be created or destroyed. The two principles -- the conservation of mass and the conservation of energy -- reigned side by side until Einstein showed that both are equivalent. Matter can be destroyed and converted into energy. Energy can be destroyed and matter created. Matter reduced to free electrons becomes a beam of light; conversely, the light beam can be converted into matter. (What a strange scientific undertone, is lent to the Scripture -- "God is Light"!)

The matter in a breath of air could power a large ship for several years if converted completely into energy. The energy of atomic fission has been dramatically revealed in the terrible atom bomb. These subatomic forces are the "building blocks" of the Universe. It is now realized that all phenomena we behold exist only on our scale of observation. A print under a microscope becomes a meaningless series of irregularly spaced dots. A razor's edge appears to us a solid line, while on the microscope scale the line is broken. On the chemical scale the line is subdivided into atoms of iron and carbon, which on the subatomic scale are resolved into electrons sweeping in orbits at *several thousand miles per second*. The infinitely small rivals in marvelousness the infinitely large!

But whither has a knowledge of this fascinating nuclear world led? Is there evidence here of superhuman Wisdom? Physics has yet no answer. It is too preoccupied with a strange situation which has arisen. For it has been found impossible to scientifically "predict" the behavior of these inner entities. They will not obey the laws of the larger world built up from them. And consequently Laplacian determinism (the dictum that a complete knowledge of elementary phenomena can determine the larger -- the foundation of the scientific method for centuries) has collapsed. Henceforth science must deal with "intangibilities," using the calculus of probabilities to weigh and analyze the basic constituents of the Universe. Expressions such as "scientific truth" can now be used only in a very limited and not literal sense. There is no scientific truth in the absolute sense. There are only certain groups of sensations which, in our experience, have always succeeded each other in the same order and which we assume will succeed each other in an identical fashion within a limited future. To this indeterminacy has physics led in the search for truth!

When Napoleon asked Laplace where in his monumental work, *Celestial Mechanics*, there was any reference to the Deity, the great protagonist of determinism is said to have replied, "Sire, I have no need of that hypothesis." On hearing Napoleon recount this story, the equally brilliant Lagrange remarked: "That, Sire, is a wonderful hypothesis."

WHAT ANSWERS BIOLOGY?

Biology is the science of life, the study of the origin, development, and distribution of plants and animals. Modern Biology has abandoned the old theories of spontaneous generation, and of the separate creation of species. Among the now accepted principles are the cell theory, the belief that all vital processes are accompanied by chemical change, and third, the doctrine of evolution.

Aristotle has been called the father of the doctrine of evolution, but there were others who anticipated him. In his time, he listed five hundred species of mammals, birds, and fishes. He theorized that design was at the bottom of evolution -- and that only a divine plan could account for the gradual and orderly unfolding of the processes of nature. Modern Biology lists twenty-five thousand different kinds of backboned animals, and a quarter of a million backboneless animals, each itself and no other.

Is not this wonderful diversity of living things an evidence of creative Mind? Biology answers: "We have no need of a supernatural explanation. All life originated in a common ancestor and has evolved to its present form through mechanisms such as adaptation (Lamarck), natural selection (Darwin), and sudden mutations (Naudin-deVries). Evolution began with living matter without a cell structure and has culminated in Man, endowed with a conscience."

If we press the question as to the origin of this primal living matter, we are met with silence. Further, it is useless to draw attention to the thousand and one questions which this mechanistic theory of creation has not answered, or to the continual controversies among Biologists themselves. Creative evolution has become a dogma from which Biology will brook no deviation, remaining quite content with its materialist viewpoint.

There is however one voice, that of the late biophysicist, Lecomte du Nouy, to protest this doctrine of chance. In his remarkable book, *Human Destiny*, this first magnitude scientist presents incontrovertible evidence that pure chance could not possibly account for the origin of life. He therein demonstrates mathematically that the enormously complex constituents of matter absolutely preclude their accidental arrangement in higher forms. He further proves that the earth has not been in existence long enough to have allowed time for even one molecule to have been formed by the accidental shaking together in their proper order of the 2,000 atoms which compose it. Hundreds of millions of identical molecules would be necessary to build up one cell, not to mention the unimaginable complexity of higher forms of life. Du Nouy unhesitatingly states that these facts scientifically evidence the intervention of Mind in the formation of all creation; in other words -- God exists!

"THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD"

We have, as it were, walked through three great chambers in the magnificent temple Rationalism has built. Perhaps it is only imagination that there appear to be cracks in this edifice of human learning. But the incense of skepticism and materialism is stifling and our feet hurry through the court with its kneeling masses worshipping before the altar to Science. We would stand beneath the open vault of heaven and draw on our spiritual faculties as we seek the face of Him for whom our spirits yearn. For we have found that the path of unaided reason has not led to God; that human life is accounted without a cause and without a goal; that man is considered an irresponsible particle of matter engulfed in a maelstrom of purposeless forces, and our hearts *cry* out in protest. We would hear the voice of those illuminated by inspiration, for there is no hesitancy in their testimony. These are their words as recorded in the Bible:

David said: "The heavens proclaim God's splendor, the sky speaks of his handiwork; day after day takes up the tale, night after night makes him known; their speech has never a word, not a

sound for the ear, and yet their message spreads the wide world over; their meaning carries to earth's end." "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy creatures."

Zophar said: "Can you discover the deep things of God? Can you reach the Almighty's range of wisdom? Its scope is vaster than the earth; wider than the sea. Higher it is than heaven -- how can you match it? Deeper than death -- how can you measure it?"

Solomon said: "When I gave my mind to the study of wisdom, to study all the busy life of the world, I found that man is unable to grasp the truth of all that God is doing in this world: he may labor in his efforts to attain it, in a sleepless quest for it day and night, but he will never find it out; a wise man may think he is coming on the secret, but even he will never find it out."

Paul said: "Whatever is to be known of God is plain to men; God himself has made it plain -for ever since the world was created, his invisible nature, his everlasting power and divine being, have been quite perceptible in what he has made."

Concerning the philosophy of man, the great Apostle sums up in these direct and forceful words: "It is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the sages, I will confound the insight of the wise.' Sage, scribe, critic of this world, where are they all? Has not God stultified the wisdom of this world? For when the world with all its wisdom failed to know God in his wisdom, God resolved to save believers by the 'sheer folly' of the Christian message. Jews demand miracles and Greeks want wisdom, but our message is Christ the crucified -- a stumbling block to Jews, 'sheer folly' to Gentiles, but for those who are called, whether Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power of God and the wisdom of God."

