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Working with God

"My Father worketh even until now, and I work." - John 5:17, R.V.

JESUS healed a man, ill for thirty-eight years, at the pool of Bethesda. Because this act was performed on a Sabbath, the Jews disapproved. When our Lord told them, in the words of our text, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work," they were enraged. They charged that "he not only broke the Sabbath but also made himself equal with God." Jesus replied, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing. For whatsoever things he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner." Moreover, he continued, his commission transcended even that staggering conception. He would raise the dead! He would be the judge of all!

What the Jews failed to realize was that "man was not made for the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man." The Sabbath provided men with an opportunity to rest and relax from their struggle for survival under the curse. (Gen. 3:18-21.) True, it was also a commemoration of God's rest from his work of creation.' (Gen. 2:2, 3.) But, as we shall see, its connotation was more profound than this, being bound up with, and implicating man in its full significance.

When God "rested from all his work which he had made," it was not because he was weary. God's work, respecting this planet, is twofold first, creation; and, second, redemption.

There is a sense in which both of these are parts of one comprehensive program that is the work of redemption is one act in the, creative drama. In another sense, they may be considered as two distinct functions. The former is the view of Jesus, recorded, in John 5:17-22; the latter, the concept of Genesis 2:2, 3. These seemingly diverse, yet actually concordant, viewpoints are clearly distinguished in Revelation, chapters four and five. In chapter four, the Father alone is worshiped as the Creator of all things (Rev. 4:11); in chapter five, the emphasis is on the Lamb as the Redeemer. (Rev. 5:9, 10, 12.) But in the sequel we find all creation adoring both the Father and the Son. - Rev. 5:13.

When God "rested" from his part in the creative work, he did so by assigning to mankind the task of finishing or completing his earthly creation. (Gen. 1:28.)

This is in harmony with his usual manner of dealing with his creatures. He does for us only what we cannot do for ourselves. To cite but one instance, we would refer to the raising of Lazarus. (John 11:1-44.) God, through Jesus, raised Lazarus from the dead, but left his releasing from the grave-clothes to Lazarus' friends.

God intended for man to make the whole earth like the Garden of Eden and to fill it with human, sons of God. But, because of sin, man failed in his appointed task. Instead of bringing forth sons, he brought forth enemies. Instead of bringing forth a living race, he brought forth a dead race. Instead, of making the earth a Paradise, he has turned it into a sepulcher.

God's purpose, however, cannot fail. Having ordained that man should subdue the earth and fill it, God destined its ultimate achievement. To this end, he sent his Son, the man Christ Jesus, who said of himself: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." (John 4:34.) The task, which Jesus began when he left his former glory, will not be completed until the race he purchased with his blood on Calvary is returned to his Father, cleansed, perfected, and sanctified. - 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

But God's creative purpose is neither consummated nor exhausted in the perfecting of his earthly creation. In the course of accomplishing, this last, God proposes to bring forth a new creation from the old; to create from among men a new order of beings, holy, immortal, divine not human, but spirits not only superior to the angels, but surpassing all other creatures in the universe, even sharing the nature of God. Indeed, the solution of the ancient mystery of why a holy God is permitting evil, lies in this that he chose to use evil in effecting the selection, and approval of those who will compose this empyreal body. And, just as, with reference to the old creation, it is true of the Son that, all things were made by him, and without him was not anything, made" (John 1:12), so also, with the new. Jesus is not only the predestined Head of this new creation, he is also the One who has made possible its coming into existence. All who have been called of our Father to be partakers of this glorious inheritance with our Lord, are translated into his Kingdom, that is, the "Kingdom of the Son of his love." - Col. 1:12-18.

Concerning this Kingdom, Jesus said: "I am a king. To this end was I born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that, is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:37.) To his disciples, he said: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me." (Luke 22:26.) And to Pilate, he said: "My kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36.) The true significance of this last statement is, perhaps, not fully realized by the English reader, due to the superficial exegesis which would make Jesus say: "My kingdom is not of this particular Age. It is of another, a future Age, the Millennial." But its true import is: My kingdom is not of this old creation. It is not of this old cosmos; it is a new creation, it is an entirely new cosmos. Those, therefore, who are of this Kingdom, are in the world, but they are not of it. (John 17:14, 15.) Or, as Paul puts it, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation.

The situation and condition of Christ's Kingdom, or New Creation, in the world during the present Age was described by Jesus in many parables, notably Matthew 13:47-50; 13:4-9, 18-23; 13:24-30, 37-43; 22:1-14, etc. In this last parable, our Lord concludes by saying that "many are called, but few are chosen." So then, even among those who are called, not all, nor even many, can gain admittance. For the terms of entrance are extremely rigid. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but *he that doeth the will of my Father.*" - *Matt. 7:21.*

In our day, many seem content to coast; to "be good in a negative sense, to read' or study the Divine Plan, as outlined in the Volumes, and to wait for the Lord. to set up his Kingdom on the

earth. Others, who have a knowledge of the Plan and are aware of the call, refuse to answer, preferring to wait for restitution. And still others, even among those who profess consecration, say, with mistaken humility, that they would be satisfied with restitution, if that is the Father's will for them.

What a terrible misconception! Paul tells us that we who are called, are "called in the *one hope of our calling*." (Eph. 4:4.) Peter tells us that God "bath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises," not for us to look at and admire, but "that, by these we might become partakers of the divine nature." - 2 Pet. 1:2-4.

There is no other call now. No one is being called to restitution. Such a call, if it were being made, would be going "to the Jew first"-not to the Gentile. (Rom. 1:15, 2:9, 10) No one can hope to receive God's approval in either this or the coming Age unless he does the work which the Father has given him to do.

Therefore, if we want to be in harmony with God, if we want to do *his will*, if we want to *work with god*, we must do what *God wants us to do now*. "Not every one but he that doeth the will of my Father" only these will receive his "well done."

What is the will of God? Paul tells: "This is the will of God; even your sanctification." (1 Thess. 4:3.) "Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, *set your hope* on the grace that is being brought to you. As children of obedience . . . as he who called you is holy ... become ye also holy in your whole behavior." (1 Pet. 1:13-15.) It is both our privilege and our duty to set ourselves aside to God's holy service. It should be our joy to forget even the most precious things of earth (Luke 14:26), and fix our hopes and our ambitions on the things in the heavens.

"Holy brethren, partakers of a *heavenly* calling," say the Apostles, "God has raised us up with him and made us to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," where "he bath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ." (Heb. 3:1; Eph. 2:6; 1:3.) Heaven! Our home! Our true abode! But, let us not forget this: If we expect to dwell there bodily in the future, it is there that we must sojourn, in spirit, now.

Many hesitate to answer the invitation to run for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus because they have been told that the "door is shut," the high calling closed. Who told them this? God? No, men! How presumptuous can men become? The shutting of the door -- that which has been reserved -- for the Master of the house, and a prerogative upon which angels might well fear to encroach-even this, fallen, fallible, dying man presumes to do!

But we are not left without a weapon with which to combat this delusion. One of the last parables Jesus uttered was given for this very purpose. (Matt. 19:28-20:16.) In this parable, Jesus pointed out that those who enter the vineyard in the last hour would receive neither more nor less than those who entered in the first, sixth, or ninth hour. Jesus foreknew that one of the hindering delusions of these last days would be the claim that the door was shut. He knew that near the end of the Gospel Age, many might thus be deterred from answering, our Father's call. And so he gave us this parable. But, even more wondrous than this, he enclosed it in an envelope addressed to us. He said, both at the beginning of the parable and at its close, that "the last shall be first, and the first last. (Matt. 19:28 and 20:16.) Think it over.

"Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holies, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which *he dedicated* for us . . . let us approach with a true heart in *full assurance of faith*.... Let us hold fast the unwavering confession of the hope, for he is faithful that promised."

(Heb. 10:19-26.) Yes, dear brethren, he is faithful that promised. For when he made promise to Abraham, since he had none greater to swear by, he swore by himself; and for what reason? Because God intended "to show more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel that we ... may have strong encouragement ... *to lay hold* of the hope set before: us, which we have as the soul's anchor, a hope *both sure and firm* entering into that which is within the veil." Whom shall we believe? -- men, or God?

Are any fearful? There is nothing to fear, except the danger of incurring God's wrath by our slothfulness, by our excuses, by our timidity, by our lack of faith in him. Let us be active, let us be alive, let us be zealous, let us be not faithless, but believing. Let us "draw near *with boldness* unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in every time of need." - Heb. 4:16.

Brethren, the high calling is still open. To you who hesitate to enter, to you who fear to enter, and to you who have already entered the race, we say:

Today is this call sounding in your *ears*; *today* is *this* call being, placarded before your very, eyes: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, and your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed-by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." "And *working together with him*, we entreat also that *ye receive not the grace of God in vain*. For he saith, At an acceptable time, I hearkened unto thee, and in a day of salvation did I succor thee. Behold, *now* is an acceptable time. Behold, *now* is a day of salvation." -- Rom. 12:1, 2; 2 Cor. 6:1-3.

Now! says the Lord. Today! Not tomorrow. Not next year, nor in the next Age, but now, *Today*, if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts as [did Israel] in the time of provocation, ... Wherefore, I was displeased with that generation and said, They do always err in their hearts; ... As I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." These words were recorded as a warning to us, "lest perchance there may be in us also, an evil heart of unbelief, but let us exhort one another each (lay, so long as it is called, Today" (Heb. 3:7-19) that none fail to enter into his rest through lack off faith.

"For there yet remaineth a Sabbath rest for the people *of* God," and "we who have believed are entering into that rest." (Heb. 4:9, 3.) It is paradoxical, yet true, that we enter into God's rest by engaging in God's work. The explanation is to be found in this, that "he who has entered into His rest bath himself also rested from his own works, as God did from his." (Heb. 4:10.) As Paul points out, we are saved by grace through faith, not of our own works, nor even by the works, of the Law. For the work we are commissioned to do are not ours, but God's, and "*we are his workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." - Eph. 2:8-10.

