

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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"Many Infallible Proofs"

"The Lord is risen indeed." - Luke 24:34.

THE STORY of our Lord's resurrection is one of exquisite pathos and beauty. His crucifixion had created despair-had smitten the Shepherd and scattered the sheep. In loving secrecy and weeping silence the faithful few had removed the body from the cross and laid it in the new tomb of Joseph. The great feast came, and while Jerusalem kept holy-day, the disciples had to bear, as best they might, their bitter shame and ruined hopes. But the women could not forget the marred visage, now rigid in death, but once so expressive of holy and beautiful life, and with characteristic devotion, waited to seize the earliest moment to look upon it once more before the effacing fingers of decay had swept the lines of its lingering beauty, and in the little ministrations of tender regretful affection at once express and relieve the sorrow that burdened their hearts. So, in the dim dawn of the morning after the sabbath, they stole to the tomb, only to find in it no buried Lord. **The thought of a resurrection did not occur to them;** they thought only that the grave had been rifled. One of them, Mary of Magdala, fled, in an anguished woman's way, blind to everything but her awful loss, crying: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." But the angels within the tomb, and the Lord without, made the tear-blinded women awake to the strange glad truth: "He is risen, as He said."

Begotten Again unto a Hope of Life by His Resurrection

Before this truth was brought home to them they were in despair. Their hopes were buried in His grave. They had trusted in Jesus, and had entertained high hopes, but now, since Jesus had died, they were sad, their hopes having withered. How different with them when the fact of His resurrection was made known to them! What joy displaced their dejection! It became true of them then, as it has of us who have believed since-they were, and we have been, begotten again unto a hope of life, by His resurrection. Because He lives we have grounds for hoping that we shall live also. In His resurrection lies our assurance.

It is an interesting study to trace in the Gospel narratives and in the Epistles, the harmony which obtains in the various references to the appearances of our Lord. Matthew, Mark and Luke, Peter, John and Paul all make mention of His resurrection. Each account is different, depending upon

the point of view of the writer, but they are unanimous in affirming the fundamental fact that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead. Moreover it is not difficult to combine all these various appearances now distributed amongst the Gospel writers and in the Epistles, and arrange them into one complete and connected picture.. By so doing we perceive that our Lord's first work was that of consoling and encouraging. To Mary Magdalene and the other women He first appeared, turning their sorrow into joy. This was early in the morning on the very day He arose. That same day, in the afternoon, those two downcast disciples who were on their way to Emmaus found their hearts burning within them as a Stranger talked with them and finally revealed Himself as their Lord. Unable to contain themselves, although the hour was late, they hastened back to Jerusalem to tell the good news. But the Lord was traveling faster than they knew. Before they got there He had appeared to another; doubtless before He had appeared to themselves, even. There was one of His disciples whose heart was breaking-one who in an evil moment had denied His Lord. What passed 'between our Lord and Peter we do not know; however, we who are in any measure acquainted with Jesus and know something of His grace can well understand the peace and comfort which possessed Peter after that meeting. At all events, Peter had not been slow to tell the good news, for when the Emmaus disciples came breathlessly with their story they were told: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon." Then, once again, in the late evening of that wonderful resurrection day, while they were rehearsing their own experiences to the Apostles, and how Jesus had been known of them by the old familiar habit of His, of first blessing and then breaking the bread, He once more appeared in their midst, saying, "Peace be unto you."

That Glad Resurrection Day

On the very day of His resurrection, then, first to the women, then to Peter, next to the Emmaus disciples, lastly to the Eleven -- four times in all -- Jesus appeared, each time bringing a sense of peace and comfort, hope and joy. What a day to be remembered for all time!

A week later He appeared to the disciples again, this time for the special benefit of Thomas, who had been absent on the previous occasion, and who had doubted.

Some time later, just when we may not know precisely, Jesus appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, no doubt taking His last leave of the collective Church then. His next appearance seems to have been to James, His "brother," or "kinsman," as the word more exactly means. This appearance is mentioned by St. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, although it is not mentioned elsewhere in the Scriptures. St. Paul, we know, had become personally acquainted with James at Jerusalem, and no doubt learned about this appearance of Jesus from James himself.

Still another appearance to His disciples is recounted 'by the Apostle John, in the last chapter of his Gospel. Seven of the disciples had gone fishing. Perhaps they had grown weary with waiting for the Lord to manifest Himself again. We do not know. At all events they had toiled all night and caught nothing. And, it will be remembered, Jesus revealed Himself to them by telling them where to cast their net to secure a big catch of fish. Finally He took His last leave of them, just before His ascension, leading them out as far as Bethany, appointing them to be His witnesses -- witnesses not only of all the wondrous things He had done and taught in their midst during His ministry; witnesses not only of the fact that He had been crucified and buried; but witnesses especially of His resurrection.

Have I Not Seen Jesus Christ Our Lord?

And yet once more, in order that he, too, might qualify as a witness, Paul was given a glimpse of the resurrected Lord in that never-to-be-forgotten journey on the Damascus road.

St. Paul never forgot this commission. In all his Epistles he speaks of the resurrection of Christ. And when, at the close of his life, the Apostle writes to his son in the faith, Timothy, he reiterates the matter in these words: "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel. But while he mentions the resurrection in all his Epistles, there is one Epistle in which he undertakes to expound the matter in great detail. It is his first letter to the Corinthians. There, in the fifteenth chapter, he unfolds the subject at length, affirming his faith, first, in the resurrection of Jesus; second, in that of the world of mankind as a whole; and third (third in point of mention, though second in order of accomplishment), in that of the Church. Most of the discussion we hope to present in the remainder of this series of meditations will be drawn from this heaven-sent exposition by "our beloved brother" Paul. However, for this meditation let us content ourselves with reviewing the ground already covered.

How Firm a Foundation is Laid for Our Faith!

The doctrine of the resurrection is so fundamental to our faith that all Christians should be thoroughly established therein -- "able to give a reason" for their own hope, and their hopes on behalf of others. Junior students of the Scriptures, especially, and all newly consecrated ones, are urged to become very familiar with all the Bible has to say on this most important subject; while those who have been long in the way will, if they join us in these meditations, experience once again the comfort to be derived from a consideration of "these words." (1 Thess. 4:18.) For example, in the previous paragraphs we have listed all the recorded appearances of our Lord. Let each ask himself the question: Do I know how many there were? To whom they were vouchsafed? In what order they occurred? Where they took place? What the total period of time was during which they all happened? -- all, that is to say, except that to Paul. To get the most out of this first meditation the reader will do well to trace in his own Bible the ten appearances mentioned, and to prayerfully ponder the related contexts of each. Those who do so for the first time will be astonished to find how firm a foundation is laid for their faith; that to the Apostles our Lord showed Himself alive after His passion by "many infallible proofs, being seen of them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." - Acts 1:3.

Our Lord Showed Himself Alive

To assist the student to accomplish, with the minimum effort, the searching of the Scriptures suggested in the previous paragraph we submit the following brief summary:

Appearance No. 1.

To whom-Mary Magdalene and the other women.
Place-At the sepulcher, Jerusalem.
Time-Resurrection Day, early morning.
Scripture-Matt. 28:9; Mark 16:9; John 20:1-18.

Appearance No. 2.

To whom-Peter.
Place-Secret meeting.
Time-Resurrection Day, during daytime.

Scripture-Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5.

Appearance No. 3.

To whom-Cleopas and another.

Place-On road to Emmaus.

Time-Resurrection Day, towards evening.

Scripture-Mark 16:12; Luke 24:13-35.

Appearance No. 4.

To whom-Ten Apostles and others (Thomas absent).
Place-Jerusalem.
Time-Resurrection Day, evening.
Scripture-Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36; John 20:19; 1 Cor. 15:5.