"For the 'foolishness' of God is wiser than men,
And the 'weakness' of God is stronger than men."

- *W. J. Siekman*

(The subject of the second article in this series will be: "The Bible a Divine Revelation.")

"Till He Come

*"For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come."
- 1 Cor. 11:26.*

WHEN WE reflect that this simple memorial of the Savior's sacrifice on our behalf is the *one request* He made of us, in so far as a ceremonial remembrance is concerned, its yearly observance assumes an importance even above and beyond its typical significance. The death of Jesus on the cross was the climax of an experience that had its beginning when He volunteered for the service which the heavenly Father at some time revealed to Him as being necessary for man's redemption.

We can well imagine the consternation and sorrow that assailed the heavenly hosts, as they witnessed the tragedy that was enacted in the Garden of Eden; for they beheld Lucifer, in violation of his trust, seduce this earthly pair created in God's image, and cause them to disobey the divine will, and through that disobedience, lose all hope for a continuation of the life and blessings that had been bestowed upon them. So wonderful was this earthly creation, that even God pronounced it "very good"; and in His talk with Job (Job 38:7), He indicates that the heavenly hosts were so delighted that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Could we for one moment think that they would then become indifferent to what they saw taking place on earth?

Perhaps, because of being perfect and accustomed to waiting upon the Lord, they would not discuss what they witnessed in the same manner that we discuss tragedies that distress us, but there would surely be sorrow in their hearts, as they beheld God's purpose apparently frustrated and seemingly nothing done about it, except to let mankind perish, and Lucifer, who was now called Satan, continue his operations of deceit and destruction.

Then too, our thoughts naturally go out to the Logos, He who was the Father's agent to accomplish the work of creation: what must He have felt as He saw Lucifer, this marvelous being who was of such great power and glory, yield to the covetous desire to have dominion like God, and in accomplishing this desire, bring rebellion, sin and death into God's perfect domain? His better acquaintance with the Father through having been His honored agent in the creative work, would no doubt give the Logos greater reason to trust in the Father's power and ability to solve the problem in a manner acceptable to the divine attributes, than would be possible for those having a more limited acquaintance. But there is no reason to think that He knew of the coming fall of man or of the part that He would play in connection therewith:

The Scriptures give us no intimation that any of God's creatures were endowed with the ability to foresee coming events; the wisdom to know the end from the beginning inhered solely in the Creator. He foresaw the rebellion of Lucifer; the resultant fall of man; the six thousand years of the permission of evil; the redemption that would be accomplished through His Son; and so His peace of mind could not be disturbed. But the angels were taken unawares, and no doubt the Logos likewise knew nothing of what was to take place. Peace of mind, in so far as they were concerned, would therefore be in proportion to their trust in the Father's power and ability to work out His own will regardless of sin and rebellion.

Events that occurred subsequently indicate that the Father did not immediately enlighten the heavenly hosts as to the way man would be restored, for had He done so, the angels would not

have made the attempt that turned out to be such a failure. They must have thought that, if given opportunity, they would be able to save mankind; and so God permitted them to exercise their wisdom and powers in this respect, at a time when men's bodies and minds were not so corrupt and weak as we see them today. Nevertheless, as God foreknew, their attempt was a failure which resulted in a condition of corruption that made it necessary to destroy all mankind but the family of Noah, and to confine in chains of darkness many of the angels who had in consequence become defiled. - 1 Pet. 3:19, 20; 2 Pet. 2:4, 5; Jude 6.

Following this, God gave a demonstration to both men and angels, that even a government carried on under His own laws and direction, wherein He was long-suffering with the nation that had promised to be obedient to His laws and will, would also be unsuccessful in bringing about a condition of righteousness and life. And when He removed divine supervision from Israel, He permitted Gentile nations to do what they could for the people of earth, and the results are everywhere apparent. Thus it has been fully demonstrated that neither men nor angels, even with the help of divine law and supervision, can do anything to restore mankind; and neither men nor angels will have anything to say about the government in the Age to come. - Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 14; Heb. 2:5.

As already stated, we do not know when it was the Logos learned that the salvation of mankind was dependent upon His willingness to sacrifice; to leave the glory and riches of His heavenly abode and become a man in order that He might take man's place under the condemnation justice had required. It may have been when the inability of the angels to accomplish anything was demonstrated; in which case, the Logos did but wait some two thousand odd years for God's due time -- "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." Or it may have been just prior to the time He "left the glory He had with the Father." But in any case, the important thing was that He was both willing and obedient in the doing of the Father's will -- "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin. Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Thy will O God." -- Heb. 10:5-7.

What a sacrifice that must have been; and how wonderfully it demonstrated His loyalty and obedience to the Father's will! But He does not appeal to His disciples on this score; nor does He reproach the Jews with the fact that in coming to earth to serve mankind, and Israel in particular, He had to sacrifice far more than mankind as a whole had ever known or possessed. We would naturally think that He would desire some recognition of this, "so great a sacrifice" on their behalf, but He does not even mention it in His request for a memorial.

And then when He was born into this world, it was to a very lowly, humble position. To be sure, His birth was proclaimed by the heavenly hosts, but only a chosen few were aware of this. His birth was not such as to overawe or unduly influence the great ones of earth, or even of that nation, but was accomplished through a lowly maiden in humble circumstances; and He grew to manhood in a community of which it was said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Furthermore, He did not hesitate to associate with publicans and sinners, and He attracted followers only through preaching the truth and by doing good wherever He had opportunity. But does He desire for an acknowledgment of this enter into His request for a memorial? No, it is not considered; and even in His daily life, instead of calling attention to what He has endured for their sakes, He points them to God's goodness and mercy which had been exercised -on their behalf all through their national existence; He appeals to their sense of duty, their obligation in justice, their debt of love and gratitude for God's care over them; and He gives to God the credit and glory *for* His own sacrifice on their behalf: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

If only we too might be as humble and as self effacing in what we do as was Jesus! His attitude was that He did but carry out the Father's will in what He said and did: "If any man will do His [God's] will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh His glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him." - John 7:17, 18.

When a certain one called Jesus "Good Master," Jesus said to him, "Why tallest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." (Matt. 19:16, 17.) The glory which this man would have ascribed to Jesus, Jesus was quick to show did not originate with Himself, but was God's goodness manifested in and through Him.

