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Easter Meditations

"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." - Matthew 28:6

WITH the death of our Lord the hopes of his disciples perished. Filled with sorrow they failed to recall his words foretelling his resurrection. They were not comforted: they saw only the cross and their dead Lord! The future seemed dark, and their hopes now were at their lowest ebb. Sorrowfully, they went away. But, behold! At the appointed time, on the third day, a little group of women approached the tomb where their beloved Lord had been laid. "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." Some of us can imagine their thoughts. To them it was but a little thing that they should visit his resting place, and perhaps recall precious memories. "And, behold, there was a great earthquake." "The keepers did shake and became as dead men." The angel of the Lord appeared, and the stone was rolled away! "Fear not ye:... He is not here: for he is risen, as he said." Surely his words came to the minds of those dear witnesses: "I am the resurrection and the life." The love, the power, the grace, and the purpose of the Eternal God is revealed in this -- the resurrection of Jesus Christ -- the greatest thing, the most potential act of all time. "He is not here: for he is risen"! So speaks the angel to the women. Words fail to describe their joy as they ran to tell the glad news "to the disciples."

"Christ is risen." That is their message. "He lives." And because he lives, we too shall live. Soon those disciples, with hearts charged now with fears and doubts, were to know the power of the risen Christ, and, in his name and strength, were to be used to the glory of the Father and Son, as, with the spirit of Pentecost, they were to go forth with the message of saving grace -- all made possible through and by a crucified and risen Savior.

How grand the message that comes to our ears: "He was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification"! Shortly after his resurrection, he manifested himself to his disciples. By this, they were reassured, and just before he left them for the last time, he gave to them his final instructions, as he enlarged their understanding about the things relative to himself (Luke 24:44-49). Amongst his last words, the "Go quickly and tell," and, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," are especially important to the believer.

As we read the account of his death and resurrection, our thought is one of an increasing sense of reverence and appreciation as the unfolding of that supreme and unparalleled sacrifice comes to mind. As yet, we see not the grandeur or the magnitude of the love and grace, the wisdom and mercy, involved therein.

We are prone to accept the gifts -- the daily blessings -- and all which through faith (itself a gift) has been brought within our reach, unmindful of the cost whereby such things have been made possible. The words of a grand old hymn come to mind:

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
I count my sufferings as but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

"See from His head--His hands--His feet
Sorrow and Love flow mingled down,
Did e'er such Love and Sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

As we say with Paul, "For me to live is-Christ," the spirit of the following verse should be ours:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

To some have been given the "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" -- the highest possible reward, promised to those who are to be "joint-heirs with Christ" (2 Pet. 1:2-4, Rom. 8:16-18), who is held up before us as a means to a larger, a fuller, and a more sanctified life. Such a life is the life which must be our goal: to follow the Master, as Peter says: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." Only thus can we feel that our sanctification is progressive and producing results.

Whatever we may think of sanctification, the Apostles were united in their exhortations to that end. Let us not be deceived by the Adversary as to the limit of attainment -- either to hope for perfection of the flesh, or to despair of full submission of the will. Let us be honest with ourselves, and live in that eighth chapter of Romans, not forgetting Jesus' words, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

Only as we look to Christ as our example -- in his life, and in his death -- can we know the depth and potency of Paul's words, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God." Let us not be afraid of heeding the words, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." How shall we do this? The answer is found in Hebrews 12:1-3 and onward: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." "Consider him."

Hence, Easter holds for us much that can be to our gain. The risen Christ assures all who accept him as their Savior, of everlasting life. He declares, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Easter is the positive pledge that the risen and glorified Christ "shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." All who fall asleep in him shall arise endowed with bodies perfect and glorious to be forever with their exalted Redeemer and King. There we shall have left behind the flesh and all that is as yet a means of testing. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Just before his death, Jesus said to his disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you." He also said, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." In other words, at his second coming, the faithful should be with him in his glory. Everywhere we see the evidences of the near approach of his Kingdom, according to the words of Jesus, the Prophets, and his Apostles. And so, we are "not in darkness" regarding these things. We see the destruction of the present order in process, and the setting up of "the Kingdom" (Dan. 2:44). This is the world's only hope, although it be not, as yet, seen To the believer, however, this is no fanciful hope, but is based on the sure word of him who has said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

To those who are to share with Christ in the better resurrection, the time is short. An Easter Day is fast approaching, when the last saint shall be changed and, with the risen Christ, share with him in the glory which is to follow. Then "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isa. 35:10). Great and glorious things are promised to a world, which, as yet, has but little appreciation or regard for the Christ of the Cross, and the Christ of the open tomb. To us, the words of Jesus are spoken, "Lift up your heads." Today "gross darkness covers the earth" But soon the "Sun of Righteousness" is to "arise with healing in his wings the deaf are to hear, and the blind are to see. The spirit of the Lord is to be "poured out upon all flesh"; "when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness"; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." - Malachi 4:2; Isaiah 35:5; Joel 2:28; Isaiah 26:9, 40:4, 5.

What a prospect! We cannot with our finite minds envision a world in which there is no sin, no pain, no sorrow, no tears, no partings, no misunderstandings, no envy or strife, and no death. But we can, through the eye of faith, see a world in which the promises of a promise-keeping God have been fully accomplished. Yes, the earth shall yet resound with the praise of its people, as soon as the glory and beauty of Easter in its full grandeur is revealed in the presence of the Christ. "The people shall praise thee for ever and ever" (Ps. 45:17). Then that of which we read in Revelation 21:1-7 shall have come to pass, and Christ shall be all in all: "King of kings and Lord of lords." Then it shall be that he, "For whom, and by whom, are all things" "shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

We cannot close our thoughts on our Lord, his life, his death, and his resurrection, without some reference to those who, by grace, are privileged to "follow in his steps," and whose hopes are fixed upon the risen Christ. With Paul we too can say that, as yet, we have "not attained." nor are we "perfect." But with him we too can say that "this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to the things which are before," we "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:10-14). No two paths are alike. The way is not always clear. But, beloved, the mighty promise, "I will be with thee," is all-sufficient. It has brought comfort, renewed hope, and courage to a great number. Many of these are now at rest, but their faith, their lives, and their vision may be -- nay, it must be -- ours too. To the world at large the outlook is far from satisfying. But to the believer it is fraught with the joys and peace which were bought at such a tremendous price on Calvary's hill. Truly, "the world is waiting for the sunrise."

A final word -- let Peter speak it: "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and

blameless." Paul's words come to mind too: "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. . . . Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

If that first Easter means anything to us-to you and to me-it means that the power of his resurrection is a living power, a power which by the grace of God shall fit us for "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." - 1 Peter 1:2-9.