Appearance No. 5.

To whom-Thomas and the rest.
Place-Jerusalem (most probably the same place and circumstances as in appearance No. 4).
Time-The first day of the next week.
Scripture-John 20:26-29.

Appearance No. 6.

To whom-The seven.
Place-By the Sea of Tiberias.
Time-Uncertain (This was the third appearance to the "disciples"-the previous two being appearances Nos. 4 and 5).
Scripture-John 21:14.

Appearance No. 7.

To whom-The Eleven in the midst of five hundred brethren.
Note: Matthew mentions only those who were receiving the apostolic commission.
Place-Galilee.
Time-Uncertain.
Scripture-Matt. 28:16; Mark 16:7; 1 Cor. 15:6.

Appearance No. 8.

To whom-James.
Place-Uncertain (Paul probably learned about this appearance from James himself).
Time-Uncertain.
Scripture-1 Cor. 15:7.

Appearance No. 9.

To whom-The Eleven.
Place-Bethany.
Time-Ascension Day (at the close of forty days).
Scripture-Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-9; 1 Cor. 15:7.

Appearance No. 10.

To whom-Saul (afterwards called Paul).
Place-On the Damascus road.
Time-Some time after the Ascension.
Scripture-Acts 9:5; 1 Cor. 15:8.

"This Jesus Hath God Raised Up"

It is strengthening, too, to faith and consecration, to trace in the Acts of the Apostles how our Lord's chosen "witnesses," -- witnesses of His resurrection -- (John 15:27; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8, 22) -- proceeded to carry out their commission. Our Lord had said: "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." But first they were to receive "power." "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem," was His word, "until ye be endued with power from on High." (Luke 24:49.) Accordingly we find them waiting at Jerusalem in prayer and supplication (Acts 1:14), until they had received the promise of the Father. Then commenced the work of witnessing, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4.) One cannot but be impressed with the prominence given to the "resurrection of Jesus" in this, their first witness given under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit:

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth . . . by wicked hands have crucified .and slain; **whom God raised up**, having loosed the pains ["grip," Fenton] of death; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." - Acts 2:22-24.

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." - Acts 2:32.

"They taught the people, and **preached through** Jesus the resurrection from the dead." - Acts 4:2.

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, **whom God raised from the dead**, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole." - Acts 4:10.

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew." - Acts 5:30.

Thus it was that at Jerusalem "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." - Acts 4:33.

"I know that my Redeemer lives;
What joy the blest assurance gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my everlasting Head!

"He lives, to bless me with His love;
He lives, who bought me with His blood;
He lives, my hungry soul to feed;
He lives, my help in time of need.

"He lives, and grants me daily strength;
Through Him I soon shall conquer death;
Then all His glories I'll declare,
That all the world His life may share."

- P. L. Read

- From the Herald, April, 1947

Laborers Together with God

*These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges:
there they dwelt with the king for his work. - 1 Chron. 4:23.*

With infinite care and forethought God has chosen the place in which you can do your best work for the world. You may be lonely, but you have no more right to complain than the lamp has, which has been placed in a niche to illumine a dark landing or a flight of dangerous stone steps. The master of the house may have put you in a very small corner and on a very humble stand; but it is enough if it be his blessed will. Some day he will pass by, and you shall light his steps as he goes forth to seek and save that which is lost; or you shall kindle some great light that shall shine like a beacon over the storm swept ocean. Thus the obscure Andrew was the means of igniting his brother Peter, when he brought him to Jesus.

- Author unknown.

The lesson seems twofold, First, that anywhere and everywhere we too may dwell with the King for his work. We may be in a very unlikely or unfavorable place for this-it may be in a literal country life, with little enough to be seen of the goings of the King around us; it may be among hedges of all sorts, hindrances in all directions; it may be, furthermore, with our hands full of all manner of pottery for our daily task.

No matter! The King who placed us there will come and dwell there with us; the hedges are all right, or he would soon do away with them, and it does not follow that what seems to hinder our way *may* not be for its very protection; and as for the pottery, why, that is just exactly what he has seen fit to put into our hands, and therefore it is, for the present, his work.

Secondly, that the dwelling and the working must go together. If we are indeed dwelling with the King, we shall be working for him too, as we have opportunity. The working will be as the dwelling-a settled, regular thing, whatever form it may take at his appointment. Nor will his work ever be done when we are not dwelling with him. It will be our own work then, not his, and it will not abide. We shall come under the condemnation of the vine which was pronounced empty, because he bringeth forth fruit unto himself.

We are to dwell with the King for his work; but he will see to it that it shall be for a great deal besides-for a great continual reward according to his own heart and out of his royal bounty -for peace, for power, for love, for gladness, for likeness to himself.

Laborers together with God! workers together with him! the Lord working with us! admitted into divine fellowship of work! -- will not this thought ennoble everything he gives us to do today, even if it is among plants and hedges! Even the pottery will be grand!

- F. R. Havergal.

When the Master of all the workmen
Called me into the field,
I went for him light and happy,
The tools of his service to wield;
Expectant of high position,
As suited my lofty taste --
When Lo! He set me weeding
And watering down in the waste.

Such puttering down in the hedges!
A task so thankless and small!
Yet I stifled my vain discomfort
And wrought for the Lord of all,
Till, meeker grown, as nightly
I sank to my hard-won rest
I cared but to hear in my dreaming,

"This one has done his best."
The years have leveled distinctions,
There is no more "great" nor "small";
Only faithful service counts
With the Lord of all;
And I know that, tilled with patience,
The dreariest waste of clod
Shall yield the perfect ideal
Planned in the heart of God.

- *Author unknown.*

Half Hour Meditations on Romans

No. 30

Being justified (declared righteous -- Rotherham) freely by His grace through the redemption (deliverance -- Weymouth) that is in Christ Jesus. -- Rom. 3:24

*In the March HERALD we noted that the word *apolutrosis* here translated "redemption" appears only ten times in the New Testament and that in each case it signifies *deliverance*. (See page 40.) But what is the deliverance to which the Apostle refers? I answer: The context must in each case decide. In Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:23, and Eph 4:30 the reference is undoubtedly to the final deliverance of the church. In Eph 1:14 the reference is to the final deliverance not only of the church but also of the whole of mankind, including the earth, mans home. In Heb 9:15 the reference is to the deliverance granted believing Jews from transgressions which took place under their old Law Covenant. In yet another place (Heb 11:35), the reference is to a deliverance the Ancient Worthies refused, preferring death. In 1 Cor. 1:30, another instance, the word would seem to apply both to the final deliverance of the church and also to their present justification by faith. We will briefly examine these ten texts in which *apolutrosis* occurs.*

(1) Luke 21:28: *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption (deliverance) draweth nigh.* When the deliverance here spoken of "draweth nigh" then the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Luke 21:31). "There is no reference here to the ransom or to the conditions precedent to the Churchs deliverance, but merely to the deliverance itself," namely *the final deliverance of the Church.*

(2) Rom. 8:23: *Even we ourselves (the faithful church) groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption (deliverance) of our Body [the Church, the Body of Christ, which is to be glorified with the Head, in due time].* "Nothing in this statement has the slightest reference to the redemption accomplished at Calvary, the purchase price; it refers purely and solely to the deliverance of the Church, which is to be *a part of the result* of the redemption finished at Calvary -- the ransom." Again the reference is seen to be *to the final deliverance of the Church.*

(3) 1 Cor. 1:30: *Of him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption [deliverance].* "Nothing here has any reference to the redemption price paid at Calvary. The Apostle is speaking, not of what our Lord *did* for us, *but of what he is yet to do for us.* . . . He will, in due time, deliver from the bondage of corruption, death, the Church which he purchased with his own blood. The deliverance, not the purchase, is here referred to," and again it is seen to refer to *the final deliverance of the Church, although it may here "very properly be applied also to the intermediate and incidental deliverances of the faithful all along the narrow way, culminating in salvation to the uttermost in the glory, honor and immortality of the First Resurrection."*

(4) Eph 1:7: *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption [deliverance] through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* Here the word "deliverance" is explained for us. It is the forgiveness of sins, *not, . . . the sin or sins of Adam but our own.* "Thy sins be forgiven thee (Matt. 9:2). Deliverance here, then, refers not to the sacrifice at Calvary but to the reckoning as righteous those who were in fact sinners, or in other words it refers to *the justification by faith of the ungodly.*

Thus seen, the word does not refer to the final but to a present deliverance.