It has often been remarked that when some distinguished one of earth leaves a memorial to himself, he usually designs it to call remembrance to some self-glorifying achievement: something that has exalted him in the eyes of his fellow-man, for it is selfglory that he seeks. But Jesus had no such thought, He knew that He was near to the hour of His greatest suffering and shame, the hour when His life as a human being would be ignominiously sacrificed: not for any wrong that He had done, as His enemies falsely accused, but that He, might do the Father's will in providing a ransom: "The just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Pet. 3:18.) It was this act of total self-abnegation that Jesus asked us to remember-this act in which He assumed the penalty that was ours, that thereby it might be possible for God to be just and at the same 'time justify those who would believe in Jesus. - Rom. 3:26.

From the divine standpoint, and therefore, eventually from the standpoint of all who will gain eternal life, *this experience* in which our Lord suffered the penalty that man had brought upon himself, is regarded as the crowning glory of His worthiness to occupy the exalted position in which God has placed Him. This is called to our attention in Revelation, chapter five, where John is given to see a Lamb that has prevailed to take the sealed book from out the right hand of God. And when He had taken the book, the heavenly creatures all about the throne sing a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." "And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud *voice, worthy is the Lamb* that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing."

And so, whereas from man's viewpoint, Jesus chose an experience that plumbed the depth of suffering and shame as the event in His life that He wished commemorated, yet from God's viewpoint, and therefore from His own and from ours, He chose that which constitutes the supreme evidence of His love for us, and His loyalty and obedience to the will of His heavenly Father. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." - 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

AS OFT AS YE EAT THIS BREAD

While it is manifest that the memorial aspect of this yearly observance constitutes the primary and vital significance in the emblems of bread and wine, still there is an additional aspect of the matter that has a solemn significance for all who have entered into a covenant of sacrifice to suffer and be dead with Christ. As the Apostle points *out* in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter eleven, in partaking of the bread and wine, we also symbolize a participation in the sacrifice. Not that we can or do add anything to the merit of Jesus, which alone constitutes the ransom for all mankind, but that God has been pleased to require, in His selection of a Bride for His Son, that they must participate in His sufferings if they would be counted worthy to share in His glory.

All the Atonement Day pictures show that God cannot accept, an imperfect sacrifice. And so, in order that these who partake of Adam's imperfection and condemnation by inheritance, may be able to offer an acceptable sacrifice, God has decreed that faith and obedience, manifested in consecration to the doing of His will, shall be sufficient ground for declaring them righteous. And since it is God that justifies (Rom. 8:33), and no one would dare call Him in question in the matter, such not only have peace with God (Rom. 5:1), but are free from the condemnation. (Rom. 8:1.) Therefore in Romans 12:1, Paul points out that their bodies, because of the merit of Christ's sacrifice applied for them (Heb. 9:24) now constitute a sacrifice that is no longer dead in trespasses and sin, but is living, holy and acceptable to God. So in partaking of the memorial that commemorates our Lord's death, let us also keep in mind our own consecration to be dead with Him.

Our text says, "For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's, death till He come."

This text has often suffered at the hands of its friends-true saints who have desired to faithfully proclaim His death, and in whose hearts there was the longing expectancy of His coming. -Some have interpreted the "as oft" to indicate any time, or any recurring period of time that they might choose Others, combining the "as oft" with the statemen found in Acts, chapter 20, verse 7, think that the memorial should be kept every first day of the week But we have taken our cue from the rule of observances established by God in the Passover, Atonemen Day and other types, and so observe the memorial yearly as near to the time indicated at its institution as we are able to determine.

TILL HE COME

But what *is* meant by "Till He come"? These words undoubtedly refer to the time of our Lord', second advent. Most Bible Students, enlightened through the commentaries of Pastor Russell, continue to observe the memorial of His death, although they are convinced that He has been present for about seventy years. The answer to this question could involve quite a discussion. From the pen of Howard H. Bickersteth we have the following lines:

"Till He come"; O let the words
Linger on the trembling chords;
Let the little while between,
In their golden light be seen;
Let us think how heaven and home
Lie beyond that "Till He come."

See the feast of love is spread,
Drink the wine and eat the bread;
Sweet memorials, till the Lord
Call us round His heavenly board;
Some from earth, from glory some,
Severed only -- "Till He come."

The latter verse shows a misconception of the state of those who have died during the Age, but the author evidently had in mind the Apostle's words recorded in First Thessalonians, chapter four, verses sixteen and seventeen-the time when the last members of the Body will be caught up to meet the Lord and the resurrected saints in the air. We would agree with the thought that as long as any of the saints remain this side the veil, it will be proper to observe the memorial of His death.

The "till He come" would therefore seem to include the thought of the complete gathering unto the Lord of those who are alive and remain, the last members of the Body who are still undergoing the ripening process before being gathered into the heavenly garner. This would agree with Jesus' own statement at the time He instituted the memorial: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until the day *when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom.*" - Matt. 26:29.

This event, we believe, occurs some years following the first sign of His presence as set forth in Luke 12:37 and Revelation 3:20, for both of these Scriptures indicate a period of time in which our Lord will personally supervise the faithful, watching saints in their feasting upon the Word of Truth in the end of this Age. It is evident that the ones He serves will be given a depth of understanding that has been lacking since the Apostle's days. Would any one of us deny that the Church has experienced such an outpouring in the past seventy years? To Israel of old God promised an early and a latter rain that would insure abundant crops if they would faithfully serve Him (Deut. 11:13, 14); and James employs the same figure of speech with regard to the harvesting of saints into the heavenly garner: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." - Jas. 5:7.

All through the Gospel Age until the harvest time, saints, when they died, were laid away in a condition of unconsciousness called "sleep." Their experience was much the same as those who died prior to the Gospel Age. Speaking of the "sons of God," the saints of this Age, God through the Prophet says, "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High. *But ye shall die like men*, and fall like one of the princes." (Psa. 82:6,7.) Prince Adam died for his own sin; but Prince Jesus died as a sacrifice for the sins of others. Those saints that having once been cleansed, return to "wallowing in the mire," will die like Prince Adam-for their own sins; but those who remain faithful to their consecration vows, will die like Prince Jesus: not for their own sins, but as a sacrifice.