The door is open, the way is prepared. A Sabbath rest awaits us. But we must be diligent to enter into that rest. We cannot afford to dally, for this privilege will not exist forever; it is only for "Today. Therefore, let us "give diligence to enter into that rest, that no one fall after the sane example of disobedience.

The old creation will not be brought to perfection until after the new creation is completed. The work which God is now performing, and the work which Jesus is now doing, is the selecting, polishing, and chiseling of the living stones which will make up that edifice. Their work "today is the perfecting of the Church. If we wish to be, working with them, we too will be striving for the

advancement of the Kingdom, the perfecting of the Body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-16.) We, will "consider, one another unto provoking of love and good works, not leaving in the lurch our own assembly [this is the literal translation of the Greek; the significance is: "not neglecting our own body, the Body of Christ"], as the manner of some is, but exhorting, and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh." - Heb. 10:24, 25.

The second Adam, the Lord from heaven, will perform the work which the first Adam failed to do. With him will be associated his Bride, the Lamb's Wife, the Church, the New Creation. Dear brethren, we have been called to be a part of that Bride. It will be our privilege to assist our Heavenly Bridegroom in restoring this weary, sin-sick, dead earth to life. This would seem, honor enough to repay us for our sufferings, our ignominy, and, our sacrifices as we follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. But our Father says it is not enough.

"Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." He has decreed that we are to inherit "all things" -- we repeat, "all things" -- with *his* Son. What these "all things" are, we can have but a feeble idea. .

To get a glimpse of them, look into the sky. See that faint star over there? If we were to look at that tiny point of light through a powerful telescope, we would learn that it is not a planet or, a sun. It is not even a solar system. No! It is more than these. It is a galaxy, a universe as large as, or larger than, our own mighty Milky Way system. That light which you see, left that galaxy 1,000 million light years ago. Traveling at 186,000 miles per, second, its journey was almost completed when Adam was created. It was then "only" about 35 quadrillion (35 followed by 15 zeros) miles from us.

Is that galaxy on the outer limits of the universe? No, it is barely the beginning of the creation of our Father: We stand in awe of his physical creation. What must be the glory of his spirit creation? Our minds rebel at any attempt to comprehend it. And yet, this is what we *are* to inherit; this is what the New Creation will eclipse!

Truly, "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy, nation, a people for God's own possession.," "Cast not away therefore your boldness, which hath great recompense of reward For yet a little while, he who cometh shall come and shall not tarry." Then they shall see his face, and his Name shall be on their foreheads." (1 Pet. 2:9; Heb. 10:35-37; Rev. 22:4.) "Happy Zion! What a favored lot is thine!"

- *W. F. Hill.*

Lessons from the Life of Joseph

Scripture Reading: Psalm 105:17-23; Genesis chapters 37; 39-50.

Joseph and His Dreams

THE story of Joseph begins when he was a lad of seventeen years. His brother Benjamin was four or five years younger. Joseph was sent by his father to his brethren who were herding, the flocks, to find out how they fared. He was unpopular with his brethren, because he was his father's favorite. Jacob showed his favoritism, which, in a family, is most-unwise. It is the dull child, or the weak one, who really needs the more praise and encouragement, the more help and favor; and favoritism for the more talented usually spoils the child; cultivating pride, self-conceit. It is unjust to the others, and draws down upon the favorite their envy and hatred.

Joseph's brethren saw him coming afar off, and said, "Behold, this; dreamer cometh. Joseph had had some dreams in one of which his brothers' sheaves bowed down to his sheaf; the e sun, moon, and stars made obeisance to him. With boyish simplicity he told his dreams and his brothers never forgave him. The dreams were divine intimations of the boy's future; but the hints of his present or possible superiority over them made their, envy the more bitter.

Sixty miles he had come to find how they fared and carry back word to his father. Doubtless they knew him afar off by his coat of bright colors. "Behold, this dreamer cometh," they said. "Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will 'become of his dreams." Here we see the fearful danger of allowing envious thoughts to remain in the heart. Envy grew into murder-murder of their own brother! We are reminded of the wisdom of Paul's counsel, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." We should instantly crush the merest beginnings of envy. Ere we close each day, we should see that every feeling of bitterness against any person is cast, out of our heart. It should be a time of forgiving and forgetting all injury or unkindness done us by any one.

But Joseph was not killed: his mission was not yet ended. His brother Reuben was not ready for murder, and proposed casting him into a dry pit, intending to rescue him later. His suggestion was accepted; Joseph was cast into a pit, and they sat down to eat. In all this, God's providence was working. As they ate, they saw a caravan coming, and Judah proposed they sell Joseph to the passing men chants. It seemed good to them for two reasons: They would get rid of the boy's blood-and blood is always a troublesome thing on one's hands. It will not wash off. Besides there would be a little money in the transaction. So they hastily drew Joseph from the pit, and after parleying with the Midianites they sold him for twenty pieces of silver-\$12.50.

When Reuben returned he found the pit empty, and supposing that Joseph had been killed, he rent his clothes in grief. The other brothers, knowing that some , news must be sent to their old father, killed a kid, dipped Joseph's coat in blood, and sent it to the father with the explanation: We found this coat, in this condition, in the field. Does our father think it is his son's coat? The father recognized the coat, and drew the inference they wished, and said, "Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces! So he thought for more than twenty years, and all the years were filled with sore mourning.

LET OUR FAREWELLS BE IN LOVE

Let us pause' here and draw some lessons from this narrative. When Joseph parted from those at home, they thought it was for only a few days' absence. His Grandfather Isaac was still living, and Benjamin was but a small boy. They thought in a few days he would be home again.- No one dreamed that for more than twenty years they would not see his face again-some would never see him again. There is a lesson for us here: Our casual partings too may be for years-may be forever. When we part at our doors in the morning, we never know, whether we shall look in each other's face again or not. We expect to gather in the evening at the fireside; but we never know. Many go out who never come home.

If Jacob had known what was to befall his son, how tender would have been the parting! Above all, we should never separate in an angry or impatient mood, with unforgiveness, bitterness, misunderstanding. No amount of flowers on the coffin will atone for the coldness of the parting, or take the pang out of the bereft heart. Every . parting with loved ones should be sweet enough, kindly enough, for a last farewell.

"If thou dost bid thy friend farewell,
But for one night though that farewell may be,
Press thou his hand in thine.
How canst thou tell how far from thee
Fate or caprice may lead his steps, ere that tomorrow comes?
Men have been known lightly to turn the corner of a street,
And days have grown to months,
And months to lagging years, ere they
Have looked in loving eyes again.
Parting at best is underlaid
With tears and pain:
Therefore, lest sudden death should come between,
Or time, or distance, clasp with pressure firm the hand
Of him who goeth forth:
Unseen, fate goeth, too.
Yea, find thou always time to say some earnest word
Between the idle talk, lest with thee henceforth,
Night and day, regret should walk."

Another lesson: Joseph, the happy lad leaving Hebron for Shechem, had no -inkling of what was to befall him. He expected a kindly welcome on meeting his brothers, and to return quickly to those who loved him. So we know not what lies before us. We spend today in gladness, not knowing that tomorrow will bring us tears. We move on through the flowers, heedless of danger, not suspecting that at our next step we may fall' into some hidden pit. We rejoice in our prosperity, unconscious of the fact that disaster may come any hour and sweep it away. We set out on the happy journey, without thought of the possible accident which may leave us crippled or dead.

What is the lesson? Should this uncertainty of all human affairs sadden our life? No, that is not the lesson. God does not want us to be unhappy while the sun is shining because by and by it will go under a cloud. He wants us to live in today, and enjoy its blessings, and do its work well, though tomorrow may bring calamity. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." How can we do this if we know that the future has in it possibilities of sudden darkness? Only by calm, quiet, trustful faith in God, and obedience' to Him at every step. We sometimes wish we could look into

the future, that we might choose our way and avoid the rough paths. But suppose Joseph had been told how his brothers would treat him, and that he would be sold as a slave. Would he have gone forward? Then what a wonderful story of providence would have been spoiled!

Joseph would have missed all that bright future which lay beyond the period of wrongs and cruelties into which he was first plunged. And think what his people, and the world would have missed!

It would not be well for us to know what is before us; we, would want to meddle with God's plans, thus marring 'our own future, and harming others. Nor should we be afraid and over cautious. Yet this uncertainty ought to hold us near the side of Christ at all times. Nothing can ever really go wrong with us if He is leading us and we are quietly following Him. Though He take us through pain, misfortune, suffering, it is because that is the path to true blessing and good.

JOSEPH A SLAVE AND IN PRISON

A modern writer has a story entitled "Hands Off," which illustrates providence in the life of Joseph. It represents a man in another stage of existence, looking down upon the Hebrew lad in the hands of the Midianites. In this story, being an active, ingenious lad, Joseph escaped from the caravan on the first night after his brothers had sold him. He had just reached the outer edge of the camp when a yellow dog began to bark and awakened the men who were in charge of him, and he was returned to captivity.

However, the onlooker wanted to kill the dog before he had awakened the camp. Then Joseph would have gotten away and would have reached home in safety. Great sorrow and suffering would have been avoided. But the onlooker's guardian said, "Hands off!" And to let him see the evil of interfering, he took him to a world where he could try the experiment and see its results. There he killed the dog. Joseph reached home in safety, and his father rejoiced and was 'comforted. It certainly seemed a better way than the other. But when the famine came, there had been no Joseph in Egypt to foretell it, and to prepare for it, and there was no food laid up in storehouses. Palestine and Egypt were devastated by starvation. Great numbers died, and the savage Hittites destroyed those whom the famine had spared. Civilization was set back centuries. Egypt was blotted out. Greece and Rome remained in a barbarous state. The history of the whole world was changed and countless evils came—all because a man in his ignorant wisdom killed a dog, saving a boy from present trouble, to his own and the world's future great loss.