(5) Eph 1:14: *Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption [deliverance] of the purchased possession. "The possession which Christ purchased by the sacrifice for sins as mans substitute includes mankind in general, or so many as will accept the favor on the Gospel conditions, as well as the Church, the Bride. The time for the deliverance is in the Millennial Kingdom and the Church is to be delivered first - - early in the morning. But the earth was part of mans original estate and was purchased by the same sacrifice once for all: hence it too is to be delivered from its share of the curse and shall become as the garden of the Lord -- Paradise. The purchase is accomplished but the deliverance waits for Gods due time. "The word, then, has reference to the final deliverance of both the Church and the rest of the world of mankind, including the earth, mans home.*

(6) Eph 4:30 :*"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption [deliverance]" "There is no reference here to the redemption sacrifice finished at Calvary. Yet not until that sacrifice was finished, and its merits presented in the holy of holies, and accepted by the Father, did the Holy Spirit come upon any and seal them as sons of God. But now these who have been sealed are to maintain this spirit of sonship, this begetting of the Divine nature, not to lose it. The sealing of the Holy Spirit is the first- fruit of the Spirit, and is all that is communicated during this present life, for the full measure of the blessing of the Divine nature we must wait until the time appointed of the Father, the 'day of deliverance ,' the Millennial Day, in which day the Scriptures declare, concerning the Church, the Bride of Christ, 'God shall help her early in the morning. "(Psa. 46:5.) Whoever loses the Holy Spirit and its seal will have neither part nor lot in the First Resurrection, in the morning of the 'day of [complete] deliverance' from the power of sin and death. In this passage the context again discloses a reference to the final deliverance of the Church.*

(7) Col. 1:14: *In whom we have redemption [deliverance] through his blood even the forgiveness of sins. This will be readily seen in a parallel passage in Eph 1:7, "We believers already have deliverance, that is, the forgiveness of our sins, and hence harmony with the Father. The word 'redemption' here has no reference to the sacrifice for sins, but merely to its effect upon us, setting us free from our sins. The Apostle, however, does not ignore the sacrifice, but declares that our deliverance from the bondage and control of sin is through the efficacy of our Lord's blood -- his death, his sacrifice for sins, the ransom paid." The word then relates, as in Eph 1:7, not to the final but to a present deliverance .*

(8) Heb 9:15 :*"For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption [deliverance] of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."*

"Once more a faulty rendering partly obscures the meaning; but when the thought is seen to be deliverance all is clear." The evident reference is to the deliverance already experienced by the believing Jew from transgressions which had taken place under the Old Law Covenant.

(9) Heb 11:35 :*"Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance." "This is the one instance in which the translators have properly rendered this word." Obviously it has reference to a deliverance that could have been accepted by the worthy ones of a previous Age, but in which death was preferred.*

(10) Rom. 3:24: *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption [deliverance] that is in Christ Jesus." Coming now to this, our text, it should not be difficult, in the light of the*

foregoing discussion to see that the deliverance here spoken of is akin to that mentioned in Eph 1:7 and Col. 1:14. It is a *present deliverance*, even the forgiveness of sins. No reference is here made to the great sacrifice for sins, but merely to the present effect upon believers, setting them here and now free from their sins; reckoning as righteous those who in fact are sinners. "The Apostle does not in these words refer to the ransom but merely *to the deliverance which the Lord's people have, now reckonedly*, and by and by prospectively in the resurrection. He is treating the matter from God's standpoint: believers are freely, unconditionally, justified; aside from any works of merit on their part.

This is accomplished through the *deliverance* which God has provided in Christ Jesus our Lord."
-- *Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. V, Page E434.

CONCLUSION

The thought of the Apostle then seems clear. He is discussing, not Adamic condemnation and death and the way of deliverance therefrom to eternal life through the ransom sacrifice of Christ, but while not ignoring that sacrifice, is, for wise reasons, limiting his discussion to personal willful sins and how by faith, believers may be *here and now forgiven* them, *delivered* from them, *justified* from them -- how by *faith they may be declared righteous* by God. And so far as this faith-righteousness is concerned, its method is freely [*without cause* in us (see March "Herald," page 39)], its origin is in God, and its all sufficient ground is *the deliverance that is in Christ Jesus*.

-- P. L. Read

Signs of the End of the Age

"What shall be the sign of thy presence (mistranslated "coming") and of the end of the Age (mistranslated "world")?" - Matt. 24:3

The signs of the full end of the Age are to be looked for in three special directions or sources. These are:

1. Signs amongst the Jews.
2. Signs amongst the Gentiles.
3. Signs in the Christian Church, both the true and false.

In all these directions the signs of the complete end are described. The Apostle Paul gives what is probably the most significant sign . . . as indicating the change of the Kingdom class. He says: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11:25.) When it becomes apparent that the truly orthodox of the Jewish people get their eyes open to see that Jesus Christ is their Messiah, and come to an understanding of what is referred to in the Scriptures as the "hidden mystery," that of gathering out the joint-heirs of the heavenly Kingdom from amongst the Gentiles, which is clearly stated to be the special purpose of God for this Age, during the period of Jewish blindness -- then, and not until then, will the Age reach its full end. Those who will live to witness that may know that the Kingdom in all its power and glory will be ushered in immediately. We believe that some Christians may possibly witness some of the events and developments leading up to and in close proximity to that time.

- R. E. Streeter, Rev. Exp. Vol. II, pp. 627, 628.

THE LONG JOURNEY LIES BEHIND

We are in the position of travelers, approaching a large and to them unknown city, at the end of a long railway journey. They are aware of the distance to be traversed, of the stations to be passed on the way, and of the time required for the transit. The milestones have long shown them that they are rapidly nearing their goal; the time the journey was to occupy has elapsed, and they have observed that the station just passed was the last but one. Yet the terminus in the strange city may have several distinct platforms, separated from each other by short distances; the train may draw up at one or two before it comes to a final stand at the last: they are ignorant of the exact localities in the great metropolis, and hardly know at which station they will be met by their expectant friends. Still they have no hesitation in making their preparations for leaving the carriage, and in congratulating each other with a glad "Here we are at last! " They would smile at the man who should dispute their conviction, though they may be unable to decide whether it will be five minutes or ten, or only two or three, before they actually reach their destination. It is a mere question of minutes and miles; if one platform is not the right one, the next may be; at any rate, the long journey lies behind, the desired goal is all but reached.

- H. Grattan Guinness, Approaching End of the Age, pp. 480, 482.

The Song of Songs

A short series of devotional meditations - No. 1

"My beloved is mine and I am His." - Song of Solomon 2:16.

Our readers will recall, with much satisfaction, "Leaves from a Christian Diary," by F. A. Shuttleworth, published in February. Consequently, they will need no further assurance from us that in "The Song of Songs," by the same author, they may confidently anticipate another spiritual feast.