We are given to understand that there comes a time at the end of the Age, when death will not bring a period of sleep as in the past, for those who die will be changed instantly. Paul says (1 Cor. 15:51-53), "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." The order in the resurrection of the saints will be, first, those that sleep, and then, "We who are alive and remain." - 1 Thess. 4:14-18.

"What a wonderful change when our Lord shall appear,
Oh, how precious the thought that the time is so near;
When the saints shall awake in His likeness sublime,
And the living be changed in a moment of time."

Who can fathom the glory of that awakening, that "till He come"? The Scriptures link it up, not with the secret and generally unknown phase of His presence, but with the appearing phase. Peter says (1 Pet. 5:4), "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." And Paul says (Col. 3:4), "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." And John in the same strain says (1 John 3:2), "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

This phase of the coming of Christ, viewed in the light of these Scriptures, will constitute the most momentous event in all the experiences of the members of the Church. What it will signify to those of us who suddenly find ourselves in the glorified presence of the Lord, and in possession of immortal life, is a change far too great for us to imagine. How can we even begin to picture the joy and wonder of that experience? We would never dare think of such heights of glory, honor, and excellence, were not the hope of attaining them so fully and unequivocally set before us as the reward of faithfulness in overcoming.

The preparation for this event that is everywhere stressed in the Word, is not the knowing of the exact date, but of being prepared in heart and life to the extent of the grace of God working through our consecrated ability. As John says, "Every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure." And so may the thought of participation, in this memorial "till He come" cause us to be watchful and diligent in giving heed to the things that pertain to our transformation into the image of our Lord.

- *John T. Read.*

"As Unknown and Yet Well Known"

Strangers here --
Not a link with earth unbroken,
Not a farewell to be spoken;
Waiting for the Lord to take them
To Himself, and like Him make them.

Strangers here --
With their hearts upon a treasure
That has dimmed for them earth's pleasure,
Lamps well trimmed, and brightly burning,
Eyes forever upward turning.

Strangers here --
Earthly rank and riches losing,
Worldly ties and claims refusing.
On to Christ in glory passing,
All things there in Him possessing.

Strangers here --
But in Him their hearts are resting,
Faith looks up in days of testing,
Follows Him with true allegiance,
Loves to walk in His obedience.

Well known there --
Oh, what joy for Christ to take them
To the Father, Who will make them
Welcome in His mansions yonder,
Strangers here -- to be no longer.
- *Reprints*, page R65.

A Tribute to the Bible

Born in the East and clothed in Oriental form and imagery, the Bible walks the ways of all the world with familiar feet and enters land after land to find its own everywhere. It has learned to speak hundreds of languages to the heart of man. It comes into the palace to tell the monarch that he is a servant of the Most High, and into the cottage to assure the peasant that he is a son of God.

Children listen to its stories with wonder and delight, and wise men ponder them as parables of life. It has a word for the time of peril, a word of comfort for the time of calamity, a word of light for the hour of darkness. Its oracles are repeated in the assembly of the people, and its counsels whispered in the ear of the lonely.

The wicked and the proud tremble at its warnings, but to the wounded and penitent it has a mother's voice. The wilderness and the solitary place have been made glad by it, and the fire on the hearth has lit the reading of its well-worn page. It has woven itself into our dearest dreams; so that love, friendship, sympathy, and devotion, memory and hope put on the beautiful garments of its treasured speech, breathing of frankincense and myrrh.

No man is poor or desolate who has this treasure for his own. When the landscape darkens and the trembling pilgrim cowers to the alley of the shadow, he is not afraid to enter; he takes the rod and the staff of Scripture in his hand, he says to his friend and comrade: "Good-bye, we shall meet again," and comforted by that support, he goes toward the lonely pass as one who walks through darkness into light.

- Henry Van Dyke - From Words of Life.

The Four Gospels

(Continued from last issue)

THE first two Gospels, Matthew and Mark, having been considered in the previous article of this series, we continue now with

LUKE -- THE SON OF MAN

Here Jesus is presented as Jehovah's *Man*.

"Behold *the Man* whose name is the *Branch*." (Zech. 6:12.) In this Gospel the human genealogy is given back to Adam and he is presented as what he is before man (intrinsically) the ideal man. In this text Jesus is presented as the "*Branch*" growing up out of his place. This is the characteristic of Luke's Gospel, in which this growing up forms the subject matter of the earlier, and separate, portion of the Gospel, and brings out the perfections of Christ, as the "perfect man."

Unlike Mark, where the peculiar view of the Lord had to be gathered from nice details, each in itself comparatively trifling, yet when summed up affording a picture full of character and distinctness, Luke throughout writes very broadly and plainly the memoirs of the Son of Man, showing, the Lord as the Ideal Man, and therefore linked not only to a certain kingdom, but to all the sons of Adam. Here is man, according to God, the pattern Man, through whom man is blessed and God glorified, seen not only in moral perfection, but as enduring all the sufferings, as well as experiencing the honors, which according to God's purpose are the heritage of the sons of men.

Luke's very preface is characteristic. Here the Evangelist begins with an address to his friend Theophilus. (Luke 1:1-4.) Human affection is thus displayed here. A man is to be described, and the writer would draw his friend to the subject by the cords of a man. (Hosea 11:4.) This Evangelist, and this one alone, refers to his own personal knowledge of this subject: "Having had perfect understanding of all things from -the very first." Thus he brings something human into his task, which is in keeping with the view of Christ that this Gospel presents to us.

The opening chapter begins like a simple tale, touching the sons of men with: "There was in the days of Herod the king a certain priest." (Luke 1:5.) And as it proceeds, we are introduced to human relationships and sympathies unlike anything we find in the other Gospels, with the circumstances of the birth and infancy of the Holy Child and of him who was to be his fore-runner.

Here too, and here only, do we find the three inspired songs, which, speaking of God's mercy to the Gentile as well as to the Jew, have for ages been the chosen utterance of the Church taken from among all nations. Here Mary sings: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." (Luke 1:53.) Here the priest looks beyond Israel, and while speaking of "salvation to his people" adds "to give light unto them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." (Luke 1:77, 79.) While the aged Simeon, ready to depart in peace, for his eyes have now seen God's salvation, cannot but add that it is "prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." - Luke 2:31, 32.