We would better keep our hands off God's providences. Peter wanted to keep Jesus back from the cross; suppose he had done so, what would have been the result? No doubt many a time love has kept a life back from hardship, sacrifice, and suffering, thereby blighting or marring a destiny. We are likely to pity the boy Joseph as we see him enter his period of humiliation, as we read of his being sold as a slave, and then cast into irons. But if human pity could have rescued him from this sad part of his life, the glorious part that followed, with all its blessed service to the world, would have been lost.

Few truths are more sustaining to Christian faith than this, that our times are in God's hands. We forget it too often, and fret when life brings hard things to endure, when our own plans are broken. But some day we shall see that God knew best.

"How oft, O God, when we have wept in vain
O'er Thy decrees and blurred, with fretful tears
The heavenward window of the soul, appears

Thy purpose sweet and wise, in after years,
Like sunshine streaming through the veils of rain!

"If we had had our way -- if Thou hadst given
The lesser good in our imploring hands,
Withholding larger; if the small demands
Of human choice, that sees nor understands

Life's broader issues, had prevailed with heaven;
"If we had never wept, nor known the keen,
Pure, cleansing pain of sorrow's sacred fire --
The broken tie, the unfulfilled desire --
Our sluggish lives had never risen higher,
But fixed in self, had ever selfish been.

"But Thou hast led us out of self, hast shown"
How love's great -circle rounds from soul to soul,
How sorrow makes us quick to others' dole
And binds each unit in the larger whole
Of life and love, complete in Thee alone.

"O God, Thy thought infolds us all! the days
Ev'n of this brief, imperfect life attest,
Ere they are spent, Thy will is ever best.
Oh, may we in Thy love and wisdom rest,
For Thou dost know the end of all our days!"

Joseph was seventeen when the caravan bore him off as a slave to Egypt. He was thirty when called from prison to become prime minister of Pharaoh. The whole period of his humiliation was therefore thirteen years. The three points we wish to consider are, his slave life, his great temptation, and his, prison life. The special thing to mark is that Joseph went through all the experiences unhurt. This is a secret worth learning-how to meet injustice, wrong, cruelty, inhuman treatment, temptation, misfortune, in such manner as to receive no harm from the experience. Let us see how Joseph bore himself so as to rob these experiences of their bitterness and power to harm, and extract from each of them blessing and good,

A SORE TEST OF CHARACTER

Think of the sense of wrong which must have filled his thoughts as he remembered the treatment he had received from his brothers. They had torn him away from his home. They had been about to kill him. They had treated him, with heartless cruelty. They had sold him as a slave. Surely it was hard to keep one's heart sweet and free from bitterness with such a sense of injustice.

Add to this the hardness of the new condition in which Joseph found himself. He was among strangers. He had not a friend in all the land. Not a face he had ever seen, passed, before him. Many a stranger in a strange land is free to make his life what he will, and is soon on the "way to success. But Joseph was a slave, in bonds. Potiphar saw him in the slave market, and bought him as he might a horse. It is hard to conceive of a condition more discouraging. It was a sore test of character to which he was exposed. If the treatment he had received from his brothers was enough to make him bitter, his present circumstances seem enough to have crushed his spirit. There are people who have not had the tenth part of Joseph's trouble but who are embittered against the

world and denounce it as cold and heartless and ungrateful. Others having been wronged; grow hard and vindictive, and, live only to repay the injustice they have received with like injustice blow for blow. Still others sullenly surrender to the injuries they have received and with broken spirit creep through life like wrecks drifting on the sea, pitiable spectacles.

Few there are who. pass through such experiences of injustice and cruelty as those Joseph met and keep their heart sweet and gentle, their faith in God bright and clear, and their spirit brave and strong. It showed the wholesomeness of Joseph's nature that he passed through these galling experiences unhurt. He was not soured 'toward men. He did not grow morbid, sullen, or disheartened. Though a slave, he accepted' his position with cheerfulness, and entered heartily into his -new: life, doing his duties so well that he soon became overseer in his master's house. He did not waste time or strength in weeping over his misfortunes, or grieving over his wrongs, nor exhaust himself in self-pity. The darkness of Joseph's life was not allowed to enter his 'heart.' This was one of the great secrets of his victorious living. With hatred all about him, he kept love in his heart. Enduring injuries, wrongs, and injustices, his spirit was forgiving. With a thousand things to discourage, and dishearten him, to break his spirit, he refused to be discouraged. Because other' men lived unworthily was but a stronger reason why he 'should live' worthily. Because he was treated cruelly and wickedly was fresh reason why he should give to others about him the best service of love and, unselfishness. That his condition was hard, was to him a new motive for living heroically and nobly.

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

So we find the spirit of Joseph unbroken underall that was galling and crushing in his circumstances. The lesson can not be too urgently pressed. Many people find life hard. Sometimes wrong; and injustice make the days bitter. Sometimes the atmosphere of daily, life is one of strife, petty persecution, miserable fault-finding, incessant opposition, nagging, criticism. Home life ought to be ideally loving, inspiring, encouraging, helpful, full of all kindness and grace. Yet there are homes little better than Joseph's, where instead of love are envy, selfishness, bitterness. There are those who must live 'continually amid unjust opposition and antagonism.

The problem of life is to keep the heart sweet and kindly amid all injustice and wrong; to keep the spirit brave and cheerful in the midst of life's circumstances and conditions; to be true and right and strong in all moral purpose and deed, however others may act toward us. We must be unselfish and loving, though even our nearest friends prove selfish and cruel to us. We must keep our spirit strong, cheerful and hopeful, though adversities and misfortunes seem to leave us nothing of the fruit of all our labors. In a word, we are to live victoriously, nobly, sweetly, cheerfully, songfully, in spite of whatever maybe uncongenial in our condition.

This is the lesson from the first period of Joseph's humiliation. This is the lesson of all Christian life. We should not let the outside darkness into our soul, should seek to be delivered from all morbidness, all dwelling upon our own difficulties and unhappinesses, from continually talking about our unpleasant experiences. We should not allow anything to .crush us. Though a slave as to our condition, our spirit should be free.

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worth learning, for it is life's highest and best-lesson It is the victory of the faith in Christ which overcometh the world.

MEETING TEMPTATION ON GROUNDS OF PRINCIPLE

Another part of Joseph's humiliation was his temptation. He had been in Potiphar's house for several years. He had lived so worthily and wrought so faithfully that he had his master's fullest confidence and had risen to the first place among all the servants. We can think of the boy's dreams of greatness as again coming into the mind of the young man as he found himself so honored. His temptation, was that of an intrigue with Potiphar's wife, perhaps thereby to rise to yet higher prominence, to throw off the slave's chains and become a man of rank in the land. No eye of one who worshiped his God was upon him to inspire him to what was pure, true, and noble. He was in a heathen land, where the standard of morals was low and doubtless such intrigues were common. He had not the social restraints which we find about us today.

But he met the temptation on far higher grounds; on grounds of pure principle. Note his answer to the solicitation of his temptress: "Behold, my master knoweth not what is with me in the house, and he hath put all that he hath into my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Two motives appear in this answer. One is loyalty to his master. Potiphar had trusted him implicitly with all that he had. Could he now be guilty of such a base wrong to the man who had placed such confidence in him? Such an act would have been treachery to his friend. In the face of this flattering solicitation of this woman of high rank, and regardless of the consequences which the offending of her might bring upon him, he kept his eye fixed on his duty and wavered not, but tore himself away from the temptation, his soul unstained.

The other motive which saved him was his loyalty to God. "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? All sin is against God. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned," said David in his penitence. We can never get away from our relation to God in any act of our life.

Another element of Joseph's nobleness of character appears in his silence under false accusation. It is not recorded that he said a word to Potiphar to turn suspicion upon the accusing wife. He seems to have thought still of Potiphar's honor, and rather than lay a stain upon it he would go to the dungeon under a false charge; leaving to God the vindication of his own honor and the proving of his innocence. It has been said, For his purity you will find his equal, one among a thousand; for his mercy, scarcely one-. There are persons who bear reproach and odium to shield others. Joseph had resisted temptation to be loyal to Potiphar; now Potiphar thinks him guilty of the very baseness which for 'love of him he had scorned to commit. But in all this Joseph kept his heart sweet; and loving.

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Another phase of Joseph's humiliation was his prison life. The Psalmist says of him (Psa. 105:18): "His feet they hurt with fetters he was laid in chains of iron." This, then, was the reward of being true to God and duty! He had resisted sin, and here he was in irons, while his guilty temptress was posing as an injured woman, receiving compassion and enjoying luxury.

However bitter the prison may have been at first to Joseph, he was not yet crushed, but the noble soul within him rose above the effects of the misfortune and wrong he had suffered. He did not despair, but his old aptitude for meeting life with courage and hope showed itself. "The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison. . . . The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand." His manhood was not in chains. The fetters, did not hurt his soul. He was victorious over all the wrong, the in justice, the false accusation, the suffering. He found his period of; humiliation a time of growth, of discipline, of training, producing in his heart hope, joy and love. And when at length he was called from prison to sit beside the king, he was so well fitted for greatness that his head; was not turned by the pinnacle of honor and fame.

So we get from this part of our story the lesson of victory over all of life's conditions. Be true to God, true to yourself," true to your fellow men. The record is that "The Lord was with, Joseph, and shewed kindness unto him, . . . and that which he did the Lord made to prosper." Likewise, if, we are true to God, He will bless us, and will use even our misfortunes to train us for a larger, better, nobler, more useful life. Christ is with us; His life is in us; and nothing should be allowed to crush us. Live close to Christ and the world's power cannot hurt you nor its darkness dim your soul's light.