With us, our author is well aware of the difficulties which have confronted expositors in their attempts to interpret this "Song"; aware, too, of the impossibility of reconciling their various interpretations. But exact analysis is no part of our author's purpose. The aim, throughout, is practical rather than expository. As more than one eminent scholar has observed, regardless of differing interpretations, the application of this Biblical Lyric Idyl, as R. G. Moulton, in the Modern Reader's Bible, describes it, can be only "an incentive to loyalty and fidelity to the 'One who loved us and gave himself for us'; and to stand fast, in our love and loyalty to him, in the face of the fiercest temptations and severest trials."-Companion Bible.

Perhaps it may be proper also to remark here, that these meditations were not submitted to us, originally, for publication, but were sent by the author as a gift to two friends in the United States, for their disposition. In the author's letter transmitting the manuscript to them, the hope was expressed that from it might arise "that incense" of the heart distilled from those essences culled from the Garden of God and from no other source." It mentioned also, somewhat wistfully it seemed to us, that while written some years ago, it might yet be found "to contain something which could inspire a flagging energy or a wavering faith to the final spurt which attains the goal." In the belief that it will be thus blessed of the Lord, we take pleasure in sharing it with our readers.

-Ed. Com.

Not the least beautiful of the sacred writings is that known as the Song of Solomon or the Song which is Solomon's, often truly spoken of as the Song of Songs. The latter title is justly deserved, for it is a most excellent song upon an evergreen topic, dear to human hearts and beloved of all poets, but superior to any produced by uninspired writers.

The royal author of this splendid and lovely poem appears to have written it in the gladness of his heart, to celebrate his marriage with a very beautiful woman known as the Shulamite, supposed by some to have been the daughter of a Pharaoh. It is considered by many able students to be an allegory of the kind which infers a deeper subject, a hidden meaning, and so produces a sublimer sense upon the historical truth with which it is primarily concerned.

The sacred writers of old were, by God's condescension, authorized to illustrate the intimate relation of Christ and the Church by the figure of marriage, and the emblem must have been strikingly becoming and expressive as carried out by the Jewish race, since their conception of the marriage union led them to perform many peculiar ceremonies and great solemnities at their nuptial celebrations.

Solomon, as a king, was doubtless led to celebrate his marriage by a contemplation of the spiritual union which marriage is often used to symbolize. The idea must have been forcibly presented to his mind by the holy spirit of God, for at that time he was preparing to build the Temple of God in Jerusalem, thereby furnishing a visible representation of the Church of Christ under another figure also much used later by the Apostles of the early Church.

In a glow of inspired fancy, Solomon describes Christ, the King of Kings, and the Church, his glorious companion, with their respective and various graces, under colorings agreeable to our minds and in terms familiar to us all, exhibiting their ardent and mutual affection under the authorized figures of earthly love.

Nothing, indeed, could be chosen to convey to us so clearly the intimate relationship of this spiritual alliance as the marriage union, especially if that union be considered in all its chaste simplicity as first established by the Creator. The poem is pastoral and exceedingly tender and exquisite in all its passages where the kingly bridegroom and his bride express their deep love one for the other. As one poet has written of this unique and lovely song:

"It is a song all songs above,
Longer, deeper, fuller, higher,
Sweeter than the Psalmist's lyre,
The breathing of nought but love;
Love that is strong with strength Divine,
Meet for thy depths, O soul of mine! ...

"All the sweets that strew the song,
Prince of Peace, to Thee belong,
Moves its kindling, melting fire
From Thy heart, O King Messiah!"

It is because no higher form of love can be found to fittingly illustrate the affection and relation of Christ to the Church, that the Apostle Paul uses the figure of marriage and the love of husband and wife in his letter to the Ephesians. There are many human ties which are wonderfully strong and tender; filial ties, bonds of friendship; but none so capable of depth, strength, endurance, joy, satisfaction, and selfless interest, as that which binds together in complete oneness a man and a woman who have found the secret and spring of a true and abiding love.

So this hallowed bond, this holy union of beings, is used in the inspired text to illustrate that wonderful closeness of relationship which exists between the Lord Christ and all who have become truly his by solemn vows of consecration. The attraction between Master and disciple is not one of outward form but of inward grace. The eye of faith looks at the Savior in his humiliation and sorrow and beholds a king and a lover. Here is One who emptied himself of his glory, who was rich and for the sake of sinners became poor, who loved the Church while she was yet ignorant of him, of her own unworthiness, and who gave himself for her that he might fit her to be a glorious companion for all eternity, his equal, sharer of his throne, joint-ruler of his Kingdom, heir of heaven, without blemish, incorruptible.

Love does not stop to weigh up in cold logic the reasons why. There is, in fact, a sweet unreasonableness about true love which is half its attraction and happiness. Its response is instant to the mysterious power; a warm, unselfish giving away of all it has to give. This quality of love has attracted men and women to Christ with the most ardent devotion. Young men and young women have given themselves to him willingly and gladly in the fair morning of life, have lived for him, served him, and suffered hardship, loss, even imprisonment and death for his sake. They have forfeited fame, denied natural ambitions, toiled hard and long in uncongenial conditions, often friendless, ostracized and forsaken, but conscious of a love that passes knowledge, of a friendship unwavering, and of a Name like sweet perfume poured out, inspiring, encouraging, and drawing on towards the ultimate consummation, that of faith becoming sight, of seeing him who is invisible, and being at last like him.

"The love of Jesus, what it is, none but his loved ones know." And those loved ones have replied in the rarest terms and responded with the truest devotion.

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

In such words as these, warm with the heart's choicest affection, the songs of saints have strewn the world of literature with some of its finest gems. They sparkle with hope and glow with love. They adorn with beauty and inspire with their fervent luster. They comfort the mourner, console the sorrowing, and carry the dying through the dark valley on wings of faith and victory, into the safe shelter of the arms of the ever-living Jesus Christ, the Savior, Friend, and Lover of those who put their trust in him.

To some of the specially tender allusions in the Song of Songs the Christian may well look with profit in these closing days of the era which has been specially set apart for the calling, testing, and choosing of the Church of Christ, sometimes referred to in the inspired Word as "The Bride -- The Lamb's Wife."

THE BRIDE DECLARES THAT SHE IS ONLY A LILY OF THE VALLEYS

The first verse of chapter two refers not to the bridegroom, as is sometimes erroneously supposed, but to the bride. While it would be quite fitting for the fragrance and fairness of the whitest lily and the beauty of the choicest rose to be used to symbolize the purity and beauty of the mind and love of Jesus, that is not the thought here. The Bible is an Eastern book, written about Eastern lands, life, and customs. Its symbols can be understood properly only when seen in their correct setting. Whereas in the Western world the lily of the valleys is white, and the rose many-colored and queen of the garden, this is not true in the East. There the lily of the valleys is that flower known in the West as the anemone with its rich petals of red and purple. Moreover the rose of Sharon is white; the flower we call narcissus. Both grow in wild profusion in Palestine.

It is the bride, then, who is here declaring that she is as one of these common or ordinary flowers of which there were so many. She says, in effect, "I am no different and no better than my companions, my sisters, in this great floral throng."

THE BRIDEGROOM'S GRACIOUS RESPONSE

This the royal lover instantly denies, insisting, in the second verse, that the bride so far surpasses the general beauty and grace of the others as to be as a lily compared with thorns. What an exquisitely delicate tribute is this of the Lord Christ for his espoused, his beloved!