The second chapter is as distinctive. Commencing with facts beyond the limits of the elect people, Luke notes that "in those days, there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Then the going up of Joseph and Mary to be taxed. Equally

distinctive is the message of the angels to the watching shepherds. The wise men from the East may ask in Matthew for "One who is born King of the Jews"; but in Luke the angel says: "Fear not: for behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be up to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10, 11.) After this we get the story of the infancy of the child, how the "Child grew," how "the grace of God was on him" (Luke 2:40); also the journey to Jerusalem when he was twelve, and that he "was subject unto them," and "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:42-52.) These points, and others like these are peculiar to this Gospel, and distinctly mark our Lord as man, personally entering man's lot, joining himself to us in birth, childhood, and in youth, that by being man, he might in his own blessed Person bring man nearer to God.

The next chapter which records John's ministry and the baptism of the Lord is in similar tone. It commences with a glance at the world's rulers, for rulers are the key to the state of their subjects. (Luke 3:121.) Tiberius Caesar is reigning, Pontius Pilate governs Judea, Herod is tetrarch of Galilee, Philip of Ituraea, Lysanias of Abilene; and (this is not without purpose) two men are named as high priests of that people who had been God's elect. Two high priests in Israel! What a tale this told of the fall of the elect, who had become so mixed with the world, that where God had appointed one high priest, the Gentiles could now make many. They were changed at the will of the conquerors and it is supposed that the office had become annual, and that these two occupying it by turns each or both might be said to be the high priest.

We have noticed that in Matthew, John comes preaching "The Kingdom of Heaven." Here he preaches "repentance for the remission of sins," after which the Evangelist quotes the Prophet to show how in this act God as opening the door, that all flesh should see his salvation. (Luke 3:3, 6; Isa. 40:3.) Then here only is the preaching of the Baptist to men of every grade recorded. Here only do we read, the people, the publicans, and the soldiers, each ask him, "What shall we do;" All of which inquiries are answered with a special word to each, for man as man, whether as soldier or publican, is the object which the holy spirit would present to us. - Luke 3:10, 12, 14.

Then as to our Lord's baptism; here only do we read, "When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heavens were opened." (Luke 3:21.) He is especially linked here with "all the people, and it is specially noted, that being baptized, as becomes a man expressing his dependence, he was praying. Another fact here only recorded, is that "Jesus now began to be about thirty years of age." (Luke 3:23.) A point of interest regarding him as a man and still more as a priest. For it was the thirtieth year in which a Jewish priest entered upon his office, as Numbers 4:3 tells us. We find in this Gospel the genealogy is given at his baptism, and not at his birth. It is his mother's line and is traced to Adam, our Lord being the Second Adam, to give everlasting life to mankind.

Equally marked is the account here given of the opening of his ministry. Matthew and Mark note the fact that after his baptism "Jesus went into Galilee and began to preach." But only this Evangelist gives the particulars which are all characteristic. Here we read: "He came to Nazareth where he had been brought up," presumably from about his third to his thirtieth year. Then in the synagogue on the Sabbath day he stood up and read a Scripture descriptive of himself as the anointed Man: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted," etc. (Luke 4:16-20.) All of this is in keeping here. Still more marked is the discourse which followed and which is peculiar to Luke, wherein he shows that his course agrees with that of the ancient Prophets. He speaks of Elijah, the Prophet, and Elisha, as being sent, one to Sarepta, a city of Sidon unto a woman that was a widow, the other to Naaman the Syrian, that is to two Gentiles, mentioning in connection "that no prophet is accepted in his own country" (Luke 4:24, 27), words implying that though rejected by

the Jews, he should yet find poor widows and lepers among the Gentiles who would receive him gladly. In the mission of the Twelve, in Matthew their mission is specially directed within the limits of a certain outward kingdom. In Luke, it simply says, "He sent them forth to preach, and they departed preaching the Gospel everywhere. - Luke 9:6; Matt. 10:5, 7.

Luke, only, gives the account of James and John who wished him to call down fire upon those who did not want to receive him.

Luke repeatedly mentions Jesus praying; for the Man Jesus continually exercised the grace of true dependence upon his Father. He prayed at his baptism (Luke 3:21); when he cleansed the leper. (5:12, 16.) His choice of the Twelve followed a night of ceaseless prayer. (Luke 6:12, 13.) Peter's famous confession was made after Jesus prayed. (Luke 9:18.) Here, only, are we told that the transfiguration happened as Jesus prayed. (Luke 9:29.) The request of the disciples that he teach them to pray followed his prayer. (Luke 11:1-4.) Here, only, are Jesus' words to Peter, "I have prayed for thee." (Luke 22:32.) All of which is peculiar here, not only as characteristic of the Lord as a Man, but deeply instructive to us as followers still in the flesh, to whom every event, be it baptism, the ministry, social intercourse, choice of servants of the class, or hours of rest, should be an occasion of renewed communion with God in prayer.

Other points show the sympathy of our Lord for humanity. Luke notes particularly that which would touch a tender heart. The son of the widow of Nain was her only son. (Luke 7:11-16.) Jesus who had known a mother's love had compassion on her, and when he had raised her son, he delivered him to his mother. Many expressions show the social life. Jesus sat down to meat, using these occasions to instruct others. The Parable of -the Rich Man and Lazarus is peculiar to Luke, in which we have a figure of the Jew and Gentile. Luke alone gives the parable of the Good Samaritan, and notes that the one leper who returned to give thanks to God was a Samaritan. (Luke 17:15, 18.) Here only is the allusion to the Times of the Gentiles. (Luke 21:24.) Here only is the place of crucifixion called by its Gentile name, "Calvary," rather than as in the other Gospels, "Golgotha." (Luke 23:33; Matt. 27:33; Mark 15:22; John 19:17.) Here only is 'the angel strengthening him; here only mention of the bloody sweat. (Luke 22:43, 44.) Here only to Judas, "betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48.) Here only Jesus' words to the dying thief on the cross and his commending his spirit into the hands of his Father. (Luke 23:43, 46.) So here, only, after his resurrection he eats with men "a piece of broiled fish and of an honeycomb." - Luke 24: 42, 43.

JOHN -- THE SON OF GOD

Here Jesus is presented as the Son of God. "I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." (John 1:34.) Compare Isaiah 9:6. "In that day shall Jehovah's Branch [that is, Messiah] be beautiful and glorious." (Isa. 4:2.) Hence no genealogy is required, and he is presented as what he is-before God (intrinsically) the Only Begotten Son. This is the great characteristic of the subject matter of John's Gospel.