Our daily prayer is still "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven" We thank our God that, in love, his Son "was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." Let us pray that in reverence and contrition of heart we may, through his sufferings, see our own part in causing them, and as we do so, resolve to follow him "all the way." Only thus can we know that he abides in us, and we in him. With such an assurance, we can look beyond the short span which yet remains, and joyfully envision the time when, with those who have gone before, and those who wait with patient hope the homeward call, we shall share in singing the glorious chorus which will resound in heaven and in earth, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:13). Surely, it shall be said then that "death is swallowed up in victory." Yes, Calvary's work at last shall have its full reward. In that "day" He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." - Isaiah 25:1-9.

- *W. Wainwright*

Does the New Creature Die?

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." - 2 Cor. 5:17.

FROM TIME immemorial there has been in the world a fallacy that in its potency, and in its effect upon religious thinking, has transcended nearly every other fallacy. It is the theory that wrapped up in man somewhere, is an ethereal principle or intangible entity designated immortality, or an undying soul. This teaching signifies that when death enters the earthly tenement of men, ending the life process, something invested with consciousness continues to exist. Strange though it may seem, a philosophical theory of this kind, utterly specious and unfounded though it is, has proved attractive to millions of people.

A question of the ages has been, What is the soul? Many persons have attempted to answer. Some years ago the author of the so-called "New Theology" in London, England, offered the following exegesis: "Your soul is your own individualized consciousness of life: But it will never really be yours till you find that it embraces and includes all life. You are here to lift your consciousness of being into that eternal glorious blessedness which is the manifest unity of the love of God."

As far as we can go back in history we find the record of some who accepted the Immortal Soul theory. Before the time of Christ, the philosopher Socrates taught this, doctrine in the city of Athens, and his disciple, Plato, gave it to the world in his writings. Zoroaster, Aristotle, Stahl, Descartes, John Bunyan; Spurgeon Talmage, and a host of other philosophers, preachers and writers, dilated on this error which is a fundamental one and of such a character that any deductions based upon it cannot be anything but false. *

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

A similar question that has arisen in the minds of many Bible Students is, Does the new creature" die? Some have expressed' the question as follows: Granted that Jesus became a new creature at the time of his baptism in Jordan, did he die as a new creature at Calvary? Or did the man Jesus die on the cross, and the new creature still live? Or exactly just what did die in the case of our Lord?

The person asking such a question evidently does not understand what the new creature is. He thinks of the new creature as the exponents of the Platonic philosophy think about the soul as a sort of invisible, ethereal entity, in man. The fact is that lie confuses it with the new mind. Now the Bible nowhere says that consecration and spirit-begettal bring the *entrance* of a new creature into a man.. The Word says that the man *becomes* a new creature, which is a very different thing. If John Smith *becomes a* doctor, what part of hire is a doctor? Why, the whole man, of course. Both mind and body are employed in the work of healing people.. We cannot separate the man into two parts and say that one part. (the mind) is a doctor; and the other (the body) is not. Or if Tom X was an utterly worthless character in the town of Y, and at length went away, remaining about twenty-five years, it would surely be a good thing for the town. But a voice is heard saying that Tom X is coming back, that he has become the mayor of a town in the West, and is a new man. Every one understands what is meant. The people realize that both in mind and body Tom X is a good citizen.

God's Word says that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature. It does not say that he has a new creature within. The thing that has entered into him is a new mind, which is a new way of thinking, due to the functioning of truth, or the sum total of those mental impulses brought into existence by divine truth. It means that an old machine, the human brain, has been given over to

new work, just as a printing press may be turned from the printing of dime novels and devoted to the work of publishing Bibles. But the new creature and the new mind are not synonymous terms, for one (the mind) is the controlling power, and the other (the new creature) embraces both the mind and the organism which it controls.

The Greek word for creature is *Ktisis*. The Apostle Paul used it in Romans 8, where in the King James Version it is translated both creature and creation. "For the earnest expectation of the creature (*Ktisis*) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature (*Ktisis*) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature (*Ktisis*) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation (*Ktisis*) groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

So then we might quote 2 Cor. 5:17, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation"; that is, he is something created by the truth, and, as we have pointed out, the whole man, mind and body, is embraced in this term. Formerly this person was living for the things of this old world, and was an old creature; now he is living for *new things*, the things of God, and is therefore a new creature.

But some of the friends may think that the new creature is the Christian's prospect of a future life, for did not the Apostle say, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that (lay)"? But the new creature is not the prospect of a future life, and there is absolutely nothing in the Bible to warrant us in so believing. Others again may think that it is the life from God which we now enjoy, but this view is not Scripturally correct either.

Let us examine some of the sayings of our Lord. Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." (John 6:47.) But when? In the 54th verse of the same chapter (John 6:54) he said, "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. But if he already possessed eternal life, why should he need to be raised up at the last day? Manifestly Jesus meant *that such life, would be reckoned* to the one who complied with the expressed terms, that eternal life would be put down to his credit in the Book of Life; for if that were not the case, and if one actually possessed the life eternal now, then when the Christian dies, death would be only a semblance and not a reality, and those who have accepted the Platonic philosophy would be right after all.

In 1 Peter 1:3, we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us unto a lively hope [or a hope of life]." Now, if we were already alive, enjoying even a spark of immortality, why should we be said to possess *a hope* of life? -Again we read, "Which *hope* we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Furthermore, we are said to be "saved ~by hope." In Romans 4:11, we read, "Reckon ye yourselves also to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

So then the Christian indeed enjoys a prospect of future life, and a glorious hope of such life, but neither the prospect nor the hope is the new creature. The prospect is preserved in the mind of God, or in the book of divine remembrance, and is not blotted out of that book or destroyed if the Christian remains faithful unto death.

The Scriptural teaching is that when the Christian dies he is *all dead*, and remains so until the First Resurrection. There is no part of him alive whatever, whether we call it a new creature or by

some other name. When he comes to life in the spirit world he has a spirit body. At the present time he enjoys the hope of receiving such a body and the high degree of life that belongs to it.

In the case of Jesus, the new creature was the man Christ Jesus doing the Father's work, calling his disciples and attending to his ministry. To some, this may seem a small matter to dilate upon, but we deem it important because it strikes down to the very root of the Biblical philosophy of the Ransom. "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23.) "Under the immortal soul theory the punishment for sin would necessarily be some form of suffering after the, death of the body. But the Scriptures clearly teach that release from the death state must come from some outside power competent to regenerate (give new life to) the being, or soul. "Jesus . . . by the grace of God tasted [experienced, tried, made proof of -- *Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon*] death for every man." (Hebrews 2:9.) Our Lord having thus removed the obstacle, the judicial disability imposed on the race by the death sentence on Father Adam, and having received power (John 17:2; 5:21-27) to again give life to "whomsoever he will," the specter of eternal torment is forever banished, and the "regeneration" and "restoration of *all* things spoken by the holy Prophets of God" (Matt. 19:28; Acts, 3:21-23) is made operative by the great Redeemer and. Life-giver, to all the willing and obedient of mankind.