The lovely little red and purple lily of the fields to which, in his earthly ministry, he called special attention, as toiling not, yet being more grandly arrayed than the glorious Solomon, who wrote beforehand this love song of the Messiah, is in itself a blossom of rich beauty. Seen under a microscope, the color and texture of the petals are exquisite. Thousands of them growing together on the slopes of some sheltered valley, would form a dazzling sight. The beholder would find it difficult to choose from such a glowing mass a dozen or more which excelled in beauty all the rest. To choose one as fairest above all others would be impossible. Yet, in the eyes of the kingly

lover, his beloved is so fair, she not only surpasses all her sisters, but compared with them she is as a lily among thorns."

THE BRIDE RESPONDS

Overcome by the emotion which this glowing tribute stirs in her, the bride in turn likens her lover to an orange tree. - Song of Solomon 2:3.* Beneath his shade she gladly sits to rest, to refresh herself, to delight herself in his close companionship. His fruit is sweet to her taste. His arms support her, and she is blissfully happy, contented, and in peace.

It is an Eastern custom to scatter orange blossom upon the bride on the day of her marriage, that she may be revived by its sweet, invigorating perfume when overcome by the joy and preparations of the ceremonies. We are not surprised, therefore, to find the bride, almost faint with gladness, next calling upon her virgin companions to "strew me with orange for I am overcome with love." - Song of Solomon 2:5.

- *F. A. Shuttleworth, Scot.*

*In the Authorized Version the translation reads "apple tree." However, the reference is probably to the orange tree. The apple tree does not thrive in the East, but the orange tree grows almost to perfection.

Notice to "Herald" Subscribers

Some of you have written us for a word of explanation as to why you have received, from St. Louis, duplicate copies of the January, February, and March issues of the "Herald."

Possibly by this time you have learned that in recent weeks, we mailed three months trial "Herald" subscriptions to a list of names and addresses secured from various sources, including responses to our magazine and newspaper advertisements. It was to be expected that a list, thus compiled, might include the names of a few persons who were already "Herald" subscribers. However, the cost of checking would have been prohibitive. Of course, as soon as any "Herald" subscriber wrote us, we removed his or her name from our "trial" list.

In any event, it was good to hear from those of you who wrote us. Your kind, good wishes were much appreciated. We know you will rejoice with us, to learn that as a result of this mailing, our regular subscription list has been noticeably increased.

Fellowship Through the Mails

"They shall speak of the glory of Thy Kingdom, and talk of Thy power." - Psalm 145:11.

This morning comes [the January "Herald" with] the letter [concerning our Lord's Second Advent] to the pastor of a Middle West church. I have read it and it certainly is excellent. I hope a copy of it will be sent to all such pastors. The New Testament references which close the letter are unanswerable.

- *Christabel Pankhurst*, Calif.

(Less than a month after writing the foregoing to her long-time friend -- our Sister Grace M. Harris -- the newspapers reported the death, at 77, of "Christabel, last of the Pankhursts." She was one of the first British women to pass the bar examination when in her 20's, but England did not then permit women to practice law. More than 50 years ago she began accompanying her mother, Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst, on speech-making tours in England in behalf of suffrage for women. When, in 1918, victory was achieved, Christabel, for her work, received from King George V the honor of Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Dame Christabel Pankhurst came to the United States in the 1930's and lectured widely at Bible conferences. Among the books she wrote were "Seeing the future" and "The World's Unrest: Visions of the Dawn." - Ed. *Com.*)

Just received the January "Herald." How timely the wonderful article by Brother Allbon, and we always enjoy and are richly blessed by Brother Kirkwood's articles. "Fellowship Through the Mails" was like attending a real good testimony meeting.

- *Mrs. Minnie Gardner*, Calif.

(Two weeks before she wrote these lines Sister Gardner had suffered the bereavement of her life partner, Brother Wiley C. Gardner. "Married by Bro. Russell in 1914, we traveled hand in hand for 43 years. God has been good to me. 'I will not murmur nor repine, for faith can firmly trust him, come what may.'" - Ed. *Com.*)

The rate of population has increased considerably since you wrote in the "Herald" in 1950.

- *Robert C. Cook*, D. C.

(Mr. Cook is the Director of the Population Reference Bureau, Inc., a non-profit scientific educational organization located in Washington, D. C., founded in 1929 for the purposes of gathering, correlating, and distributing population data. *Ed. Com.*)

I have enjoyed the sample copies of the "Herald" which you have so kindly sent to me, and should like to continue to have the magazine.

- *Mrs. Jane E. Trewin*, Can.

At present we are studying the Epistle to the Romans. I know this will strike a chord with you, in view of your "Half Hour Meditations" in the "Herald." All the Class wish to be remembered to you both.

- *William and May Neil*, Eng.

The Lord who opened the blind eyes, the deaf ears, and the mouth of the dumb, also opens the understanding of the heart. But those whose heart the Lord opens, must open their hand in loving service. How we do this will depend on our personality, our opportunities, and our circumstances.

- *Amos Van Sant*, N. J.

Money order has been forwarded to cover 1958 Herald subscriptions for the following named brethren. The "Herald" continues to be a source of profitable reading and a link with brethren of U.S.A. and other countries. We pray that 1958 *may* prove to be a year of much fruitful service and joy in the Lord for you all.

- *L. G. Simkin*, Australia.

"Leaves from a Christian Diary," in this [February] issue, was particularly enjoyed.

- *Mrs. Jessie Lee Jones*, Va.

Here are two questions which came up in our Class studies recently. We should be glad if you could deal with them in the Question Box. And here is a poem for Sister Read [which Sister Read wishes to share with our readers]

FAITHFUL

Only a stone in the building
And one of the smallest there
But the Builder needed such an one
As He reared the Temple fair.
'The clambering vines may hide me
The shadows across me fall

But still there's One expects me to stay
Firm in the massive wall.
Within there are gifted voices
Caught by the passing breeze
And fingers thrilled by His mighty love
Are passing the organ keys.
But all through the splendid music
The Builder thinks of me
A little gray stone in the outer wall
Placed just where he wants me to be.

- *W. P. & J. M. Poole*, Eng.

Thanks for the copy of the "Herald." I have read every word of it and found so much that we know and believe about God's Word. The article, "When Ye Come Together" was much help. "Redeeming the Time" gave us a new goal for 1958 -- that we *would* redeem it by his grace. Do you have any back numbers of the "Herald"? \$1.00 enclosed for subscription.
- *Mrs. J. W. Pilant*, Colorado.

I read your pamphlet "The Place of Israel in the Plan of God"-also the Report on Israel by Mortimer May. I enjoyed both.
- *David Bronstein*, Chicago.

(The Rev. David Bronstein is the pastor of a Hebrew Christian Church in Chicago. -- See "The Herald" for February, page 25. *Ed. Com.*)

Thank you for sending me the introductory copies of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom." I have enjoyed reading them and have sent in my subscription.
- *Mrs. Beulah B. Tabor*, Virginia.

Through the kindness of some one, I received a copy of the January issue of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," and I hasten to enclose the subscription price. I am so thankful for the food for the soul which I found in the articles. It is hard in these days to find real spiritual nourishment. May I have a copy of "The Place of Israel in the Plan of God"? I will be very glad to meet any charge.
Thank you so much and may the Spirit continue to inspire your work.
- *Mrs. I. Matenky*, Wash.

I received, with a great deal of pleasure, the January issue of "The Herald," and would very much like to receive future issues.
- *R. C. Hidar*, Australia.

Will you please send me Brother John Read's Album -- Ministry in Song. I heard him sing in England, at Manchester and Warrington, and will be so pleased to have the records. The articles in the "Herald" I find very helpful.
- *Mrs. C. E. Hind*, New Zealand.