FROM PRISON-TO PALACE

This story reads like a romance. In the morning Joseph was in prison. He had been there probably three years. He knew of nothing that gave any hope of release. In the evening, he was wearing the king's ring, was arrayed in vestures of fine linen, had a gold chain about his neck and was honored as next to the king. It seems too strange to be true, yet it was true.

Though he was in prison, he was not a criminal; he was there on false charges. We see a man with a pure soul, though under the cloud of a black charge. May it not be so with some one we know, of whom people allege dishonorable things, but who in God's sight is innocent? We should stand for justice and charity toward all. We should shut our ears to the insinuations and whisperings of the slanderer's tongue. It was a lie that put the felon's garb and chain on Joseph and robbed him of his good name. Be slow to believe an accusation against another. One false mouth can destroy the reputation won by a life time of worthy deeds. Let' us see to it that we have the love that thinketh no evil.

Joseph was suffering wrongfully; but his case demonstrates the truth declared by the Psalmist: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall make thy righteousness go forth as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." (Psa. 37:5, 6.) We, too, may safely leave *our* vindication to the Lord.

The life of Joseph remained gentle, beautiful and, sweet under all the terrible trials of those thirteen years. Yet some of us can hardly keep sweet under, little or imaginary slights, the microscopic hurts and injustices of every-day life. And what though our trials may be severe and long? The noble bearing of Joseph teaches us to be superior to *all* circumstances and conditions, to *all* unkind or unjust treatment. Discouragement is undivine. We must be strong in the grace of God. We must be unconquerable through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us. We must

put misfortunes, adversities, personal injuries, sufferings, trials, under our feet, and tread ever upward on them.

"We rise by the things that are under our feet;
By what we have mastered of good or gain;
By, the pride deposed, and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

Remember, your problem in living, is to keep sweet, to keep your heart gentle, brave, strong, loving, full of hope, under the *worst* that the years can bring you of injustice, hardship, suffering, and trial. That is what Joseph did; then, when he was suddenly wanted for a 'great duty, he did not fail.

Something went wrong, one day in the world above Joseph's dungeon. There was trouble in Pharaoh's palace," and two high officials were hurried off to prison. God is always coming down to us through unlikely paths; meeting us unexpectedly. We know not what trivial occurrence any day may affect all our after course unto the end" of life. The touching of Joseph's life by these prisoners from the palace was a link in the chain by which he was .to be lifted out of prison.

Yet it seemed for a long time as if nothing would come of this contact. Joseph told the meaning of the men's dreams, and in three days what' he had said came true. As the chief butler went out happy from the prison, to resume his old duties, Joseph said to him: "Think on me when it, shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and-bring, me out of this house." No doubt the butler promised to do so. But the pathetic words of the record are: "Yet did' not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

The butler was restored to his place in the palace and the brilliance of the royal presence. Waiting in his prison, doubtless Joseph hoped each day to be released through the strong influence of his friend at court -- waited and hoped, but there was no answering token. Two years passed, and still Joseph was in prison: the chief butler had forgotten him.

Many there have been in all ages who would condemn the ingratitude of this Egyptian officer, and yet who repeat his sin. At the time when help comes to us, or deliverance, or favor, our hearts are warm with gratitude. We say with sincere intention that we will never forget this kindness. But do we never forget it? Alas, we are all too prone to remember wrongs, but to forget kindnesses. We write the record of our grudges in marble, and of favors in water. The lesson, is that we should write the record of hurts and wrongs done us in water, and of kindness shown to us, in stone.

Yet see how God uses even *ibis* adversity to Joseph's final good.' Had he been released at once he was still a slave, and might have been sold away from the city. Or had he been set free, he would likely have returned to Canaan. He would not likely have been in reach when he was sought for to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. And so all the future blessings would have been thwarted.

But while Joseph was left in prison, God's purposes were ripening in the world outside, and Joseph's character was ripening into strength and self discipline within the dungeon walls. In God's providences, nothing comes a moment too soon, and nothing lags, coming too late. He whose hand moves the machinery of the universe is also our Father. And all the wrongs suffered may, by the divine touch, be transmuted into blessings.

Shall we suppose that Joseph's life was in God's hand in any exceptional sense? Is there any less of God's providence in our life than there was in the life of the Hebrew lad? He did not see the providence at the time; not until afterwards did the dark clouds disclose their silver lining, or the rough iron fetters reveal themselves as gold. Not until afterwards shall we see how our disappointments, hardships, trials, misfortunes, and wrongs, are all made parts of God's providence for us; but the "afterwards is sure if only we firmly and faithfully follow Christ and keep our own hands *off*. - *Contributed*.

(To be continued)

Lessons from the Life of Joseph

Scripture Reading: Psalm 105:17-23; Genesis chapters 37; 39-50.

(The Herald of Christ's Kingdom - October, 1943)

Joseph and His Dreams

THE story of Joseph begins when he was a lad of seventeen years. His brother Benjamin was four or five years younger. Joseph was sent by his father to his brethren who were herding, the flocks, to find out how they fared. He was unpopular with his brethren, because he was his father's favorite. Jacob showed his favoritism, which, in a family, is most-unwise. It is the dull child, or the weak one, who really needs the more praise and encouragement, the more help and favor; and favoritism for the more talented usually spoils the child; cultivating pride, self-conceit. It is unjust to the others, and draws down upon the favorite their envy and hatred.

Joseph's brethren saw him coming afar off, and said, "Behold, this; dreamer cometh. Joseph had had some dreams in one of which his brothers' sheaves bowed down to his sheaf; the sun, moon, and stars made obeisance to him. With boyish simplicity he told his dreams and his brothers never forgave him. The dreams were divine intimations of the boy's future; but the hints of his present or possible superiority over them made their envy the more bitter.

Sixty miles he had come to find how they fared and carry back word to his father. Doubtless they knew him afar off by his coat of bright colors. "Behold, this dreamer cometh," they said. "Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will 'become of his dreams." Here we see the fearful danger of allowing envious thoughts to remain in the heart. Envy grew into murder-murder of their own brother! We are reminded of the wisdom of Paul's counsel, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." We should instantly crush the merest beginnings of envy. Ere we close each day, we should see that every feeling of bitterness against any person is cast, out of our heart. It should be a time of forgiving and forgetting all injury or unkindness done us by any one.

But Joseph was not killed: his mission was not yet ended. His brother Reuben was not ready for murder, and proposed casting him into a dry pit, intending to rescue him later. His suggestion was accepted; Joseph was cast into a pit, and they sat down to eat. In all this, God's providence was working. As they ate, they saw a caravan coming, and Judah proposed they sell Joseph to the passing men chants. It seemed good to them for two reasons: They would get rid of the boy's blood-and blood is always a troublesome thing on one's hands. It will not wash off. Besides there would be a little money in the transaction. So they hastily drew Joseph from the pit, and after parleying with the Midianites they sold him for twenty pieces of silver-\$12.50.

When Reuben returned he found the pit empty, and supposing that Joseph had been killed, he rent his clothes in grief. The other brothers, knowing that some news must be sent to their old father, killed a kid, dipped Joseph's coat in blood, and sent it to the father with the explanation: We found this coat, in this condition, in the field. Does our father think it is his son's coat? The father recognized the coat, and drew the inference they wished, and said, "Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces! So he thought for more than twenty years, and all the years were filled with sore mourning.

LET OUR FAREWELLS BE IN LOVE

Let us pause' here and draw some lessons from this narrative. When Joseph parted from those at home, they thought it was for only a few days' absence. His Grandfather Isaac was still living, and Benjamin was but a small boy. They thought in a few days he would be home again.- No one dreamed that for more than twenty years they would not see his face again-some would never see him again. There is a lesson for us here: Our casual partings too may be for years-may be forever. When we part at our doors in the morning, we never know, whether we shall look in each other's face again or not. We expect to gather in the evening at the fireside; but we never know. Many go out who never come home.

If Jacob had known what was to befall his son, how tender would have been the parting! Above all, we should never separate in an angry or impatient mood, with unforgiveness, bitterness, misunderstanding. No amount of flowers on the coffin will atone for the coldness of the parting, or take the pang out of the bereft heart. Every . parting with loved ones should be sweet enough, kindly enough, for a last farewell.

"If thou dost bid thy friend farewell,
But for one night though that farewell may be,
Press thou his hand in thine.
How canst thou tell how far from thee
Fate or caprice may lead his steps, ere that tomorrow comes?
Men have been known lightly to turn the corner of a street,
And days have grown to months,
And months to lagging years, ere they
Have looked in loving eyes again.
Parting at best is underlaid
With tears and pain:
Therefore, lest sudden death should come between,
Or time, or distance, clasp with pressure firm the hand
Of him who goeth forth:
Unseen, fate goeth, too.
Yea, find thou always time to say some earnest word
Between the idle talk, lest with thee henceforth,
Night and day, regret should walk."

Another lesson: Joseph, the happy lad leaving Hebron for Shechem, had no -inkling of what was to befall him. He expected a kindly welcome on meeting his brothers, and to return quickly to those who loved him. So we know not what lies before us. We spend today in gladness, not knowing that tomorrow will bring us tears. We move on through the flowers, heedless of danger, not suspecting that at our next step we may fall' into some hidden pit. We rejoice in our prosperity, unconscious of the fact that disaster may come any hour and sweep it away. We set out on the happy journey, without thought of the possible accident which may leave us crippled or dead.