Our purpose is to indicate rather than to explore the subject, to show that there is a special purpose rather than to attempt to fathom its depth. For here, like in Ezekiel's vision, we come to waters to swim in, a river that cannot be passed over. (Ezek. 47:5.) John omits the birth of Jesus, as his Gospel begins the record before the worlds were made. Though all things were made by him, and despite his high office, he was made flesh and dwelt among us. Instead of the Lord of the Kingdom, here is the Light of men, instead of a Servant, here we see him who made all things. Instead of a Man subject to the powers of this world, it is the Only Begotten Son, who is

in the bosom of the Father, revealing his image and giving to as many as receive him the power or the right to become the sons of God.

The notice of the Baptist is also characteristic. In the other Gospels the Baptist is seen in connection with the earthly rather than the heavenly aspects of the Lord. Jesus is here the Light, John is a lamp, burning and shining it is true, but destined to be quenched as soon as -the Light of Heaven shall have come. (John 5:33-35, *Diaglott.*) Jesus is the Word, and John here is the voice. (John 1:23.) The Word here is the sense, the voice is the sound. The word, if it has been received abides in the heart, but the voice passes away. Having served to communicate the word, the voice has done its work. Its use is as a witness, and this being accomplished, the word remains, while the witnessing voice is content, and should be content, to be forgotten. In Matthew, John the Baptist preaches a coming Kingdom, in Luke repentance, while here he is a witness to the Light, that all men through him might believe. (John 1:7.) "I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God" and, "Behold the Lamb of God." (John 1:32-36.) John did not know Jesus as the Son of God until he saw the spirit descending and remaining upon Him. (John 1:33, 34.) John knew him not in his official character, as the Messiah.

Here is no temptation in the wilderness, not a word of his apprehension of -the cross, no agony in the Garden, no mention of the Transfiguration. Here it is the Person of the Lord that is presented rather than his offices. Instead of speaking of his grief, He is here occupied in giving comfort to the disciples. (John 14:26.) And if for a moment his soul is troubled because one of his own should betray him (John 13:21), it is as a passing storm, revealing by its contrast the depth and quiet of that peace which still abode in him. Instead of weakness and agony in the Garden, there is power appalling to his adversaries. He "went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he.... As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground." (John 18:4, 5, 6.) Instead of seeking sympathy from his disciples, he is seen possessing and exercising the power to protect them. "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." (John 18:4-8.) Before Pilate he is the calm witness of the truth. "He that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37.) He stands as One from whom no one can take his life, unless he please to lay it down. On the cross his own words, "It is finished" seal with a sufficient witness the full accomplishment of his own perfect work.'

THE COMMON WITNESS

What is the common witness of the four Evangelists? Not his birth, his baptism, fasting, nor transfiguration, but the cross and resurrection, the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Out of the countless acts and words of Jesus, his death and resurrection is chosen to be the great subject for the common testimony. In all, Jesus is betrayed by one, and denied by another of his disciples. In all, on is near him on the cross striving to escape the cross by a carnal appeal to human energy, some of the Gospels expressing more in detail than others. In all, he is judged by Priests, Scribe, and Elders. In all, condemned by Pilate, the great of this world. In all, Barabbas, who was imprisoned for sedition, is preferred before him. In all, he is crucified and numbered with the transgressors. In all, he is stripped and his raiment parted among the soldiers. In all, a grave is prepared for him by others. In all, he rises, and as risen speaks and walks with his disciples. Jesus and the resurrection is the theme of the early teachings of his followers (Acts 4:2.) Paul, in 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, adds his testimony: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

To paraphrase we quote a few lines from Robert Burns:

"We find redemption's story is the theme,
How guiltless blood, for guilty man was shed.
How He, Who bore in Heaven, the second name
Had nowhere on the earth to lay His head."

It is well to remember that all of this, and more, was foretold by the Prophets, and in all these instances God fulfilled his Word with the utmost literality and precision.

So if the prophecies of his shame were literally fulfilled, shall the predictions of his glory be set aside as vague and shadowy? If the cross on which he hung was a reality, shall the throne which he shall inherit be a figure of speech? If the sufferings which he endured were real, shall the glory which is to follow be an empty vision or an idle dream? Surely if any portion of prophecy were to be figuratively expounded, it should be that portion which told of the shame and sorrow and sufferings of the Son of God. If we can believe that God "spared not his own Son but delivered Him up for us all" we can fully believe all the wondrous promises of God in him for us.

- *G. E. Lodge.*

The writer wishes acknowledge the help derived from the writings of Andrew Jukes and the notes in the Companion Bible, in the preparation of this article.

Slaves

They are slaves who fear to speak,
For the fallen and the weak.
They are slaves who will not choose,
Hatred, suffering, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink,
From the truth they needs must think.
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

-- *Anonymous.*

The True Unity of Christ's Church

"And thou shalt take fine meal, and bake it in twelve cakes.... and thou shalt set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the pure table before Jehovah." "And thou shalt place upon the table Presence bread before me continually." - Lev. 24:5, 6; Exod. 25:30.

THE injunction was very precise: "Thou shalt set upon the table the Presence-bread before me alway." In two passages it is described as the "continual bread" (Num. 4:7; 2 Chron. 2:4). When the trumpet gave the signal for the march, the loaves and vessels were left undisturbed in their accustomed places, and over them all three coverings were placed, of blue, of scarlet, and of sealskin. There was therefore no interruption of the continued symbolism *of the Unity of the Chosen People*.

This thought pervades the Scriptures. If we go back to the days of the judges when the land was repeatedly swept by whirlwinds of judgment, when every man did as seemed right in his eyes, and there was no unity of government or authority, we find that the Presence bread was still offered with undeviating regularity. This is established by the incident told of David, when he sought the hospitality of the High Priest at Nob, and did "eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests" (Mark 2:25, 26). Evidently, through those stormy centuries the twelve loaves stood before God, an emblem of the essential unity of Israel. When, afterwards, schism came, and the ten tribes, under the leadership of Jeroboam, broke away from the house of David, still upon the holy table, in Solomon's temple, the twelve loaves were presented, representing an unimpaired oneness.