Thank you for sending me sample copies of "The Herald." Will you please enter my subscription. Also please send me copies of the books on Daniel, The Revelation, and The Lord's Return. The rest of the enclosed check is for 25 each of the free booklets which I wish to give to friends.
- *Mrs. Delta Jordan, Texas.*

I received a copy of the ABC of Bible Prophecy and enjoyed it very much. If it's not asking too much, could I have six more copies please?
- *John Nothstine, Mo.*

I have received two copies of the "Herald," which I have greatly enjoyed. \$1.00 enclosed for subscription.
- *Mrs. J. W. Sneed, Ark.*

It was a pleasure to receive a copy of your January "Herald," which I have read with interest. As a retired journalist as well as a keen Bible student, I would very much appreciate a monthly copy.

I am also much interested in Israel. May I have copies of your booklets and tracts on this and related subjects? Will you please include your booklet on "The Lord's Return" when you reply.
- *W. H. Brown, Eng.*

Today I received your magazine, "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom." I have already some articles read with great interest and especially the article by Brother Edwin Allbon, "Redeeming the Time." When you redeem the time for prayer, please do not forget me, but pray for me, that I may speak the evangel of the Apostle Paul. - Ephes. 6:19.
- *R. Beintema, Holland.*

I received a copy of the January "Herald" from an unknown source and have enjoyed its contents immensely, especially the article to be continued entitled, "The Upper Room." This was beautiful in its devotional aspects. Enclosed please find P.O.M.O. for one dollar. Please enter my subscription for the "Herald" for 1958 -- "If the Lord will."
- *C. H. Styles, Can.*

Some ten days ago I received for the first time a copy of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," from St. Louis, Mo. My wife and I have been Kingdom believers for about forty-five years. Am enclosing \$1.00 for subscription for year 1958, and would be pleased to have a few of your tracts.
- *Howard H. Hawkins, Ohio.*

My remembrances of you over the years, are indeed fragrant, and it is with much gratitude that I hold fast these stimulating memory impressions-up to, and including, those formed last August, when you addressed us on "Clear Vision brings Strength," basing your remarks on the sixth chapter of Isaiah.

- *J. H. Murray, Eng.*

The attached news clipping was placed on my desk with the following note: "Not how small but how *large is* the Lord's Prayer in our life today."

- *F. A. Watts, Mo.*

WORLD'S SMALLEST BOOK?

The Library of Congress will put on display soon a copy of the Lord's prayer in English in an 11-page bound book about one-twentieth of an inch square. The letters are fourteen-hundredths of a millimeter high. The book, bound in black morocco with a gold cross tooled on the front, was published in Amsterdam, Holland. It was bound in Munich, Germany.

- *St. Louis Post Dispatch.*

These certainly are momentous days. Surely the Kingdom must be near.

- *Harvey and Nellie Nosby, Minn.*

Very joyful was I, when I received your "Herald of Christ's Kingdom" in an envelop with very interesting postage stamps, "Religious Freedom in America." The Catholic Superior Sister asked me to give her those 4 stamps for her collection which, of course, I was pleased to do.

Perhaps you know I am in a hospital, or home, for the aged. There are between 750 and 800 of us, mostly Catholic:, however, some (about 80) are Protestants who have their church services in a building nearby.

It is a great pleasure to read in the January "Herald" the names of the Editors, In March I shall be 85 and my memory is defective, but the names of most of the Editors I remember -- also those of H. E. Hollister, J. T. Read, P. E. Thomson, B. F. Hollister, and W. J. Siekman.

I go now to read the January "Herald," and I know a blessing awaits me. My prayers continue with you. Pray too for me.

- *Mary Glass, West Germany.*

We want you to know how much we appreciated and how blest we were to have Brother John Read with us the last three days of January. Sister Charlotte Magnuson was such a great help in calling up different ones of the Class that she knew would like to hear him. We had two meetings in homes arranged for him to speak.... After the second song he sang, there wasn't a dry eye.... Thursday we had a study meeting on Tabernacle Shadows. Friday we saw pictures of the Holy Land at the home of Brother and Sister Soper. He has some very fine colored slides taken on his visits there. We get a great blessing from the "Herald," and pray God's continued blessing on your labors.

- *Peter and Carrie Fugelseth, Calif.*

The article "Leaves from a Christian's Diary" was a great blessing to me, beyond words to express.

- *Elizabeth Hall, R. I.*

I know that it would be too expensive to distribute such fine booklets from door to door, because there are so many people who, for various reasons, would not appreciate them. However, if you would send me five hundred each of these three, (1) "Has Judgment Day Begun?" (2) "The Place of Israel in the Plan of God" and (3) "Is Israel Emerging from Hell?" I will see that they are carefully placed.

Will you also please send ten each of the others listed in the March Herald.

As you know, Sister and I have been subscribers to the Herald since 1918.

- *Victor Randour, Ill.*

May I have a dozen more copies of the booklet "Has Judgment Day Begun?" I wish to send these to friends who are interested in the "times and seasons."

- *Mrs. Alice J. Roane, Pa.*

Thank you for the booklet "ABC of Bible Prophecy" and the March Herald. I like them very much, and am enclosing \$1.00 for a 1958 subscription to your magazine.

- *Mrs. Alfred Borges, Neb.*

We've been especially blessed by some of the Herald articles recently. One such was "The Upper Room" by Brother Kirkwood. The Pilgrim visits of Brothers J. T. Read and P. E. Thomson, too, were much enjoyed. Tape recordings were made of -several of their messages for our use in visiting shut-ins.

- *Dick and Pauline Robinson, Calif.*

The sample Herald you sent me was much enjoyed. Enclosed is \$1.00 for subscription.

I am very much interested in the series of articles by P. L. Read on "Half Hour Meditations on Romans." Would it be possible for me to obtain the entire series?

- *Aude Plew*, Ind.

The December *Herald* reached me here and I have enjoyed it as usual. It is given exclusively to Scripture interpretation and discussion ... a line consistently pursued and much appreciated.

- *W. J. Hollister*, Fla.

I'm nearly eighty years young and have found that our Father gives all good things to those who love him, including spiritual food in The Herald.

- *Mrs. Clara Weaver*, N. Y.

The sample Herald you kindly sent me was greatly enjoyed. It puts in words the very thoughts I have in my mind and heart. I am enclosing \$1.00 for a year's subscription.

- *Annie Mills*, S. C.

I remember the comments of Brother Muir at Welling concerning the events in the Middle East. How true they seemed then and how much more so now. Much Christian love to yourselves and all the brethren. We remember especially the helpful visits of Brothers P. E. Thomson and J. T. Read.

- *John and Molly Humphrey*, Eng.

Thank you for the *Herald* you sent me recently. I read it from cover to cover and surely did enjoy it. Enclosed is \$2.00. Please enter a 1958 subscription in my name. Also kindly send me the booklet on our Lord's Return and "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Please send also one copy each of your free booklets and tracts.

- *Mrs. B. Stephenson*, Neb.

Are Wars to Cease?

It surely is a wry paradox that the arms of the world's nations are heard clashing louder and louder while the peoples of the world are more and more insistent that peace be established. We do well to turn to the Scriptures for assurance that the time is near when wars will no longer occur.

Both Old and New Testaments provide such assurance. Nevertheless there is a school of thought which holds the belief that "there will be wars and rumors of wars to the end of time," and the further opinion that "the New Testament has given us no hope that all men will eventually come to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ."

These people are to be credited with sincerity and Christian motives. However, we can, and do, take exception to some of their interpretations of pertinent Scriptural passages, examples being 1 Timothy 2:4 and Matthew 24:14.

The differing viewpoints indicated are the reason for publication of a new "Institute" booklet titled, *Are WARS to Cease?* It corresponds in size and style to others of recent issue, as listed on the back page of this journal. Each *Herald* subscriber will automatically receive a copy, by first class mail, without charge, later this month. Additional copies will be supplied free on request.