-- *Walter Sargeant.*,

The Song of the Lord

"When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also." - 2 Chronicles 29:27.

SONG expresses the characteristics of a person and of a people. In a majority of cases when you hear a person continually singing, if you will -note the tone of the singing, of the subject matter of the singing, you will get an index to the singer's heart. Of some, you have heard the statement made that they "are saddest when they sing." This is true of those whose singing is invariably those songs whose notes or words are those of pathos and sadness. Song expresses the historical background of a person or of a people. How, for instance, could the history of the colored people have been more indelibly written than it is in their plaintive folk songs and touching melodies. And how could the past 2,000 years of Jewish history have been more clearly portrayed to one than to have listened to their wailing at their famous wall in the city of Jerusalem. Also the pent up emotions of many centuries of oppression were given vent in the "Marseillaise," the famous song of the French Revolution.

THE SONG OF MOSES

Also, we hear singing from the lips of the children of Israel. For centuries they had toiled and suffered under the lash of -the oppressor. Long since all song must have died upon their lips. Generation after generation had been born, had lived, and had died under the cruel heel of the tyrant, until the overwhelming majority of those Israelites had probably ceased to think of their lot as being abnormal. Finally God, -through Moses, delivered them out of the hands of their oppressors. And then the song began again.

Moses led the children of Israel in what is known as the Song of Moses. What a jubilee of singing that must have been. Afterward Miriam, the sister of Moses, took up the refrain, leading the women of Israel in that great song of liberty. Thus we see how quickly, in a matter of but a few hours, song that had lain dead for so many centuries, again sprang to the lips of God's liberated

people. The absence of joy in the heart is expressed by the absence of song. Song expresses the feeling of the heart, and there can be no song of joy, no song of the Lord in the hearts of spiritual Israel if we feel that we are not pleasing to our heavenly Father, if we feel that we are not living in harmony with his will and purpose for us; for only in the sunshine of his love and favor is there joy forevermore in the heart of his child, and a song upon his lips. If we are living up to our privileges in Christ Jesus, we will be constantly rejoicing, and the song of the Lord will well up from our hearts and will constantly be upon our lips.

It is remarkable how quickly song can be restored to the lips of a people from which singing has long since vanished, even as a harp long silent can quickly burst into entrancing melody. Thus can song quickly return to the lips of an emancipated life or people. It is recorded that King Ahaz had fostered idolatry in its most vicious form. He caused to be removed from the temple its sacred vessels and altars, prostituting them to profane purposes, even to the giving of some of the temple furnishings to the heathen king of Assyria. (2 Kings 16:10.) Then Ahaz drove the priests and singers out of the temple, closing its doors. He then worshiped and offered sacrifices to idols. Finally he died and was buried in unhallowed and unconsecrated ground.

Upon the accession of his son Hezekiah to the throne, the scene changes, for he was as good as his father was evil. He loved the Lord, and he at once proceeded to restore to the temple those things of which it had been despoiled by his father. He cleansed the temple, after which it was opened amidst brilliant, ritual and ceremonials and the offering of sacrifices upon the altar, the singers and the musicians standing by with the instruments of David. "And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also."

CLEANSING THE TEMPLE

Hezekiah's first act upon ascending the throne was to start again the worship of God. With that object in view he summoned the priests and Levites together, instructing them to sanctify themselves, to set themselves-apart for the service to which they had been chosen, for they had been chosen to stand before the Lord, and to minister to the people. After this he tells them to cleanse the temple, to carry the filthiness out of the Holy Place. After the temple was cleansed and the vessels restored that King Ahaz had taken away, then Hezekiah commanded that the sin offerings and the burnt offerings be laid upon the altar, and, in the words of our text, "When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also." And it is recorded that they bowed their heads and worshiped and sang praises with gladness.

In his epistles to the Corinthians Paul in several places states that God's people are "the temple of the living God . . . I will dwell in them." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit?" (2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Cor. 6:19.) As we look back over recent years, we can see how constant have -been the efforts of the great, Adversary to remove from these temples-the minds and hearts of God's people-the vessels of truth, the vessels of Christian tolerance, the vessels of Christian liberty, the vessels of loyalty alone to Jesus, the Head of the Church. In- recent years the song of the Lord has died out among many of the Lord's people. In the case of solve it has been by reason of their tendency to look to some earthly. leader or leaders, to sing the song and praises of these leaders. And as this song grew stronger and stronger, the song of the Lord grew weaker and weaker until it completely died out. Others became disillusioned in their leaders, finding them to be possessed of feet of clay, to be weak and fallible men like unto themselves; but instead of looking from them unto the Lord, they cast loose their moorings and drifted further from the Lord and from the faith delivered once for all unto the saints.

Others looked to certain leaders for their interpretation of Scripture, failing to test such interpretations by a comparison of Scripture with Scripture. Thus the dust and dirt and cobwebs of man-made and human interpretations of Scripture have accumulated, and in place of the harmony and beauty of the song of the Lord, the song in such instances resembles more the shoutings of confusion, of turmoil and of battle; resembles more the discord of religious jazz than the melody and harmony of the song of the Lord.

The contempt in which King Ahaz held the song of the Lord is shown not alone in driving the priests out of the temple but in his driving the singers out of the temple also. All this and his closing the doors of the house of God robbed Israel of her song. And if the song of the Lord shall ever go out of the life of spiritual Israel, it will be because of our closing the door of the temple of our hearts to God's holy spirit.

NEGLECTING THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

Of course we would not close this door with a bang; we would not be that rude to the Lord. It would be a gradual closing of the door by a growing neglect of the study of God's Word. Earnest prayer to the Lord might become too much of a task. The worship of the Lord might lose its attraction. Then would the door to the temple of our heart be closed, and the song of the Lord would cease. How then could one get the song back that he knew when first he loved the Lord? Our text provides the answer: "And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also." What a beautiful picture is the burnt offering of our consecration and of the acceptance by our heavenly Father of that consecration.

THE ASCENDING OFFERING

In the Hebrew, reference is made to the burnt offering as "that which ascends," or the "ascending offering." Thus is it with our consecration. It is not a consecration to this condition or to that condition, to this prize or to that prize, but it is to our heavenly Father, to the One on high, an ascending consecration to God alone. Also it is a full, entire, and complete consecration, nothing held back; not a part or partial burnt offering, but a whole burnt offering. In the trespass offering, meat offering, and other offerings, either the whole or a part of the offering became the portion of the officiating priest, and in some cases a portion was returned to the giver. But not so in the case of the whole burnt offering, picturing our consecration, which is full and complete, with

"Not my own! my time, my talent,
Freely all to Christ I bring,
To be used in joyful service
For the glory of my King."