What is the lesson? Should this uncertainty of all human affairs sadden our life? No, that is not the lesson. God does not want us to be unhappy while the sun is shining because by and by it will go under a cloud. He wants us to live in today, and enjoy its blessings, and do its work well, though tomorrow may bring calamity. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." How can we do this if we know that the future has in it possibilities of sudden darkness? Only by calm, quiet, trustful faith in God, and obedience' to Him at every step. We sometimes wish we could look into the future, that we might choose our way and avoid the rough paths. But suppose Joseph had been

told how his brothers would treat him, and that he would be sold as a slave. Would he have gone forward? Then what a wonderful story of providence would have been spoiled!

Joseph would have missed all that bright future which lay beyond the period of wrongs and cruelties into which he was first plunged. And think what his people, and the world would have missed!

It would not be well for us to know what is before us; we, would want to meddle with God's plans, thus marring 'our own future, and harming others. Nor should we be afraid and over cautious. Yet this uncertainty ought to hold us near the side of Christ at all times. Nothing can ever really go wrong with us if He is leading us and we are quietly following Him. Though He take us through pain, misfortune, suffering, it is because that is the path to true blessing and good.

JOSEPH A SLAVE AND IN PRISON

A modern writer has a story entitled "Hands Off," which illustrates providence in the life of Joseph. It represents a man in another stage of existence, looking down upon the Hebrew lad in the hands of the Midianites. In this story, being an active, ingenious lad, Joseph escaped from the caravan on the first night after his brothers had sold him. He had just reached the outer edge of the camp when a yellow dog began to bark and awakened the men who were in charge of him, and he was returned to captivity.

However, the onlooker wanted to kill the dog before he had awakened the camp. Then Joseph would have gotten away and would have reached home in safety. Great sorrow and suffering would have been avoided. But the onlooker's guardian said, "Hands off!" And to let him see the evil of interfering, he took him to a world where he could try the experiment and see its results. There he killed the dog. Joseph reached home in safety, and his father rejoiced and was 'comforted. It certainly seemed a better way than the other. But when the famine came, there had been no Joseph in Egypt to foretell it, and to prepare for it, and there was no food laid up in storehouses. Palestine and Egypt were devastated by starvation. Great numbers died, and the savage Hittites destroyed those whom the famine had spared. Civilization was set back centuries. Egypt was blotted out. Greece and Rome remained in a barbarous state. The history of the whole world was changed and countless evils came—all because a man in his ignorant wisdom killed a dog, saving a boy from present trouble, to his own and the world's future great loss.

We would better keep our hands off God's providences. Peter wanted to keep Jesus back from the cross; suppose he had done so, what would have been the result? No doubt many a time love has kept a life back from hardship, sacrifice, and suffering, thereby blighting or marring a destiny. We are likely to pity the boy Joseph as we see him enter his period of humiliation, as we read of his being sold as a slave, and then cast into irons. But if human pity could have rescued him from this sad part of his life, the glorious part that followed, with all its blessed service to the world, would have been lost.

Few truths are more sustaining to Christian faith than this, that our times are in God's hands. We forget it too often, and fret when life brings hard things to endure, when our own plans are broken. But some day we shall see that God knew best.

"How oft, O God, when we have wept in vain
O'er Thy decrees and blurred, with fretful tears
The heavenward window of the soul, appears
Thy purpose sweet and wise, in after years,

Like sunshine streaming through the veils of rain!

"If we had had our way -- if Thou hadst given
The lesser good in our imploring hands,
Withholding larger; if the small demands
Of human choice, that sees nor understands

Life's broader issues, had prevailed with heaven;
"If we had never wept, nor known the keen,
Pure, cleansing pain of sorrow's sacred fire --
The broken tie, the unfulfilled desire --
Our sluggish lives had never risen higher,
But fixed in self, had ever selfish been.

"But Thou hast led us out of self, hast shown"
How love's great -circle rounds from soul to soul,
How sorrow makes us quick to others' dole
And binds each unit in the larger whole
Of life and love, complete in Thee alone.

"O God, Thy thought infolds us all! the days
Ev'n of this brief, imperfect life attest,
Ere they are spent, Thy will is ever best.
Oh, may we in Thy love and wisdom rest,
For Thou dost know the end of all our days!"

Joseph was seventeen when the caravan bore him off as a slave to Egypt. He was thirty when called from prison to become prime minister of Pharaoh. The whole period of his humiliation was therefore thirteen years. The three points we wish to consider are, his slave life, his great temptation, and his, prison life. The special thing to mark is that Joseph went through all the experiences unhurt. This is a secret worth learning-how to meet injustice, wrong, cruelty, inhuman treatment, temptation, misfortune, in such manner as to receive no harm from the experience. Let us see how Joseph bore himself so as to rob these experiences of their bitterness and power to harm, and extract from each of them blessing and good,

A SORE TEST OF CHARACTER

Think of the sense of wrong which must have filled his thoughts as he remembered the treatment he had received from his brothers. They had torn him away from his home. They had been about to kill him. They had treated him, with heartless cruelty. They had sold him as a slave. Surely it was hard to keep one's heart sweet and free from bitterness with such a sense of injustice.

Add to this the hardness of the new condition in which Joseph found himself. He was among strangers. He had not a friend in all the land. Not a face he had ever seen, passed, before him. Many a stranger in a strange land is free to make his life what he will, and is soon on the "way to success. But Joseph was a slave, in bonds. Potiphar saw him in the slave market, and bought him as he might a horse. It is hard to conceive of a condition more discouraging. It was a sore test of character to which he was exposed. If the treatment he had received from his brothers was enough to make him bitter, his present circumstances seem enough to have crushed his spirit. There are people who have not had the tenth part of Joseph's trouble but who are embittered against the world and denounce it as cold and heartless and ungrateful. Others having been wronged; grow hard and vindictive, and, live only to repay the injustice they have received with like injustice

blow for blow. Still others sullenly surrender to the injuries they have received and with broken spirit creep through life like wrecks drifting on the sea, pitiable spectacles.

Few there are who pass through such experiences of injustice and cruelty as those Joseph met and keep their heart sweet and gentle, their faith in God bright and clear, and their spirit brave and strong. It showed the wholesomeness of Joseph's nature that he passed through these galling experiences unhurt. He was not soured toward men. He did not grow morbid, sullen, or disheartened. Though a slave, he accepted his position with cheerfulness, and entered heartily into his new life, doing his duties so well that he soon became overseer in his master's house. He did not waste time or strength in weeping over his misfortunes, or grieving over his wrongs, nor exhaust himself in self-pity. The darkness of Joseph's life was not allowed to enter his heart. This was one of the great secrets of his victorious living. With hatred all about him, he kept love in his heart. Enduring injuries, wrongs, and injustices, his spirit was forgiving. With a thousand things to discourage, and dishearten him, to break his spirit, he refused to be discouraged. Because other men lived unworthily was but a stronger reason why he should live worthily. Because he was treated cruelly and wickedly was fresh reason why he should give to others about him the best service of love and, unselfishness. That his condition was hard, was to him a new motive for living heroically and nobly.

THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

So we find the spirit of Joseph unbroken under all that was galling and crushing in his circumstances. The lesson can not be too urgently pressed. Many people find life hard. Sometimes wrong; and injustice make the days bitter. Sometimes the atmosphere of daily life is one of strife, petty persecution, miserable fault-finding, incessant opposition, nagging, criticism. Home life ought to be ideally loving, inspiring, encouraging, helpful, full of all kindness and grace. Yet there are homes little better than Joseph's, where instead of love are envy, selfishness, bitterness. There are those who must live continually amid unjust opposition and antagonism.

The problem of life is to keep the heart sweet and kindly amid all injustice and wrong; to keep the spirit brave and cheerful in the midst of life's circumstances and conditions; to be true and right and strong in all moral purpose and deed, however others may act toward us. We must be unselfish and loving, though even our nearest friends prove selfish and cruel to us. We must keep our spirit strong, cheerful and hopeful, though adversities and misfortunes seem to leave us nothing of the fruit of all our labors. In a word, we are to live victoriously, nobly, sweetly, cheerfully, songfully, in spite of whatever maybe uncongenial in our condition.

This is the lesson from the first period of Joseph's humiliation. This is the lesson of all Christian life. We should not let the outside darkness into our soul, should seek to be delivered from all morbidness, all dwelling upon our own difficulties and unhappinesses, from continually talking about our unpleasant experiences. We should not allow anything to crush us. Though a slave as to our condition, our spirit should be free.

We read that Joseph bore himself so genially, and did his work so well, and was so capable, so true, so trustworthy, that Potiphar left all he had in his hand: "He knew not aught that was with him, save the bread which he did eat." Joseph would never have won such a success if he had given up to discouragement, if he had brooded over his wrongs, if he had sulked or complained, if he had spent his time in vain regrets or in vindictive feelings. We should learn the lesson, and it is worth learning, for it is life's highest and best-lesson. It is the victory of the faith in Christ which overcometh the world.

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Another part of Joseph's humiliation was his temptation. He had been in Potiphar's house for several years. He had lived so worthily and wrought so faithfully that he had his master's fullest confidence and had risen to the first place among all the servants. We can think of the boy's dreams of greatness as again coming into the mind of the young man as he found himself so honored. His temptation, was that of an intrigue with Potiphar's wife, perhaps thereby to rise to yet higher prominence, to throw off the slave's chains and become a man of rank in the land. No eye of one who worshiped his God was upon him to inspire him to what was pure, true, and noble. He was in a heathen land, where the standard of morals was low and doubtless such intrigues were common. He had not the social restraints which we find about us today.

But he met the temptation on far higher grounds; on grounds of pure principle. Note his answer to the solicitation of his temptress: "Behold, my master knoweth not what is with me in the house, and he hath put all that he hath into my hand; there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Two motives appear in this answer. One is loyalty to his master. Potiphar had trusted him implicitly with all that he had. Could he now be guilty of such a base wrong to the man who had placed such confidence in him? Such an act would have been treachery to his friend. In the face of this flattering solicitation of this woman of high rank, and regardless of the consequences which the offending of her might bring upon him, he kept his eye fixed on his duty and wavered not, but tore himself away from the temptation, his soul unstained.