So when Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord, that had been broken down by Jezebel's orders, he took *twelve* stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name." In the Prophet's thought, as in God's, the sorrowful strife and alienation between the northern and southern groups were as though they were not, in view of the Eternal Covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

A WITNESS TO THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE

When the ten tribes were carried into captivity, and scattered far and wide through Babylonia, Persia, and Asia Minor, still each Sabbath the priests brought the twelve loaves, and placed them on the Table of Presence, as though God knew well where to find his scattered people, and in his judgment they continued one. Then followed the captivity of the seventy years, and afterward the return to the Temple of the priests, the people, and the holy bread. And in our Lord's time, though Israel was rent and scattered, and Simeon and Dan had long since disappeared, still the twelve loaves were presented; and in a remarkable sentence Paul, speaking before Agrippa of the promise made unto the fathers, expressed his belief in the unbroken number of the tribes, when he said: "Unto which promise *our twelve tribes*, earnestly serving God, night and day, hope to attain." In the opening of his epistle, James sends greetings to the twelve tribes of the dispersion. Our Lord assured his Apostles, that in the regeneration they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. On the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem are written the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Dan is indeed missed out of the enumeration of Revelation 7, but the sacred associations of the twelve are still maintained by the dual representation of Joseph. Remember also Ezekiel's unfulfilled prophecy (Eze. 37:15-17, 21, 22).

THE UNITY OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

Throughout this is one of those deep and subtle suggestions of the way in which the objective ideal of the Church, as an undivided and sacred unity, stands before God. . . . Amid all the storms that have swept the world since our Lord constituted his Church, throughout those disastrous periods of division and distraction, there have still been, in the Divine estimation, "one Body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Always the twelve loaves, the wine of his blood, and the frankincense of his merit, for we are made "accepted in the Beloved."

NOT NECESSARILY A VISIBLE UNITY

It need hardly be remarked that this unity was never intended to be organic, because Jesus prayed that his own might be one as the Father and he were one. "Holy Father," he said "keep them in thy Name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are." . . . It is therefore certain that those who suppose that the unity of the Church must be patent to the senses have wholly misconceived the Divine ideal. *The members of the Body of Christ were never intended to be gathered into one organization, to repeat one formulary, or march in military array. Uniformity is far removed from unity; and you may have perfect unity apart from uniformity.* A tree is a unity, though there is a vast diversity between the gnarled branches and the cones which it tosses on the forest floor. A house is a unity, though there is no similarity between the gabled roof and the deep laid foundations. A body is a unity, but the eyelash differs widely from the bones of the skeleton.

Uniformity is impossible where there is life, as the most superficial consideration of the autumnal produce of orchard, field and garden proves. *Wherever, therefore, uniformity has been insisted on, death has ensued.* Just before the Reformation of the sixteenth century, it seemed as though the Inquisition had extinguished every trace of nonconformity with the tenets and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, she might have almost literally adopted the proud boast of Babylon: "As one gathereth eggs that are forsaken, so have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped" (Isa. 10:14, R.V.). But at this period it is incontestable that the religious life of Christendom was dead; except where the limited Piedmontese, in the high Alps, kept a spark burning amid the gray ashes.

EXTERNAL UNIFORMITY UNATTAINABLE

The same mistake is perpetrated by those who demand uniformity of creed as by those who insist on uniformity of ritual. You cannot make all men climb alike, or express identical conceptions in identical words. *A creed is, after all, an intellectual effort, whereas religion is not the creature of mind or reason, but of the heart and spirit. It is a life, . . . the inauguration of that eternal condition of existence which will be still young when all human formularies and conceptions have been put away, as a man puts away the things of childhood.* If your soul is united to the Head of the Church by a living faith, through which the life of Christ enters and pervades it, you must be reckoned a member of the Body, though you may have passed through none of those ecclesiastical systems which at the best are but broken lights, reflecting the sunlight at different angles.

VARIETY WITHIN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

In the Church there is room, therefore, for an infinite variety. Each brings his own contribution; and we must gather *with all saints*, if we would comprehend the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the love of Christ. You cannot see the whole sky, the whole mountain, the whole broad ocean, nor can I; but I will tell you what I have seen, tasted, and handled of the Word of Life, and you shall tell me what you have experienced. Thus our spirits shall have fellowship one with another. There will be a mutual exchange in commodities, as we report our discoveries of the unsearchable riches of Christ. For none has exactly the same viewpoint as another has; and none exactly the same definition or formula. Be yourself! Make your own discoveries of the manifold grace of Christ. If you cannot bring grapes from Eschol, bring pomegranates or figs. Bartimaeus and the man born blind had different stories to tell of the way in which they were healed, but they both saw, and owed the sight which revealed the world to the same voice and touch. Whether you swam to shore or floated on a broken piece of ship furniture, or a spar, makes very little difference, so long as you have been saved from the storm, and stand there with the rest in the circle round the fire lighted because of the cold. *You are probably right in what you affirm, but wrong in what you deny. You are justified in holding firmly to your special fragment of Truth, but be willing to admit that you have not everything, and that others may be as conscientious, as to truth, and as eager for its maintenance and diffusion as yourself.* Seek to gain from others whatever will perfect your religious life, rounding it to a more complete circle, and touching it to finer issues. "I long to see you," said the Apostle, "that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift . . . that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith" (Rom. 1:11, 12, R.V.).

CHRIST THE BOND OF UNITY

Christ is the bond of unity to his Church -- Christ in each individual, and each individual in Christ. Let us never forget that gracious reciprocity. The sponge must be in the ocean and the ocean in the sponge. Each believer is written in the Lamb's Book of Life by the same fingers. Each of us has been grafted into the true Vine, though in different places. Each of us has some function in the mystical Body. We were in him when he died, and rose, and entered the Father's presence. In him we have access into this grace wherein we stand. We are in him, as those twelve loaves stood on that pure table. The gift of Christ, on the other hand, has been made to each one of us, that he might realize himself through all the experiences of his members. As of old it required *four* Gospels to reveal to mankind what Jesus Christ was, so all believers are required to set forth and exemplify to the world all the excelling glories of our Emmanuel. It is for this reason that we are told that the Church is his Body, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

ALL ONE IN HIM

Was it not of this that our Lord spoke, when he said: "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me" (John 17:22, 23) ? In such radiance the Church now stands before God. He sees her essential unity. Its denial does not disintegrate it. Its obscuration does not impair it. The very members of the Church that compose the Unity may be unaware of it, and may denounce each other; but even so, the twelve stones are in the same breastplate and the twelve loaves stand side by side on the same table. The members of a large family of boys and girls may be scattered far and wide over the world, but to the mother, in her daily and nightly prayer, there is but one family, and to her they seem sheltered still under the wings of her brooding love.