The two important features in connection with the burnt offering are that it was flayed (skinned and stripped), and that it was entirely consumed. Not until that flaying was finished was the burnt offering laid upon the altar. For our consecration to be acceptable in the sight of God, we must be stripped of all fleshly coverings. In Hebrews 4:13 we read: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

THE WORK OF THE PRIESTS

The work of preparing the burnt offerings was a part of the duties of the priests. But in this case there were not sufficient priests to do this work. Many had failed to make themselves ready. What a sad state of affairs is here presented. Thus others had to step into the breach. Thus we read:

"But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all thee burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests." - 2 Chron. 29:34.

Is this not a lesson for us today? Are we maintaining our consecration? Have we completely given up self and self-will? Do our daily lives show forth the fact that we have been with Jesus? Are we continuing to cast off and to renounce all coverings of human creeds, of sectarianism, of self-righteousness? Have we been flayed, skinned and divested of all these, and in their place have we been invested with a covering robe of Christ's righteousness? Do we stand in that robe spotless and acceptable in the sight of our heavenly Father? If not, then our Father will not be able to use us to his eternal glory. What a blessing we will then be missing in the Age to come and also in this Age, in that the privilege of assisting others of the household of faith will not be ours. Such, however, would not prevent the continuing of that part of the work that would have been allotted to us individually, but it would deprive us of the blessings attached to the doing of it, and it would be given to some one else. Let us be awake lest another shall take our crown. This serious question of the fulfillment of consecration was faced even by our Lord in the darkness of Gethsemane and in the shadow of the cross. Had he in any degree fallen short of the goal for which he had consecrated himself? Upon that answer hung for you and for me the issue of life and death, -the issue of whether with Adam. we should sink into eternal death, or whether with Jesus we should have a resurrection from the dead,

KNOCKING AT THE DOOR OF OUR HEARTS

If the song of the Lord has in any measure gone from our lips, gone out of our lives, are we willing to again open the temple to the indwelling of his holy spirit? In such instance can we not hear a gentle knock at the door of our hearts; can we not hear the gentle tones of entreaty, as the words fall upon our ears:

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." - Rev. 3:20.

May self and self-will never again enter our lives, for with its entrance the song-of the Lord and the joy of the Lord will take their departure, and some day we will awaken to find ourselves saying in the words of Cowper:

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I found the Lord?
Where is that soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his Word?"

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still;
How they have left an aching void
This world can never fill."

We read in 2 Chronicles 29:19 that they restored the holy vessels that had been taken away in the reign of King Ahaz. The question comes to those in spiritual Israel who may have lost the song of the Lord: Are there things that must be restored to my life as a new creature? Is it the study of God's Word? Have I neglected this? We are walking through a valley which is overcast with the shadow of death. If we would avoid the pitfalls along this shadowed way, then we must be in constant study of the Word of the Lord, we must feed from that table that God hath "prepared for us in the presence of our enemies"; for even as the natural man cannot be joyful if he is starving for food, neither can a song be upon the lips of the spiritual man if he is cut off from access to spiritual food. Is it prayer that must be restored? Have we neglected this most important and most powerful function granted to the child of God? If so, then it is most essential that this shall be restored if the song of the Lord is to be restored to one's heart and life. Is it love and fellowship that must be restored? Have we become arrogant, heady, intolerant in our attitude toward others of the household of faith?, Has sectarianism again taken control of our minds and hearts? Have we become like the Apostle John was in his early experience, when he endeavored to prevent others from serving the Lord because they, as he said, "Follow not with us." We remember how Jesus rebuked him. If we are under the control of such a spirit, the Lord cannot take pleasure in us; nor can his song be upon our lips or within our hearts. "When the burnt offering, began, the song of the Lord began also." As our mind becomes illuminated with the knowledge of our heavenly Father's love toward us, in the giving of his Son Jesus to be a ransom for Adam and Adam's race, a melody begins to form within our hearts. Then when the further illumination comes to our minds regarding an additional manifestation of his love toward his Church in the offering to them of a share in the glorious work of the incoming Age, the melody begins its ascension to our lips, having awaited but the one more manifestation of our heavenly Father's eternal love for it to burst forth.

BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF CONSECRATION

In the burnt offering was the final beautiful picture given of our consecration, and of God's acceptance of that consecration, and of our induction into that coming great work. Upon our realization of the glorious fact that our consecration had been approved and accepted by our Heavenly Father, what a joy was ours, and then from our heart and from our lips burst forth the song of the Lord.

Where unity of the spirit is absent, there can be no genuine song of the Lord. Paul has enumerated the cords of unity drawing God's people together:

"Giving diligence to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." - Eph. 4:3-6.

We will not seek at this time to enter into the very comprehensive implications of this statement of Paul. Suffice it to say, they are all-embracing. One body-all of us members of the Body of Christ and members one of another, No one member endeavoring to lord it over a fellow member, all of us united to our one and only Head, Jesus, in the bonds of love, all needing one another, no dictation except from Jesus, the Head, but true cooperation among all the members. One spirit, the spirit of love and liberty. In the Acts we read that God hath made of one blood all people who dwell upon the earth. But he hath made of one spirit those who compose the Body of Christ, his true followers; for in Romans we read that he who hath-not the spirit of Christ is none of his. For the true followers there is the one hope -- the hope, of the high calling, and all that such blessed hope implies, all that clusters around that hope; one faith -- yes, that faith which --

once for all was delivered to the saints, one baptism -- not an immersion into some human organization, not an immersion for this purpose or for that purpose, but an immersion into the suffering and death of Christ; for he that hath been immersed into Christ bath put, on Christ; one God -- not a triune god, three gods in one (not a trinity or three separate gods, but one God, as: declared throughout, the Scriptures) and Father of all, the one original Life-givers the Author of life on any and on every plane. Jesus said that he "beheld Satan like lightning fall from heaven."

Heaven lost one Lucifer, that "star of the morning," but there are to be exalted from among men 144,000 to be stars *in* the heavens from which he fell.

STARS OF THE MORNING

They will also be stars of the morning, for their exaltation is in the morning of the Millennial Age, and of them it hath been written:

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." - Dan. 12:3.