The other motive which saved him was his loyalty to God. "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? All sin is against God. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned," said David in his penitence. We can never get away from our relation to God in any act of our life.

Another element of Joseph's nobleness of character appears in his silence under false accusation. It is not recorded that he said a word to Potiphar to turn suspicion upon the accusing wife. He seems to have thought still of Potiphar's honor, and rather than lay a stain upon it he would go to the dungeon under a false charge; leaving to God the vindication of his own honor and the proving of his innocence. It has been said, For his purity you will find his equal, one among a thousand; for his mercy, scarcely one-. There are persons who bear reproach and odium to shield others. Joseph had resisted temptation to be loyal to Potiphar; now Potiphar thinks him guilty of the very baseness which for 'love of him lie had scorned to commit. But in all this Joseph kept his heart sweet; and loving.

Sometimes it seems to cost very dearly to be loyal to God. Joseph now lay in a dungeon. But his loss through doing right was nothing, in comparison with what he would have lost had he done the wickedness to which he was tempted. His prison gloom, deep as it was, was as noontide, compared with what would have been the darkness of his soul under the blight of evil and the bitterness of remorse. Though his feet were in fetters; his conscience was free, and his heart was pure. . Better to suffer any loss, any cost, any sacrifice, than to sin against God. The lesson of Joseph's victory over temptation is: anything-dishonor, loss, dungeon; death -- before sin.

Another phase of Joseph's humiliation was his prison life. The Psalmist says of him (Psa. 105:18): "His feet they hurt with fetters he was laid in chains of iron." This, then, was the reward of being true to God and duty! He had resisted sin, and here he was in irons, while his guilty temptress was posing as an injured woman, receiving compassion and enjoying luxury.

However bitter the prison may have been at first to Joseph, he was not yet crushed, but the noble soul within him rose above the effects of the misfortune and wrong he had suffered. He did not despair, but his old aptitude for meeting life with courage and hope showed itself. "The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison. . . . The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand." His manhood was not in chains. The fetters, did not hurt his soul. He was victorious over all the wrong, the in justice, the false accusation, the suffering. He found his period of; humiliation a time of growth, of discipline, of training, producing in his heart hope, joy and love. And when at length he was called from prison to sit beside the king, he was so well fitted for greatness that his head; was not turned by the pinnacle of honor and fame.

So we get from this part of our story the lesson of victory over all of life's conditions. Be true to God, true to yourself," true to your fellow men. The record is that "The Lord was with, Joseph, and shewed kindness unto him, . . and that which he did the Lord made to prosper." Likewise, 'if, we are true to God, He will bless us, and will use even our misfortunes to train us for a larger, better, nobler, more useful life. Christ is with us; His life is in us; and nothing should be allowed to crush us. Live close to Christ and the world's power cannot hurt you nor its darkness dim your soul's light.

FROM PRISON-TO PALACE

This story reads like a romance. In the morning Joseph was in prison. He had been there probably three years. He knew of nothing that gave any hope of release. In the evening, he was wearing the king's ring, was arrayed in vestures of fine linen, had a gold chain about his neck and was honored as next to the king. It seems too strange to be true, yet it was true.

Though he was in prison, he was not a criminal; he was there on false charges. We see a man with a pure soul, though under the cloud of a black charge. May it not be so with some one we know, of whom people allege dishonorable things, but who in God's sight is innocent? We should stand for justice and charity toward all. We should shut our ears to the insinuations and whisperings of the slanderer's tongue. It was a lie that put the felon's garb and chain on Joseph and robbed him of his good name. Be slow to believe an accusation against another. One false mouth can destroy the reputation won by a life time of worthy deeds. Let' us see to it that we have the love that thinketh no evil.

Joseph was suffering wrongfully; but his case demonstrates the truth declared by the Psalmist: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall make thy righteousness go forth as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." (Psa. 37:5, 6.) We, too, may safely leave *our* vindication to the Lord.

The life of Joseph remained gentle, beautiful and, sweet under all the terrible trials of those thirteen years. Yet some of us can hardly keep sweet under, little or imaginary slights, the microscopic hurts and injustices of every-day life. And what though our trials may be severe and long? The noble bearing of Joseph teaches us to be superior to *all* circumstances and conditions, to *all* unkind or unjust treatment. Discouragement is undivine. We must be strong in the grace of God. We must be unconquerable through Him that loved us and gave Himself for us. We must put misfortunes, adversities, personal injuries, sufferings, trials, under our feet, and tread ever upward on them.

"We rise by the things that are under our feet;

By what we have mastered of good or gain;
By, the pride deposed, and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

Remember, your problem in living, is to keep sweet, to keep your heart gentle, brave, strong, loving, full of hope, under the *worst* that the years can bring you of injustice, hardship, suffering, and trial. That is what Joseph did; then, when he was suddenly wanted for a 'great duty, he did not fail.

Something went wrong, one day in the world above Joseph's dungeon. There was trouble in Pharaoh's palace," and two high officials were hurried off to prison. God is always coming down to us through unlikely paths; meeting us unexpectedly. We know not what trivial occurrence any day may affect all our after course unto the end" of life. The touching of Joseph's life by these prisoners from the palace was a link in the chain by which he was .to be lifted out of prison.

Yet it seemed for a long time as if nothing would come of this contact. Joseph told the meaning of the men's dreams, and in three days what' he had said came true. As the chief butler went out happy from the prison, to resume his old duties, Joseph said to him: "Think on me when it, shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and-bring, me out of this house." No doubt the butler promised to do so. But the pathetic words of the record are: "Yet did' not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

The butler was restored to his place in the palace and the brilliance of the royal presence. Waiting in his prison, doubtless Joseph hoped each day to be released through the strong influence of his friend at court -- waited and hoped, but there was no answering token. Two years passed, and still Joseph was in prison: the chief butler had forgotten him.

Many there have been in all ages who would condemn the ingratitude of this Egyptian officer, and yet who repeat his sin. At the time when help comes to us, or deliverance, or favor, our hearts are warm with gratitude. We say with sincere intention that we will never forget this kindness. But do we never forget it? Alas, we are all too prone to remember wrongs, but to forget kindnesses. We write the record of our grudges in marble, and of favors in water. The lesson, is that we should write the record of hurts and wrongs done us in water, and of kindness shown to us, in stone.

Yet see how God uses even *ibis* adversity to Joseph's final good.' Had he been released at once he was still a slave, and might have been sold away from the city. Or had he been set free, he would likely have returned to Canaan. He would not likely have been in reach when he was sought for to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. And so all the future blessings would have been thwarted.

But while Joseph was left in prison, God's purposes were ripening in the world outside, and Joseph's character was ripening into strength and self discipline within the dungeon walls. In God's providences, nothing comes a moment too soon, and nothing lags, coming too late. He whose hand moves the machinery of the universe is also our Father. And all the wrongs suffered may, by the divine touch, be transmuted into blessings.

Shall we suppose that Joseph's life was in God's hand in any exceptional sense? Is there any less of God's providence in our life than there was in the life of the Hebrew lad? He did not see the providence at the time; not until afterwards did the dark clouds disclose their silver lining, or the rough iron fetters reveal themselves as gold. Not until afterwards shall we see how our disappointments, hardships, trials, misfortunes, and wrongs, are all made parts of God's providence for us; but the "afterwards is sure if only we firmly and faithfully follow Christ and keep our own hands *off* . - *Contributed.*

(To be continued)

The Church of the Living God

"The Church of the living. God, the pillar and ground of the truth." - 1 Tim. 3:15.

"And he is the Head of the Body, the Church." - Col. 1:18.

AS BIBLE students well know, the word "church" (ecclesia) means a called out or selected body. In the New Testament there are various beautiful word pictures of this Body. When Jesus used the illustration of the vine and branches, he presented the matter from the viewpoint of connection and growth: He said, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." As in the vine, the sap, and therefore the vitality, flows to the branches through the main stem, even so does all spiritual strength and vitality come to the Christian through Christ Jesus; and according to this picture the all-important thing, is to abide in him.

When the Master spoke of the shepherd and his sheep, he set forth another point of view, namely, that of recognition, guardianship, protection, and care. A sheep recognizes the voice of the shepherd, "and a stranger they will not follow," for they know not the voice of strangers." "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." In order, therefore, to enjoy all the benefits of the shepherd's care, one simply has to be a sheep, with the meek, humble, sheep-like disposition that inclines; him to follow the shepherd.

Then Jesus used the parable of the sower and the seed, and four different kinds of soil conditions, with the members of the true Church pictured as good ground hearers, where the growth of the seed was not interfered with but continued until it produced the desired fruit.

In Revelation 1, the Church of God is set forth as seven golden candlesticks. As John looks back, he sees them as here presented. It was Brother Russell's thought that John here pictured the last members of the Body of Christ looking back over the stream of time and beholding the distinctive work of the Gospel Age in the selection of these who were to compose the Church. This is at least true to facts. In the midst of the candlesticks is One described as "like unto the Son of Man." Evidently this is the great antitypical High Priest. The typical high priest of Israel had something to do with the typical candlesticks. It was his duty to see that they were provided with oil, that their wicks were trimmed, and that they produced light. Then what would the antitypical High Priest be doing in the midst of the antitypical candlesticks? Something similar. He would be providing them with the antitypical oil of the holy spirit, trimming off the dross, and seeing to it that they produced the light of truth.

This picture, then, shows direct contact. There is no intermediary -- nothing between the High Priest and the candlesticks. He has been exercising personal supervision over his people all through the Gospel Age, and not leaving their care to another. And the Bible distinctly teaches this direct contact.