Notes on Chronology

In Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. II, chapter 2, page C39, the following sentence appears: "Though the Bible contains no direct statement that the seventh thousand [years] will be the epoch of Christ's reign, the great Sabbath Day of restitution to the world, yet the venerable tradition is not without a reasonable foundation." A question is raised as to whether or not we know the source of this "venerable tradition."

Since the author gave no citation, it is not possible to speak with certainty, but in all probability his reference was to the *N. T. Apocrypha*. Note the following quotation from the *Book of Barnabas, XIII, 3-6*, which could well have been before him, when he penned that sentence:

"Even in the beginning of the creation he makes mention of the Sabbath. And God made in six days the works of his hands; and he finished them on the seventh day, and he rested the seventh day, and sanctified it.

"Consider, my children, what that signifies, he finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this; that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end.

"For with him one day is a thousand years; as himself testifieth, saying, Behold this day shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished.

"And what is that he saith, And he rested the seventh *day*: he meaneth this; that when his Son shall come, and abolish the season of the Wicked One, and judge the ungodly; and shall change the sun and the moon, and the stars; then he shall gloriously rest in that seventh day."

Things That Alone Count

(Continued from last issue)

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. - Ephes. 4:1-3.

AFTER having announced that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand, the Master sought to impress upon the hearts of his disciples the principles of that Kingdom. He revealed one important aspect of it in the words: "Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:3.) How great the value of this counsel! And how important that we hold it in our hearts, and learn of him, who was "meek and lowly in heart." It teaches us what will be the nature and distinction of the heavenly Kingdom, for "whosoever shall humble himself as this little child shall be exalted." (Matt. 18:3.) Thus Jesus, the meek and lowly One, calls us to learn of him the path to God and the heavenly Kingdom. There is no other way. Self-abasement alone will be exalted.

In the Beatitudes, with which the Sermon on the Mount opens, especially Matt. 5:3-11, the Lord Jesus clearly and definitely reveals what the believers of his Gospel are to be in themselves. He points out that the Christian life consists in being poor in spirit, in mourning, in being meek, in hungering and thirsting after righteousness, in being merciful, pure in heart, in being peacemakers, persecuted for righteousness' sake, when they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

After laying the emphasis on "for my sake," the Lord Jesus proceeds to describe the effect of such living upon the world, saying, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5:13-16.) History shows that real Christian character has been indeed "the salt of the earth" and "light of the world." Keeping this end in view, do not be unthinking Christians, but try to comprehend what is the Lord's will. In other words, keep in mind that a Christian believer by his new life in Christ Jesus is light, and as such he must order his life, for the fruit of light appears in every form of goodness, righteousness, and truth. Did not the Great Teacher say, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:16.) The Son of God gives all honor to the Father.

The wise Master-Teacher gathers up and emphasizes the outstanding things, things that count, saying, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." (Matt. 10:22.) This is coupled with the assurance that theirs shall be an appropriate reward. But, on the other hand, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20.) Thus, the Master points to the fact that entrance into the Kingdom of heaven will not be upon the basis of legal righteousness, but upon that which far exceeds it—a *love* of righteousness. We must go beyond the outward form, or we will not enter that Kingdom of love in which we "love our enemies and do good to them that despitefully use us." God has called his people through Christ Jesus to wage a new warfare, on a new plane, and with new weapons. He calls us to the overcoming of evil, of hate, of the world, and the only way this is possible is by using the higher weapons of love, restraint, good will, and the spirit of forgiveness. If we fail here in the things that alone count, we fail as Christians.

Having viewed in the Sermon on the Mount, first, what the believers are to be in themselves; second, what they are to be to the world—we now come to the third thing which is of great importance, namely, what they are to be in their

RELATIONSHIP TO GOD:

"Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) This word perfect implies full development, growth into maturity of godliness. St. Paul expressed it in these words: "Till we all come into the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:13.) That work will not be complete until the image of Christ is engraved upon the heart and we are changed by the work of the Spirit, transformed into the image of his Son. What we are in ourselves, what we are to the world, and what we are in our relationship to God, determines life for us. They determine what we are to be in the future. Unless we seek and strive after the things that alone count, we shall not hear that "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." - Matt. 25:21.

Let us, therefore, regard each passing moment as having a specific character and definite purpose. Let us realize to the utmost, the solemnity of each moment of our Christian life as a whole, for we are to utilize the time because "the days are evil." Let us bring intellect and conscience to bear upon all our ways. Let us seek to know God's will, and be willing to pay the price.

It is true there are many minor purposes, but the great end is to form ourselves, with the help of God, "according to the pattern showed" to us in the Sermon on the Mount, in order that it may lead us on to the higher purpose of being changed from the image of the earthly into the image of the heavenly.

The first three beatitudes uncover the aggressive attitudes of life. They show God's invasion of us, taking away our self-sufficiency, our very self-life, getting us ready for the most amazing offensive of love that the world has ever seen. For we read: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" in order that every one exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life. (John 3:16.) "That tender love is timeless," having no beginning, because *he is God*, therefore, no end and no decay.

As surely as the magnet when applied to a dish of sand into which some metal filings have been thrown will draw every little bit of these filings out, so surely will the magnet of his love draw out of earth's humanity the ones who feel its impulse and its preciousness. It first means we must be knit to God by the Son of his love, separated from evil-separated by the power of his received love; for the root idea of holiness is not moral character, goodness, and of action, but it is separation from the world and consecration to God. Yielding and answering that love, so that it separates us for himself, is that which alone counts, for it gives calmness, peace of mind, security, and leads to happy submission, and he assures us that never will he "forget" any of our works.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ begins with the demand of self-renunciation -- "poor in spirit" -- and ends in the fulness of the "new life." He who walks amidst the candlesticks will see that each little lamp is fed according to its capacity and need. We must hold up our emptiness and nothingness to him, and he will fill it with all of his fulness. Thus by his grace, out of this nothingness we will grow strong in faith, giving God all the praise and glory.

But let us remember at the same time that the highest glory of the creature is in being only a vessel to receive and enjoy and show forth the glory of God, by simple reliance upon Christ,

conscious of our deep need, and believingly waiting upon him. Yes, it is the displacement of self by the enthronement of God. Where God is all, self becomes nothing. This fact is revealed by the very first words of the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord Jesus therein revealed to his early disciples and to us the open gate through which alone we enter the Kingdom of heaven, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." *Moffatt* says, "Blessed are those who feel poor in spirit"-not in material things, but rather, recognizing that we have nothing in ourselves and being conscious of our spiritual need. It is simply the sense of entire nothingness which comes when we see how truly God is all in all. It is not something which we bring to him, but the nothingness that makes room for God to work in us his good pleasure.

It was God's good pleasure to give a set of new commands (laws) unto the children of Israel, "for the law came by Moses." To them it contained the things that alone counted to them-things which made for peace, happiness, and life. Love of ease and unbelief kept them from marching on and obtaining the heights of the fulness of God's promised blessings. Israel failed sadly under law and government -- hence, instead of life and blessing, there has been judgment and dispersion.

Thanks be to our God, in spite of Israel's unfaithfulness, all Israel shall be saved and restored and blessed on the ground of God's oath-bound covenant to Abraham and his seed.

Through their failure, "grace and truth came by Jesus" to us Gentiles. So let us cherish our opportunities and seek the things of the Spirit. It is for us to determine that we shall make our trials, whether little or great, a means to draw us nearer to God.