In the place of that celestial voice that has been missing from the heavenly choir for lo, these many millenniums, there will be 144,000 to blend their voices together in song--yes, yes, in a song that shall cause the heavenly host to again shout for joy. Has this earth anything of sufficient value to lure us away from being present when that great crescendo of song shall burst upon this universe? All that this great jubilee of celestial singing is waiting for, is the completion of the antitypical burnt offering, the completion in death of the consecration of the last member of the glorious Church of the Gospel Age. And so shall we not endeavor to live a little more closely to our heavenly Father, a little more earnestly study his Word, to be a little more constant in prayer, a little more fervent in our love and consideration of the brethren, to a little more faithfully walk in the footsteps of our blessed Master; a little more patiently run the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. And may we be found singing, the "song of the Lord" until our consecrated course is finished, and we hear that "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." This is a song of such entrancing melody that it brings to our hearts peace -- yes, that peace that passeth understanding; that it brings to our hearts joy -- yes, that joy unspeakable and full of glory; that it fills our hearts with love -- yes, that

"Love that wilt not let me go.
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give *Thee back the life I owe,*
That in Thine ocean *depths its flow*
May richer, fuller be."

- H. V. Warren.

Crime Televised

The *Christian Century*, in a recent issue, gave a report on a survey made *in* Chicago, covering the types of programs presented on the four Chicago TV stations. We reprint a part of the report:

We hope it spreads across the nation. It is a revolt against murder. Parents have taken up arms against the indoctrination of their children in murder and violence by television. So, working in relays, thirty sets of parents monitored *the* children's daytime programs on the four Chicago TV stations. Day by day adults watched with growing horror what appeared on the screen

"When the week was over, their notebooks showed that no less than 9,3 murders had been fed to the children during the last week of 1952. *During* the first four days, including the day dedicated to the Christ-child, 77 murders were pictured."

To parents who have TV sets, we would like to remind them of the Chinese proverb, "One picture is worth ten thousand words." Crime, drinking, smoking, dancing, as portrayed on television seven days of the week, can do far more injury to plastic minds of children than can possibly be counteracted by the *little time* spent in Sunday School and in Church.

We recently were in a home where the young parents would not permit the TV set to be turned *on* because *they* did not want their children to see such pictures. TV is here; and it is *here* to stay. It is up to the parents to protect their children from having their fertile minds poisoned with pictures and language which form brain cells of evil.

- *News and Prophecy Digest*.

From *The Restitution Herald*, May 26, 1953.

"Shew Us the Father, and It Sufficeth Us"

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? - John 14:9.

THE REQUEST, "Shew us the Father and it sufficeth *us*," was made by Philip, of whom little had been heard since the day he was called; and it may be wondered why he should have made this all-important request rather than a disciple more in the forefront. Does it mean that he was slower than the others to grasp the truth about Jesus? Hardly so, for the request was from a thoughtful mind which may have felt that our Lord's constant references to his Father required more explanation. Or it could mean that because of the turn of events and the trial of heart and mind that all were undergoing, the more prominent disciples had become silent, and that Philip and Thomas were making requests that were in each mind. And further, did our Lord *in* any sense reprove Philip when he answered, "Have I been so long time with you, Philip, and yet thou hast not known me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Or was Jesus pleased with the request, knowing in himself that if the disciples were granted their request, they would know the full truth of his Messiahship, which was *the* question at the first Advent.

Related requests had been made by others and had been granted according to the sincerity of the one making the request, but our Lord was most anxious that his close disciples should know beyond doubt, for he knew that in a few hours he himself would die as the Lamb of God and in the dismay at his death no such requests would arise. If there was no response to Philip's request, then the purpose of the first Advent itself becomes a question of paramount importance.

It may, however, be profitable to come to the point by *reference* first to early days, and then advance step by step. John 1:43-45 in few words describes the call of Philip; and the effect on him was immediate, for he "findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, *We* have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth." When Nathanael accepted this enlightenment (John 1:49), he said to Jesus, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." The day previous, Andrew had found his own brother, Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah." (Both Andrew and Philip said they had "found" him. True, but it were truer to have said He had found them. But that is another point, another relationship.)

In this chapter Jesus is declared to be the Word, the Light, the only begotten Son of God, the Messiah, the Lamb of God, the King of Israel, and the Son of Man; and *these* seven titles of our Lord, together with constant reference to the Father, comprise much of John's Gospel. No wonder. Philip said, "Shew us the Father."

It seems from the reading of John 1 that the *disciples* early believed Jesus to be Messiah, *but did* they then believe so firmly that nothing would ever shake their belief? Was their faith so strong that when at last Jesus became the Lamb of God in fulness of sacrifice, they would not waver? The possibility of our Lord's sacrificial death would not have entered their minds at that moment. A year or two later Jesus questioned them, "Whom *say* ye that I am?" and Peter in a flash of revelation said, "Thou art the Christ." A bold confession! but had they *not* believed from the day they were called? Yes, they believed, but not then so intensely that nothing would cause them to waver. Jesus always knew the strength of their faith, from day to day and from year to year, and that is why Philip's last request would be answered. If Philip' and the others could at that late hour learn more of the relationship of Jesus to his Father, it would help them to recover after the coming storm.

It has often been noted that Matthew traces our Lord from Abraham; Luke shows our Lord's connection with Adam; and Mark portrays him as a slave-and slaves have no genealogy. But John has other facets of his Master's rank to reveal and goes further back than his fellow writers of the Gospel, showing Jesus' pre-human association with his Father. When reading this Gospel, one feels there is another request, one more revelation to be made-a revelation that would answer all Messianic problems -- "Shew us the Father."

THE FATHER GRADUALLY REVEALED

The disciples, constantly with their Lord throughout his ministry, saw his miracles, heard *his* teaching and wisdom. By these he built up their faith in himself as the "Sent of -God." At last the culminating miracle-the raising of Lazarus from the dead-was achieved. This proved beyond question who he was; yet when the rulers in Israel heard it they took counsel to put him to death. Jesus himself knew the hour was fast approaching.

As they all were nearing Jerusalem for the final trial of faith, Jesus took them aside privately (Luke 18:31-34) and prophesied -his own death, and they did not seem to comprehend. A great trial of faith was looming up and they knew it not. In fact as they drew near the, city of the great king, they thought that the Kingdom should immediately appear, and were given a parable to correct their thought. (Luke 19:11-27.) They saw their King's triumphant approach to. his own city, and for, a moment all is bright-but only for a moment. It was during that eventful week that they were given the prophetic words in answer to their *three* questions of Matthew 24:3 They did not realize they were asking questions, the answers to which were for other disciples of a later period, and what they understood of their Lord's reply *we* cannot know, but certainly they were perplexed and their faith was on trial.

As true Israelites they came to their Passover remembrance; but it was no ordinary Passover. Their only hope of understanding the fast-moving events of that week depended upon their remaining with their Lord, who was the center of it all. While he was there, they could be sure that as before he would answer their problems and unravel the tangle, proving once again that he was Messiah. But he had told them he was going away, and now the time was very near. What would become of their faith when he had gone to Calvary, and later to his Father? These, their problems, were surely in our Lord's mind when they assembled for *that* Passover. "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) Though he knew he must shortly suffer unto death, he wished to confirm their faith, so that when the storm was over, they would by his further grace in the resurrection and the gift of the holy spirit at Pentecost, fully revive and be his witnesses during his absence.