When Savonarola was about to be burned, the Papal Legate, dressed in his scarlet robes, stood beside his scaffold, and cried: "I cut thee off from the Church triumphant and the Church militant." But the martyr replied truly: "You may cut me off from the Church militant, but over the Church triumphant thou hast no power." Only two things can cut a man off from the Holy Catholic Church, considered in her loftiest ideals, and these are unforgiveness to the brethren and departure from the living God.

But as surely as the Lord accounts us members of the same mystical Body, he bids us give diligence to *keep* the unity of that Body in the bonds of peace. *We are not required to create the unity, but to manifest it.* We are to recognize as one with us, those who may differ ... in their ritual and creedal expression. . . Without the other neither can be made perfect. Let us, therefore, in this way hasten the time when our Lord shall present the Church to himself, a glorious Church, without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing.

- F. B. Meyer

The Question Box

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." - Isa. 7:14.

Question:

What is the lesson to be drawn from Isaiah 7:14? I suppose you have noticed the controversy in the public press over the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible, particularly in regard to this verse. Perhaps you could relate your answer to this controversy.

Answer:

Yes -- I have noticed (how could any one have failed to notice?) the controversy you mention.

The lesson, as I see it, is in reference to the birth of Jesus -- a lesson concerning the great Messiah; a lesson for all times and for all people.

There is, however, a secondary lesson -- one that applies exclusively to Isaiah and his times. How much Isaiah was able to enter into *the* lesson is problematical. The secondary lesson was urgent and immediately grasped by him.

In the next "Herald" I will try to consider both lessons, taking first the secondary one. *That lesson once understood, it will not be difficult to grasp the mighty sequel -- the fulfillment, to which, under the guidance of the holy spirit, St. Matthew unerringly points.*", Matt. 1:22, 23.

- P. L. Read.

The Glory of God

"The Lord our God hath shewed us His Glory." - Deut. 5:24.

God's great design in all his works is the manifestation of his own glory. But how shall the glory of God be manifested to such fallen creatures as we are? Man's eye is not single, he has ever a side glance towards his own honor, has too high an estimate of his own powers, and so is not qualified to behold the glory of the Lord. It is clear, then, that self must stand out of the way, that there may be room for God to be exalted; and this is the reason why he bringeth his people oftentimes into straits and difficulties, that, being made conscious of their own folly and weakness, they may be fitted to behold the majesty of God when he comes forth to work their deliverance. He whose life is one even and smooth path, will see but little of the glory of the Lord, for he has few occasions of self-emptying, and hence, but little fitness for being filled with the revelation of God. *They* who navigate little streams and shallow creeks, know but little of the God of tempests; but they who "do business in great waters," these see his "wonders in the deep." Among the huge Atlantic-waves of bereavement, poverty, temptation and reproach, we learn the power of Jehovah, because we feel' the littleness of man. Thank God, then, if j you have been led by a rough road: it is this which has given you your experience of God's greatness and lovingkindness. Your troubles have enriched you with a wealth of knowledge to be gained', by no other means: your trials have been the cleft of the rock in which Jehovah *has* set you, as he did his servant Moses, that you might behold his glory as it passed by. Praise Gad that you have not been left to the darkness and ignorance which continued prosperity might have involved, but that in the great fight of affliction, you have been capacitated for the outshinings of his glory in his wonderful dealings with you.

- C. H. Spurgeon

Mary

At Simeon's door she pauses,
Then in trembling haste steps through,
Methinks the very lintel to a higher space withdrew
Lest, at her touch polluted,
It must need'st be cleansed, made white
By purifying water in some Pharisaic rite.

Still hesitant, she stands there,
Framed in the doorway light,
Within her eager grasp is held a box translucent, white;

For One she seeks is, at the board
By Simeon's bounty spread --
She quickly crosses to His side
And tows her sin-crowned head.
She washed His feet with tears
While He on Calvary some day --
Would pour His life-blood forth for her
And wash *her* stain away.

- Grace M. Harris.

Interesting Selections

Touched with the Feeling of Our Infirmities

"For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." - Heb. 4:15.

Dearly beloved of the consecrated household, let us not forget to keep in touch with the groaning creation; to sympathize with its sorrows and its woes; to realize its deep degradation and misery; to remember its frailties, its awful burden of hereditary taints and consequent weaknesses; its present environments of ignorance and superstition; and its long, established errors of public sentiment; remembering that we too are still in the sinful flesh and that the motions of sin' are still often painfully manifest in us, in some, directions, at least, if not in many. And as the cries of the groaning creation come up into the ears of the Lord of hosts (James 5:4) with strong and pathetic pleading to his loving heart, so let them come into our ears and gain our sympathies, and quicken our zeal to cooperate with our Heavenly Father's plan for the establishment of is Kingdom of righteousness and peace.

- Excerpt from *Reprints*, p. R3067.

The King Who Gave

Tae natural man lives to be ministered unto-he lays his imposts upon others. He buys slaves: that they may fan him to seep, bring him the jeweled cup, dance before him, and die in the arena for his sport. Into such a world there came a King, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The rough winds fanned his sleep; he drank of the mountain brook and made not the ater wine for himself; would not use his power to stay his own hunger, but had compassion on the multitude. He called them he had bought with a great price no more servants but friends. He entered the bloody arena alone, and, dying, broke all chains and brought life and immortality to light.

- *Bible Students Monthly*, Eng.

My Prayer

Oh for a message, just a thought from Thee,
Fragrant with love, as Thine alone can be --
Simple, yet precious, that some heart may cheer
And help to realize that Thou art near;
Or cause some soul in loneliness, or grief,
In Thee to find their comfort and relief --
Some thought to ease the burden of the day,
For this, for human hearts, my God, I pray.

Only for a message from Thee now, I pray,
The wayward step that else might slip, to stay --
Some joy to re-awaken in the sad,
As ray of light from Thee, to make them glad;
To pierce the shadows that have closed around
Some hearts, that life renewed in Thee be found:
That faith may be re-strengthened with new power
To trust Thy love unerring hour by hour.

That broken heart's in Thee may find their balm,
And restless souls find Thee their strength and calm;
Some message, O any Father, that shall bring
Complete allegiance to Thy Christ, our King,
And give assurance of Thy ceaseless care,
Imparting strength to be, to do, to dare:
Some thought that "first things first" shall cause to be,
A message speaking to the heart, *from Thee*.

- E. Bentall.