It says, "He that hath the Son, of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

In the Sixth Volume of the *Scripture Studies* we find a forceful illustration set forth -- that of the street car: Away of somewhere there is a power station where the electrical energy is generated. Up above, there is a wire along which the current travels. There is a trolley arm that reaches up and catches the wire. Then the motorman applies the power, and the motor itself transforms it into mechanical energy and the car functions in the desired way. In this illustration the car itself

represents the Christian. The power station is the Heavenly Father, who is the great Source of all power. The wire is our Lord Jesus, the channel of communication between God and man. The trolley arm is our individual faith. The motor-man is our will power, and the electrical -lower that comes down is the holy spirit of the truth,, which is transformed into service for God and gives rise to the fruits and graces that obtain in the Christian's life. The great thing that we must maintain, therefore, is contact with the wire, that is, with Jesus; Christ. Without such contact all our efforts will be in vain. Our final success depends *more on this one thing* than on anything else. We, have, indeed, met persons who have been isolated for many years, with no privileges of class association, and yet they have attained to a remarkable development as Christians, revealing the possession of faith and love to a high degree. This has been accomplished not through contact with other Christians, but *through contact with Christ Jesus*.

This picture of the candlesticks, with Jesus himself in the midst of them -- clearly, concisely, and beautifully presented-is' one of the very finest and most helpful pictures in the entire Book of Revelation. And what can a follower of the Master do better than keep it in mind and endeavor to live up to the lesson it conveys, all along his pilgrim way?

In Revelation 11 we find the members of the Church pictured as those who are called upon to measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein.

'This is a work, indeed, that comparatively few persons assume the, responsibility-of doing. If such a proposition were set before a Roman Catholic, he would probably say something like this: "You see; that is just where we Catholics have the 'advantage over you Protestants. We do not have to do, any measuring. It is all done for us. Over there in Rome we have a high ecclesiastical functionary called the Pope, who is the father of the church. He collaborates with a body of cardinals in producing the measurements of spiritual' things, and these measurements having been approved are then handed down to the archbishops. These gentlemen approve them and pass them to the bishops, and from these they go to the priests and then to the people. So you can thus see what a perfect system for measuring is employed by our church."

And if this proposition were given to a Protestant, he would probably say, "I do not have to measure anything. We keep a minister for that purpose. He is a college graduate and knows his duties. He works out the measurements of all spiritual entities during the week, using his study as the workshop. Then .on Sundays he comes to the church and delivers the measurements to us,"

But we think that something different from the foregoing is indicated by the Revelator. Evidently, the john class is being spoken to. Each member of this class is told to do the measuring. But why should we individually do this work? The answer is, Because no one can possibly do it for us. ' There are various things that no one can do for us. No one but ourselves can take the exercise that our bodies require, or the food we eat, or our sleep at night. No one can count the cost of Christian discipleship for us. So we are called upon to take the divine measuring rod (the Bible) in our own hands and measure as directed. We find then that the temple is numerically small--only 144,000, but the requirements thereof are large. Just what are these requirements? One of them is, "If we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him." "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him." Another is, "Except a man take up his cross daily and follow me, he cannot be my disciple." A third is, "Except a man forsaketh all that-he hath, he cannot be my disciple." This last one is very large, for it takes in all that we have. But some one may ask, if this is literally true. We think that such is indeed the case. Just when do we give up all that we have? We do this when we consecrate to God. That was the time when we came into partnership with God.

Suppose that a man were operating a small business. After a time" he finds himself on the verge of failure. Then a multimillionaire comes along and says to him, "The best thing you can do is to join up with me. I have money and will not permit you to fail. But you must put the business in my name." Then the partnership is formed in like manner some of us were operating the little business of our own lives, and ere long' failure stared us in the face. It was then God' came into our life and offered to go into partnership with us. This was a big thing. It meant that we had to put the business in his name. We had to recognize him as owning everything that we had formerly thought we owned. This would apply to house, furniture, land, money, children, eyes, ears, hands, feet, brains, and life itself. When these things are given to God, we know that our business cannot possibly fail. But we must not fail to use them in his service. If he wants us to have a meeting in his house, we must not refuse. And he has a, right to, ask us to take some of his people to, a meeting in his car. When our house belongs to him, we have the best fire insurance in the world: When we ourselves belong to him, we have the best life insurance in the world. But we must not forget and go back on our bargain, for if he withdrew' his protecting care from around us, Satan might get in and destroy us. We must stand by the agreement that we have made. Thus we, see what it means to measure the temple of the Lord. It simply means to find out what it implies to be a Christian in a practical way.

When some hear of these measurements, they say; "Oh, I could never measure up to such requirements. You see, I have a somewhat crusty disposition, a raspy temper, an unruly tongue, and other defects that I hate to mention." Well, our answer to this is that no one will ever measure up to the temple's requirements through the merits of the flesh. He can do so only in the spirit. If his heart is set on righteousness, the Lord will be pleased with him. And if he can daily say, "Thy will be done, then his heart is set in the right direction, and he is measuring lip to the temple and its requirements in the only manner that will be possible for him in this world.

In the 15th chapter of Revelation we read of the Church of God as a: victorious company standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire, having gained the victory over the beast, the image of the beast, his mark, and the number of his name. This is evidently a picture of the Church at the close of the Gospel Age. A vantage ground is clearly indicated, and a condition of transparency, for glass is transparent. God's people today can see things that other people cannot see. That is, they can see the meaning of things in the light of fulfilled prophecy. They understand the significance of the present war, and the entire state of unrest and upheaval that the world is in. They know that prophecy is being fulfilled in many running to and fro, and knowledge being increased, and in many other ways. So they live in hope of the blessed time to come, for they realize that the present is but a transition period.

And they are pictured as having won a fourfold victory-over the beast, the image of the beast, his mark, and the number of his name. And what is the beast? That is quite a question. If Pastor Russell had fully known the answer to this question, without doubt he would have written the seventh volume of *Scripture Studies* on the Book of Revelation. But the best he could do was to treat of fulfilled prophecy up to his time, leaving the rest for later revelation. However, whatever the beast may finally turn out to be, it would seem very clear that those who win the victory over it will have to gain the victory over fear, and do so by the possession of that perfect love that casteth out fear. This would also apply to the image of the beast, for the image of the beast must look like the beast or it would not be an image.

THE MARK OF THE BEAST

And what; of the "mark of the beast"? Seventh Day Adventists believe this to be the mark of Sabbath observance; but we do not think so. It was Pastor Russell's thought that it was a kind of

sectarian mark, as evidenced by the fact that those not possessing it were not allowed to buy or sell (traffic in spiritual wares) which indicated its sectarian character. Some persons might feel disposed to question such an idea. However this may be, the fact remains that the members of the true Church of Christ are required to gain the victory over sectarianism. Many times the Pastor said, "The true Church is not sectarian. The Gospel is not sectarian. No one can tell who will finally be of the elect company. Therefore, we are not, to judge the brethren, but leave all judgment in the Lord's hands."

There are two great marks in the Book of Revelation. One of these is the mark or seal of God, and the other is the mark of the beast. Now what is the mark or "seal of the living God"? What could it be but love? If God is love, what would he seal his people with but the element that chiefly represents; himself? And we think that Paul makes this matter very clear in the 13th chapter of First Corinthians. Then what would the "mark of the beast" be? Would it not be the opposite of the mark or seal of God? Therefore, in the last analysis would it not amount to a lack of love? That is to say, it is only those who lack love who will wear the mark of the beast, whatever definite form that mark may eventually assume. Is it not a [fact that all who claim to be the Lord's people will wear one of these marks -- either that of God, or that of the beast? Possibly in a spiritual sense, this mark is already in evidence, and this suggests the question, which of these two marks do we wear?

THE NUMBER OF HIS NAME

And those on the sea of glass are said to have the victory over the number of the beast's name. And what is this? It is said to be on the Pope's crown in the words, *Vicarius Fuji Dei*, three Latin words meaning "Vicar of the Son of God," which is one of the Pontiff's titles. It was the Pastor's thought that this took in more than the Papal system, and in a *Tower* article he gave a number of other possible interpretations,

Now let us examine the first interpretation-the application to the Roman Catholic system. If there are three sixes on the Pope's crown, it is reasonable to believe that they indicate three elements in that system-elements that have made it what it has been throughout the Gospel Age. But are there three such elements? We believe there are, and that they were mentioned in the Fourth Volume of *Scripture Studies*. The first of them is the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, which means that the Pope is the successor of the Apostles, and therefore the head of the Church of Christ on earth. So then it is the doctrine of big earthly headship vested in the Pope. The second six is the claim of channelship, which signifies that the Roman Catholic Church is the one and only channel of truth. And the third is the claim that the people cannot understand the Bible and that therefore it is not for them. So God's Word was taken away and the catechism of the church put in its place.

And is it not a fact that each one of these sixes: has stood in the holy place? Jesus said, "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel the Prophet stand in the holy place, let him that is in Judea flee to the mountain." Any one who claims to be the head of the Church on earth certainly stands in the holy place, for that place is properly occupied by Jesus and Jesus alone. Then Jesus is also the channel of access to God, and there is no other, for he said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." But this place was taken by the other channel, which therefore stood in the holy place. And of earthly things, the Bible is holiest, and when it is taken away and something else put in its place, that other thing stands in the holy place. The doctrine of the mass was also used by Satan in this way.