The account of the last Passover most suited to lead up to Philip's request is of course John's, because with that account are the sublime chapters 13-17. The very hearing of such wonderful words would prompt every other disciple to echo with Philip, "Shew us the Father."

It helps in the consideration of these five chapters to have them in the order suggested by Dr. Moffatt's translation. Briefly it is that chapters 15 and 16 should be restored to what he considers their original position in the middle of verse 31 of chapter 13 (John 13:31). This makes the account read that immediately after Judas went out, Jesus began with, "I am the true vine" (John 15:1), and continued to the end of chapter 16, and then followed with the words, "Now is the Son of Man glorified" (John 13:31); and continued on to the appropriate closing words of John 14:31, "Arise, let us go hence" -- which they did after the closing prayer of chapter 17. This arrangement

puts the disciples' questions and our Lord's remarks in better order, and no despite is done to the text.

LOVE ENDURING

The story commences at John 13:1 and introduces the Passover and the hour. "He loved them unto the end." He had always loved them and that love would not cool- even during the coming crisis. Can we gather all that is meant in that love? Has the word "end any thought of time in it? Is it duration or intensity that is meant? And why did his love go out to them at that particular time? One answer given by Jesus at that very time (Luke 22:28) is: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations." Though others had gone back and walked no more with him, these few (and an unknown number outside his immediate circle) had remained loyal, and he knew that a great trial of their faith and loyalty was fast approaching. Soon they would be as sheep without a shepherd,- and his love went out to them knowing the depth of, their trial. He loved them unto the end-had he not done so they would have been utterly broken. For three and a half years he had held them together in unity with himself -- he would hold them and love them till the end, and though they then knew it not, the end itself would reveal his love as never before and would prove his love to be unending.

Then in the narrative follows the feet-washing. (Verses 3-15.) One might ask why at this juncture? -- with so much to be said and done-so many questions in their minds? With their Master's decease so close at hand, was the lesson of the feet-washing opportune? Yes, in spite of all, it was opportune. This was his last lesson by example, and with it he introduces his last discourse to them and to the later disciples. This is part of his love unto the end. He makes them clean every, whit; he puts them- on a common level-bound to each other in service, and he the servant of all.

"LEARN OF ME"

When accepting the promises, the love, and the glories of the following chapters, the Christian must remember they were introduced with a lesson on humility and service. Peter failing to see the lesson, possibly thought it inappropriate that Messiah should stoop to wash the feet of his followers. Should a king act as a slave? How could they tell others he was Messiah if he did so unkingly an act? Now, we know Christ's service for them was another proof that he was servant of all and also Messiah; for in the purpose of God the greatest king is the greatest servant. On that rests his Messiahship and our redemption.

Then chapter 13 follows with our Lord's remarks about betrayal, and this also would disturb the minds of those who believed in his Messiahship. Then ensues the long discourse with its constant references to his departure to his Father. He was about to depart from them and ascend to where he was before he would no longer be at hand to answer questions no longer their visible guide and companion. The long exhortation closes with the prayer of John 17, and it reveals how pleased he was with them (though he knew they would be scattered) and how much he and his Father loved them. He truly loved them unto the end. Nothing cooled his love for them -- not their seeming doubts, nor his own great trial.

What are the questions in their minds? There are several, and all are related to his Messianic claim, such as "Whither goest thou?" "What is this that he saith, a little while?" "How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world?" Because of his love for them he would answer as he had done before to true inquirers. Once before, one very great man had asked, "Art thou he that should come or look we for another?" (Matt. 11:2-6.) It was in effect the same question; in fact it was *the*

question. The answer given to John the Baptist was that the works and the words prove everything. Then Jesus turned to the multitude and gave his sublime tribute to John, and followed that with his assessment, of that generation, and his denunciation, like John's, of the cities which had seen his mighty works but repented not. Then he gave thanks to his Father that though these great truths were hidden from the wise and prudent, they were revealed to babes, and to them he would give further revelation as verse 27 tells. To these acceptable ones, such as Philip, he would reveal the Father and the Son. They knew Jesus to be sent of God, they believed him to be Messiah, but of his Father they needed to know much more. And so when Philip requested, "Shew us the Father," no doubt our Lord was pleased.

But to others who inquired who he was, were given altogether different answers, depending on the sincerity of the inquirer. To the questioners of Capernaum (John 6:30-65) Jesus gave a lengthy answer with reference to his going away, and his giving his flesh for the life of the world. As expected they found it a hard saying, and many walked no more with him. So greatly was the number depleted that Jesus asked his disciples, "Will ye also go away?"

Can it be that great truths, hard sayings, make for few disciples? Had Jesus expected a large following rather than a little flock, he would not have spoken truths difficult to grasp; but he knew his Father's will that the babes should understand, and that was his guide. Still others asked who he was. John 10:24 tells of insincere inquirers who did not deserve an answer, but were given the principle (ver. 38) whereby they might believe if they became true. "The miracles and the teaching convinced some that he was a great prophet superior to his predecessors. Those holy men were sent of God with his message; but this Prophet claimed that God was his Father, and that he had left his heavenly home to speak the very words of God to his people. They spake *for* God; this One spake as God the Father. They were good men, but of Adamic stock; this One was untainted by sin. This One had come to Jordan to be baptized by him who was "more than a prophet" and who was reluctant to immerse him-- and a voice from heaven had announced, "This is my Beloved Son."

The disciples who had continued with him from his baptism were conversant with these truths, and accepted them and believed him to be Messiah. But now he was talking of going away. What could that mean? He was talking of his death. How could it be that Messiah should die? He loved them unto the end. Their questions must and would be answered! In fact he himself drew from them the questions he knew they were eager to ask. For example John 16:5: "None of you asketh me, whither goest thou," but Peter asked that very question later. (John 13:33-36.) Peter was not satisfied with his Lord's answer and in saying so, promised more than he could then keep, and when Jesus answered him, prophesying that Peter would deny him, he said no more -- he had not shone in the feet-washing. John did not speak after he had asked the fateful question, "Lord, who is it?" And so Thomas speaks for them all (John 14:5): "We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" Our Lord's answer to him prompted Philip to make his request: "Shew us, the Father."

Possibly Philip thought that one plain answer to one question would answer their many questions. He was in effect saying that if they discerned the Father, they would know all they needed to of the Son. They had from early days confessed Jesus to be the Son of God, and they had no doubt heard the Jewish argument (John 5:18) that to claim God was his Father was to claim equality with God. This, of course, was distortion of truth; nevertheless, if Jesus would reveal more of the Father, how many points would be clearer! It is true today.