We must let Christ, "the wisdom of God," choose our path, and at last we shall lift our praises to "him that is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

- *T. G. Smith.*

My Times Are in Thy Hand

Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me;
And the changes that are sure to come,
I do not fear to see;
But I ask Thee for a present mind
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask Thee for the daily strength,
To none that ask denied;
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side;
Content to fill a little place,
If Thou be glorified.

- *A. L. Waring.*

The Question Box

Question:

In Matthew 16:18 our Lord is reported to have said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." What is the significance of this statement? Please also explain the meaning of the words in the next verse, which read: "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." *Answer:*

Roman Catholic theologians teach that in the words "upon this rock," our Lord has reference to Peter, himself.

It will be recalled that when his brother Andrew introduced him to the Lord, Simon had been greeted by Jesus with the words: "Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation Peter" (that is, a rock or a stone: John 1:42 margin, A.R.V.). At that time Simon was anything but a rock, but our Lord's penetrating glance saw in the hot-headed, impulsive, rash, unstable Simon other qualities which, in *his* skilful and loving hands, could be, and would be, so trained and developed, so molded and strengthened, as to give him the self-control he lacked; which would fit him for service, make him stout-hearted and strong where he was now weak-helpful, no longer unreliable, in the cause which at heart he loved.

Catholics, indeed, contend for much more than this. It *is* their position that, after his resurrection, having previously conferred on Simon the name of Cephas, our Lord made Peter "Prince of the Apostles"; that when he thrice reinstated him in the under-shepherd's office (John 21:15-23) our Lord conferred on Peter *a* primacy—a primacy which he began to exercise immediately following our Lord's ascension.

Protestant expositors readily admit the outstanding leadership of Peter during the early *days* of the Church. This is clearly in evidence in the events recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. Some, indeed, share the Catholic view that in the words, "upon this rock," our Lord had reference to Peter. However, such Protestant scholars reject the further Catholic claims that this pre-eminence descended to a line of successors. For this idea Protestants of all shades of belief find no Scriptural basis.

Most Protestant scholars, however, do not believe that the words, "upon this rock," refer to Peter. Such believe that had that been our Lord's meaning, he would have said: "Thou art Peter and upon *thee will* I build my Church." On this point there is an interesting footnote in Rotherham's translation.

Other scholars, too, have noted that in Matthew 16:18 the word "Peter" is a translation of the Greek word *petros*, which means a (piece of) rock; whereas the word "rock" is a translation of the Greek word *petra*, which means a (mass of) rock. On this point see the Greek Dictionary in the back of *Strong's Concordance*, Nos. SG4074 and SG4073. The word *petra* suggests the bed-rock out of which pieces of rock or stones are cut; whereas *petros* carries the thought of one of such stones; a large stone, indeed, and perhaps the first -- certainly one of the first-to be laid upon the great underlying Rock-foundation on which all the faithful would be built.

Some of the early Christian Fathers -- indeed some modern Protestant expositors, have supposed that the rock referred to was not Peter, but Peter's confession of faith; the faith to which he had just given expression in Matt. 16:16, namely that Jesus was the long-promised Christ -- the

Messiah of Old Testament prophecy. Against this interpretation, however, there has been urged, what appears to be a valid objection. The objection is this: In Scripture, whenever the word "rock" is employed figuratively, it is applied to *persons, never to things*. Indeed, the designation "rock" in the Old Testament is applied *only to Jehovah*; in the New Testament only to *Christ*. For example: "He [God] is the rock" (Deut. 32:4); "Who is a rock, save our God?" (2 Sam. 22:32); "In the Lord Jehovah is a rock of ages." (Isa. 26:4, margin); "They drank of a spiritual rock that followed them; and the rock was the Christ." - 1 Cor. 10:4, margin.

Christ, then, not Peter, nor yet Peter's confession of faith, but Christ himself is the rock. And on *this* rock he has ever since been building his Church. The bed-rock, the "Rock of Ages," is here, in Matthew 16:18, as elsewhere in the Scriptures, God, as revealed in his Son.

In harmony with this, the Apostle Paul declares: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." - 1 Cor. 3:11.

We come now to those other words: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven," What is the meaning here?

In these words the Savior varies his presentation. He had spoken of his Church as an edifice, himself as its bedrock, and Peter as likely to become an important foundation-stone, to be well and truly laid upon it. The figure in his mind was evidently that of a temple. Now he likens his Church to a kingdom. The headquarters of a kingdom is a city; keys would be needed to open its gates.

Elsewhere in the Scriptures our Lord declares that he, and he alone possesses the key. This he tells us, in language unmistakable, in his message to the Church at Philadelphia: "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth." (Rev. 3:7.) The only one possessing the power to open the door into his Church was and is Himself. But when he spoke, his earthly course was about to be ended. Henceforth he would operate through honored agents. Whom shall he use to open the doors of the Kingdom? *The answer to this question may be seen in the events which followed his ascension.* Very evident it is that to Peter it was granted, in his great discourse on the day of Pentecost, to open the door of the Kingdom to the Jews. (Acts 2:14, 40.) To him also was assigned the high privilege of opening that door to the Gentiles, in the case of Cornelius. (Acts 10; 11; 15:7.) In this privilege of opening the door to both Jews and Gentiles Peter was, indeed, signally honored; but only in this did he have any preeminence amongst the Apostles. And of course, such a prominence, granted for a particular service, could not, in its very nature, be passed on to a successor.

It is worthy of note that the power to bind and loose on earth and in heaven, mentioned in the closing words of verse 19, was granted not only to Peter, but to all the Apostles. (Matt. 18:18.) These phrases, "whatsoever thou shalt bind," and "whatsoever thou shalt loose," were common Hebrew expressions, having a definite and well-known meaning. "To bind" meant "to forbid," or "to declare forbidden." "To loose" meant "to allow," or "to declare allowable." The eminent scholar, Lightfoot, tells us that one might produce thousands of examples from the writings of the Jews to prove that such was the meaning of the phrases in question. By our Lord's employment of them here, then, may be understood, in harmony with his promise in John 16:12, that after he had been crucified, raised from the dead, and ascended to God's right hand, the holy spirit of truth would be sent to them, to guide and direct them in their ministry, so that in their presentation of the Gospel, and in all related matters, in connection with the unfolding of God's great plan of

salvation, the true followers of the Master might have confidence that they were having revealed to them, not merely the thought of the Apostles, but the very mind and purposes of God.

To summarize then, Jesus is, as the hymn writer has suggested:

". . . The great Rock-foundation,
Whereon our feet were set by sovereign grace;
Not life, nor death, with all their agitation,
Can thence remove us, if we see His face."

Meanwhile, while we do not worship them, we delight to honor those whom Jesus honored, namely, the Twelve Apostles, as being, all of them, foundation-stones indeed. The wall of the City (of the New Jerusalem), we are told by Peter himself, is built of living stones. (1 Pet. 2:4, 5.) And the Master, in "the vision glorious," has told us that this wall has twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. (Rev. 21:14.) And not only are their *names* inscribed there; these foundations are seen to be "adorned with all manner of precious stones." (Verse 19.) Well may we honor them.

To close with words well known to us all, we "are being built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom every building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the spirit." - Eph. 2:20-22, A.R.V., margin.

- *P. L. Read.*

Recently Deceased

Sr. S. C. Derring, Norfolk, Va. - (April)
Sr. E. Faubush, San Francisco, Cal. - (Dec.)
Bro. A. W. Kuehn, Rutherford, N. J. - (Feb.)
Sr. Myrtle Leighton, S. Portland, Me. - (Oct.)
Sr. Nora Paulsen, Albuquerque, N. M. - (Feb.)
Bro. Paul K. Shepler, Coshocton, O. - (Feb.)
Sr. A. Stevenson, Montreal, Que. - (Mar.)