We can see that this could apply also to certain Protestant systems, which have been, guilty of doing these very things. Indeed, is it not a fact that we all have to keep our eyes open lest we fall

victims to this same danger? Think of that first six-big, headship or leadership. How many classes have been broken up by leadership! It would seem to have done more to scatter the sheep than anything else. And we, do not mean, eldership -- which is of divine ordination -- but group leadership. Some, indeed, have claimed to be Pastor Russell's successors, which is anything but a modest claim and is entirely unwarrantable. Once in a while some brother thinks he has found something wonderful -- something a little different from the rest, and so he goes forth and starts a new group, thus causing division among the Lord's people, instead of encouraging them to, live in harmony and peace. Of course we had to leave old systems where we could not find true Christian liberty, or the real truth. But what we all need today is to press on to attain to the perfection of faith and love.

And then the second six -- the channelship claim. Some have the idea that their group is a special channel being used by the Lord to give out great things to the rest of the friends. And this encourages pride, and is a dangerous doctrine. Then there, are those who have put other things in place of the Bible, which is a very wrong thing to do, for the Bible is the Word of God, and other books are written by man, even though they may be grand books. So we must be on our guard for the third six.

Those who stand on the sea of glass are said to have the victory over the number of the beast, so there must be a real victory to be gained, and if the matter applied only to Catholicism, where would our victory be?, We think that a real test is going on today and that some are in possession of that broadminded love which indicates that they are proving victorious. These have the harps of God and are making music such as God loves to hear the wondrous music of peace, joy, faith, and love.

- *W. Sargeant*

The God I Love

I HAVE been asked by several of my friends many times to put on paper what I feel and know concerning the great God of love and mercy whom I love with all my heart; but due to my lack of education, I have hesitated to do so. The desire keeps coming into my heart to tell others about the God of all people; the God in whom we live and move and have our being. He has, been pictured to the world many, many times and in many, many ways, but I feel a great urge to picture to others a personal God -- one who deals with the individual through the conscience.

Most people picture God as a powerful being and a stern judge who is so far away that so small a creature as a human being could never get in touch with him, much less have fellowship with him and be taught and loved and? cared for by him. Still, in his Word he tells us over and over how he loves his creatures, how he cares for the little sparrows, and how he clothes the grass of the fields, and that even the hairs of our heads are numbered. He asks us to cast all our burdens on him and tells us he will give us rest -- rest and peace that no man, nor anything, can take away from us, and yet we are too interested in the things that we, as human beings, can see and feel, to stop and listen for a moment to the voice of him who created us in his own image and created us for good works. Most of the light has become darkness, and how great is that darkness! Jesus says, "I am the light of the world," and "If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not." He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." These are wonderful words, and we fail so often to make them our own.

The world is looking for a powerful United Nations to bring peace into the world. This will never happen, because the trouble is in men's hearts. God alone knows men's hearts, and he alone can change them. , And the thrilling thing is that one day God *will* change men's hearts, and every knee' will bow to him and every tongue confess that he is their God. "Great peace have they which love thy law and nothing shall offend them."

I see and hear the world all around me day by day, and on every side there is fear and distress people going to and fro searching for peace of mind and never finding it, all because they are looking for it in the wrong place. Peace is something within the individual, and it comes from God, who created the individual. God only can 'give peace, so if we, look for it anywhere else, we are searching in vain.

There are so many doctrines and religions in the world that it is hard to understand God as being the good and merciful God that he is. There is only one doctrine and one religion -- and that is God's own true words -- and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The individual has to want this peace enough to take God's Word and make it his own -- study it diligently and pray without ceasing that he may be counted worthy to be given this wonderful peace which comes only from the God of Peace.

I was, terribly confused until I began to study my Bible for myself. I did not really know God at all, because I was afraid of him, for I had been told that he watched everything we did and if we slipped the least little bit, he sent us to "hell" to burn forever and ever. But something put it in my heart to want to know this great God and judge of all the world, and I began *studying my Bible*, and now I can truthfully say it is my life. The Scriptures tell us that when we come to God, we "must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Then, we must seek him day and night. We all have too much faith in everything but God. We have faith in ourselves, and in our friends, and in the head men of our country; but we have such a little in the great, merciful God of all mankind. It is sad, too, because in him is beauty and love and peace and

understanding. He is closer to us than our best friend, and loves us more than any human being knows how to love.

I am a patient in a home for incurables. I am thirty-one years old, and have been crippled with arthritis since I was twenty-three months old. All the education I have was given me in the hospitals and places of this kind. My physical condition does not worry me in the least, because I have learned that the true riches are of the spirit, and I thank God with all my heart for my position in life. I feel that he has put me where I can learn best of him, and I can also observe the lives of others who should be happy and praising God for their strength and health. I am happy to say I would, not trade my position for anybody else's in the world -- not that I am anything myself, but because, I know the one and only true God and Jesus Christ., his Son, whom he sent into the world that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Every minute *of my* life is one that offers me an opportunity to learn and to serve the God of Love. I have not always loved people, but God has put me in a position to learn to love all types of people. Jesus had compassion on the multitudes, and we have to learn to have that compassion in order to be fit for his Kingdom.

God is not only good to those; who love him; he lets the worst of sinners go on in their own willful way until his due time. Then he will make himself known to them, and they will have a chance to love him and serve him. It is not his will that any should perish. The Scriptures tell us that "We love him, because he first loved us." He first loved us and sent his Son to die for our sins. He who knew no sin was made sin for us. Jesus died for our sins, but was raised from the dead by the power of God. The Apostle Paul tells us, "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also, quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This is, the spirit of love and forgiveness -- the spirit that prompts us to do the Father's will.

God has been so good to me that I wish I could introduce him to every living being as the kind and loving Father he is. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

I am thankful to say that I have two Bible studies in my room each week, and I have a little group of friends who love the same things that I do. We meet and study God's Word together. This is one of my greatest blessings; and it is my life, because I want with all my heart to learn more about this wonderful God of love and mercy. I would rather know more about God and his will for me than to have a healthy, well body or all the money in the world. The Scriptures tell us that man's life is like a vapor which appears for a short time and then vanishes, but God's words and his judgments are right and true and remain forever. This God that I know is a good God and a personal God, and he performs wonders in the lives of those who love and trust him. He lifts our minds above ourselves and above the things of this world which disappear before our eyes, and makes us to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. He is the Father of light and life.

I have many wonderful friends who visit me from time to time, and I thank God for all of them. Some are more spiritually minded than others, but God loves them all, and I want to learn to do the same. Friends are one of God's greatest blessings, and I am thankful to say he has blessed me greatly. I am always happy when my friends visit me, and I am especially happy if they love, the God that I do, and love to talk about him. I am looking forward to and praying for his Kingdom to come and his will to be done in earth as it is in heaven. Jesus told his disciples to pray after this manner, and we know that he would not have told them to pray for something that he could not give, don't we?

Jesus, in one of his parables, says, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." So the Kingdom of God is worth more than all we own or all that this world has to offer. All the hopes and desires of life of the individual depend on this Kingdom, and the Bible teaches us that it will be established, and that when it is all the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness, and every living creature will love and serve the great God of Love with one consent.

- Jesse Burke. (Richmond, VA)

Encouraging Messages

Dear Brethren:

The many articles published in the "Herald" have been, to me, valuable to an extent perhaps not *as* yet realized I find in *them* the ring of purpose and desire, even as those things were spoken of in 2 Corinthians 12:14, "I seek not yours, but you" and also in 1 Thessalonians 2:8, "... because ye were dear unto us." However, to some of us, one article may have a deeper appeal than it has to others. This, of course, for various reasons. To me, the one by our beloved Brother Blackburn which appeared in the October and November issues of our "Herald," is outstanding in many ways. I mean the one, "The True Mark of Christian Maturity."

In these days of compromise and complacency, such an article or address comes with all the dynamic force and power which impelled the Apostles to see Jesus and Jesus only; and which without fear or doubt could say, "I have not shunned to declare "unto you, all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:27.) As the days of the Church are, closing, there is evidently need of such articles and addresses. The "this one thing I do," is to many a standard of too high a grade and so, deadly compromise still obtains in many hearts and minds which have said or sung, "Where He leads me I will follow, I'll go with Him, with Him all the way." To Christ, to Paul, to Peter, and others, the words, "all the way, mean just that! As I read those words of our dear brother on the *essential* Christian maturity, my heart was glad to know that, here and there, are some to whom Christ is; not only a pattern to strive for, but also One in and through whom are possible things which apart from Him would be, impossible.

And His words of Matthew 5:48, and Paul's of 2 Corinthians 9:8, Ephesians 3:16-20, and Philippians 4:13, all confirm the thoughts of ', a victorious life in which sin has no power. (See Matthew 21:22; 1 Corinthians 6:12.) What can Satan do with one who believes and practices those, words? .

In closing let me suggest Isaiah 62:10-12: as a final thought. With every good wish and hope, I am, by grace,

Your brother in the Lord,
W. W. -- B. C.

Dear Brethren:

I have had the "Herald" sent to me by Brother ----- and love it so much I should like to have it sent to -----.

Enclosed \$1.00 for subscription, and may the Lord bless your wonderful work, that it may continue.

Respectfully,
Mrs. S. F. K. -- R. I.

Dear Brethren:

You may never realize how much good I've received from your Vol. II on Revelation. I copied it in longhand, and have made five carbon copies of it by chapter and verse, which I loan out to various interested people. Expect to return the book to you tomorrow, as I have it all packed. .

Your fellow worker in the Lord's service,
H. C. A. -- Mich.

Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute

All lovers of our Lord Jesus and friends of *the* truth are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting of the Institute to be held at 2 p.m. in the office of the Institute at 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn 38, N. Y., Saturday, June 5, as announced in our April' issue. In addition to the primary business of the election of directors, opportunity will be given for consideration of such other matters as may properly come before the meeting.

Members of the Institute who are not receiving the "Herald" in their own name, or the name of a member of the immediate family, but who are readers of the "Herald," *should so* inform the office at once so *that* proxy forms may be sent them.

In addition to the present directors the following *has been* placed *as* nominee:

H. V. WARREN, Rich Hill, Mo.