How blessed are Christians who discern the relationship and the one purpose of the Father and the Son! The Christian has the advantage of the disciples of that day in that he has so much truth revealed since the events of those days. That God and his Son are one in purpose is the essence of John's Gospel, and on that depends creation, salvation, and restoration.

Throughout this Gospel the perfect unity of the Father and Son is most marked-that the Son speaks the very words of God and does always those things which please his Father. By this Gospel the King eternal, immortal, invisible is brought down to men and declared to be Father as well as God, and his love for the children of men is proved by the sending of his Son to work and speak just as he would.

The reply to Philip was and is equally true. "He that hath seen [known, comprehended] me hath seen [known, comprehended] the 'Father.'" Thus was Jesus fulfilling his mission of John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." But when he answered Philip, mentioning as he also did to John the Baptist, the works and the words as proof of his close union with the Father, there was still one thing to be done; one thing to be settled for all time; one act which would finish the work given him to do; one event which would show the Father as never before.

The proof that he and his Father were one in purpose would be revealed in that crisis which the disciples might think cast doubts on his Messiahship his death as the Lamb of God. Though the Prophets had foretold his sacrificial death and he himself had prepared them for his death and departure, they seemed unable to understand. Note the words of Jesus to their affirmation of belief in him; (John 16:29-32): "Do ye now believe? Behold the, hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall all be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

The Father did not, could not, utterly forsake his only begotten Son, for in his Son at that time rested his own good name, and the life of all creatures.

The Father's own concern in that hour is seen in that most precious text, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and to which may be added other inspired words, "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." And again: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him." Here the everlasting God is revealed in a new light. Previously all sacrifices and offerings had been made by man to him and were always insufficient to atone for sin, and "he had no pleasure in them." Man was utterly undone; yet God himself provides the sacrifice that man could never have made of himself; and that all-sufficient sacrifice for man's atonement was none other than his only begotten Son. Thus in truth he was proved to be not only God, but the Father. Just one thing remained to be done -- redemption -- and in that the Father and the Son are perfectly one. It is almost beyond man to fathom and depict the union of the Father and the Son at that hour. Of all the faithful representatives that the Father had commissioned, there could be none superior to his Son; and so it must be reasoned in all reverence that had he failed in the work given him to do, then all would be lost. Surely that is why our Lord began his prayer (chapter 17) with, "Father, the hour is come." Everything was then at stake, yet he is confident all will be well. And all will be well for Philip and the others, for the love of the Father for them is most clear in this chapter 17. Note verses 6-8: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gayest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gayest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gayest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." - John 17:6-8.

The answer to Philip was absolute, complete, Thus did he love them unto the end. The death of their Lord scattered them, as prophesied, but they recovered, as prophesied, and their risen Lord shed abroad in their hearts the holy spirit at Pentecost which (brought to their remembrance the things he had taught them, and thus a further showing of the Father was made and has continued to this day.

- *B. J. Drinkwater*, Eng.

The Question Box

Question:

Please explain Matthew 24:28, which reads: "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

Answer:

I shall never forget, at the age of seventeen, asking this selfsame question of a dear sister then in her eighties. Nor shall I ever forget her reply. While to most of my queries she had a ready response, this one puzzled her. She did not permit this lack of knowledge, however, to disturb her poise. With quiet dignity, humbly, and with her customary charm and serenity, she replied simply: "My boy, I really do not know what that scripture means."

Fifty years have rolled away since then. She, I doubt not, has long known the answer to this puzzling passage. For myself, I am not too certain. Perhaps I have it also. That, however, must be for the reader to decide.

Before inquiring as to the meaning of the expression, let us first secure a better translation.

To begin with, the first word of the verse, the particle "for" should be eliminated. It *has* been eliminated in the *Revised Standard Version*, the *Diaglott*, and other more accurate translations. Scholars tell us that an earlier translator foisted this word "for" into the text because he imagined, erroneously, that the statement in verse 28 was intended to corroborate the statement in verse 27, where our Lord had likened his second advent to lightning emerging from the east and shining to the west.

Again, the word translated "eagles" includes all birds of rapine, and since *eagles do not feed on carrion*, the word vultures should be used here. A preferred translation is given by *Moffatt*: "Wherever the carcase lies, there will the vultures gather."

Now that we have this preferred translation before us, let us examine it. No less than five possible interpretations have come to my attention.

One interpretation is that the Jewish nation is represented by the carcase, while the eagles are the Roman armies, whose ensign is the eagle. Many able scholars have adopted this view, among them being Lightfoot, John Wesley, and Adam Clark. But this interpretation proceeds on the assumption that verse 27 refers to our Lord's return to destroy Jerusalem through the agency of the Romans in A.D. 70 -- an assumption which is not confirmed by historical facts, and which introduces confusion into the interpretation of the rest of the chapter.

A second interpretation, one adopted by Chrysostom and others of the early Christian Fathers, is that the carcase represents Christ himself, and the eagles represent the members of the Church, gathering to him by faith throughout the Gospel Age

A third interpretation is somewhat similar to the second one, except that the gathering together of the eagles is understood to mean the meeting with the Lord in the air, mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

A fourth interpretation is the one put forth by Brother Russell. His view was approximately the same as that held by Chrysostom, except that he supplemented the thought (that the carcass represented Christ) by the additional thought that it also represented the truth concerning Christ and especially the food of "present truth," provided by our Lord during the period of his second presence.

In support of this view, Brother Russell pointed out that, in the parallel passage in Luke (Luke 17:37), these words of our Lord are in reply to a question put to him by the disciples, namely, "Where, Lord?" This question Brother Russell understood as meaning "Where will these [the two on the bed in Luke 17:34 and the two grinding at the mill in Luke 17:53] -- where will these be taken?" - S. S., *Vol. IV*, page D610.

However, their question, "Where, Lord?" may be understood in another way, in line with a further interpretation, which appeals to me as being, probably, the true one. In this, the fifth interpretation noted, the carcass represents *corruption*, and the vultures *judgment*. Let us consider this interpretation, and note how well it fits the context.

Our Lord had just been pointing out a coming time of *judgment*. It would, he "had said, be a time of trouble such as had not been previously in mankind's history. Elaborating his theme, he had reminded them that, except for the few who entered the ark with Noah, the flood had destroyed, not merely a few, but *all* of them. Again, he had observed that when Lot fled from Sodom *all others were destroyed*; even Lot's wife had perished when she looked back. And he had likened these events to the conditions which would obtain during the period of his second advent (Matt. 24:21, 37-39; Luke 17:28-30). It was to all of this that the disciples had responded: "Where, Lord?" (Where will these judgments take place?)

Such a question indicated that, as yet, they understood very little of the ways of God. In their imperfect, immature point of view, God, being almighty, could do anything he chose. They failed to realize that there are some things which even God cannot do. He cannot violate his own principles. He cannot deny himself (2 Tim. 2: 13). This they had yet to learn. In their minds, Christ, did he but choose, could restore the kingdom to Israel "at this time" (Acts 1:6), or five hundred years hence, or five thousand. These judgments of which he had just been forewarning them, could take place in Jerusalem, if God so chose, or in Japan. They had yet to learn that God never has and never will act arbitrarily. *He cannot do so.*

To their question, "Where, Lord?" -- where shall these judgments take place? -our Lord replied *in a way they would understand*. He replied with a well-known Oriental proverb, based on a passage in the Book of Job (Job 39:30). "Where the slain are, *there is she*" (the eagle, or vulture -- Job 39:27). "Wheresoever the carcass is, *there will* the vultures be gathered together." (Wheresoever corruption abounds, *there* God's judgments will be sent to clean up the putrid mess.)

This has been the unvarying procedure on the part of Almighty God throughout the centuries. It is plainly to be seen in the case of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, *and will never be more true than in the judgment day of the nations in the end of the Gospel Age.*

And when will that be? And where? I reply: To my understanding it has been in process for years, and will continue to its completion. It is not localized to one or a few nations, but includes, or yet will include, all nations. Its purpose is benevolent, as may be noted in the following lines from an unknown poet:

"The wrath of God is Love's severity
In curing sin-the zeal of righteousness
In overcoming wrong -the remedy
Of Justice for the world's redress.

"The wrath of God is punishment for sin,
In measure unto all transgression due,
Discriminating well and just between
Presumptuous sins and sins of lighter hue.

"The wrath of God inflicts no needless pain
Merely vindictive, of himself to please;
But aims the ends of mercy to attain,
Uproot the evil and the good increase.

"The wrath of God is a consuming fire,
That burns while there is evil to destroy
Or good to purify; nor can expire
Till all things are relieved from sin's alloy.

"The wrath of God is Love's parental rod,
The disobedient to chastise, subdue,
And bend submissive to the will of God,
That Love may reign when all things are made new.

"The wrath of God shall never strike in vain,
Nor cease to strike till sin shall be: no more;
Till God his gracious purpose shall attain,
And earth to righteousness and peace restore."

What to do? Let the Prophet answer: "Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it *may be* ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.- (Zeph. 2:3).

- P. L. Read

Compassion

Compassion: "A suffering with another, hence sympathy. A sensation of sorrow or pity excited by the distress and -- misfortunes of *others*." -- *Webster*.

Jesus, moved *with compassion*, said to the leper, I will; be thou clean. -- Mark 1:41.

Jesus said, Go home and tell them how -- great things the Lord hath done for thee and had *compassion* on thee -- Mark 5:19.

Jesus said, I have *compassion* on the multitude because they have been with me *three* days and have nothing to eat. - Mark, 8:2.

Jesus had *compassion* on the two blind men and touched their eyes. -- Matt. 20:34.

When the Lord saw the widow of Nain, he had *compassion* on her and said, Weep not. Luke 7:13.

But a certain -- Samaritan came where he was and had *compassion on him*. -- Luke 10:33.

Should you not also have *compassion* on your fellow servant even as I had pity on thee. -- Matt. 18:33.

A great way off, his father saw him and had *compassion* and ran and fell on his neck. -- Luke 15:20. .

Every high priest taken from among men ... who can have *compassion* on the ignorant and erring, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. -- Heb. 5:1, 2.

Ye had *compassion* on me in my bonds and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods. -- Heb. 10:34.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having *compassion* one of another, tenderhearted. -- 1 Pet. 3:8.

Whoso sees his brother have need and shuts up his *compassion*, how dwells the love of God' in him? -- 1 John 3:17.

And of some have *compassion*, making a difference. -- Jude 22.

Jehovah sent to, Israel his messengers because he had *compassion* on his people. -- 2 Chron. 36:15.

God, being full of *compassion*, forgave their iniquity; yea, many a time turned his anger away. -- Psa. 78:38.

But thou, O God, art full of compassion, and gracious, long -- suffering and plenteous in mercy and truth. -- Psa. 86:15.

Jehovah is gracious and full of *compassion*; slow to anger and of great mercy. -- Psa. 145:8.

Blessed are the merciful: *for they* shall obtain mercy. -- Matt. 5:7.

Judgment is without mercy to *him* that has showed *no* mercy. -- James 2:13.

-- Compiled by *E. K. Snyder*.

Annual Meeting of the Institute

Members of the Pastoral Bible Institute are hereby reminded of the privilege which is theirs of nominating in the pages of this journal the -- brethren they wish to elect as directors for the fiscal year. 1954-55. While the attention of new members is especially drawn to this matter, we desire to emphasize in the minds of old members also, not only the privilege, but also the responsibility which continued association with this ministry brings.

All should be aware of the fact that the affairs of this Institute are in the hands of seven brethren who are elected from the Institute's membership to serve for a period of one year or until their successors are, elected. The next annual meeting will be held Saturday, June 5, 1954, at 2 p.m., in the parlors of the Institute, 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, New York.

The brethren whose term of service will expire are:

F. A. ESSLER
H. E. HOLLISTER
J. C. JORDAN
J. T. READ
W. J. SIEKMAN
T. G. SMITH
P. E. THOMSON

The brethren named above are pleased to report that a spirit of Christian love and harmony exists in their midst; and they have every reason to believe that the Lord has seen fit to bless their association in this ministry. They realize, however, that those carrying on any work often fail to see opportunities for improvement and expansion apparent to others not charged with such responsibility. For this reason changes in office not infrequently have beneficial effects. They desire *above* all things that -- the work of the Lord (for the furtherance of which this Institute was formed) be prosecuted with the greatest possible efficiency, and to this end are ready cheerfully to step aside for others whom the membership believe to be fitted for the work. They therefore urge upon all the members of our Institute that they make this a special occasion of prayer, and that they also earnestly pray that our Father's will may be expressed in the vote of the members. If after prayerful meditation any are led of the Lord to nominate brethren, and will forward the names and addresses of such brethren -- so as to reach this office on or before April 10, 1954, such names will be published in the May issue of the "Herald," that all members may have an opportunity of voting for them.

Recently Deceased

Sister S. Bennison, Brooklyn, N. -- Y; -- (March).
Sister F. H. Greenville, Brooklyn, N. Y. -- (March).
Brother A. E. Koko, Phoenix, Ariz. -- (November).
Brother H. N. Nelson, Ann Arbor, Mich. -- (February).
Brother H. Raffel, Dayton, Ohio -- (February).
Sister C. P. Taylor, Everett, Mass. -- (February).
Sister Ione S. Whitehead, Seattle, Wash. -- (February).