

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XLI October, 1958 No. 9

The Second Psalm

"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." - Psalm 72:11.

THE Bible may be likened to a mighty mountain range of truth rising above the plane of human seasonings, with high peaks which especially evidence Divine inspiration, such as its magnificent introductory chapter -- a record of events to which no human being was witness; or certain Psalms, as the 46th (Psa. 45), so descriptive of events in our day and those to be in the near future; or the 45th, that wonderful, royal marriage hymn in which both the King's Son and Daughter are so graphically described. Again, the awesome prophetic 22nd Psalm (Psa. 22) is one of these high peaks, opening as it does with the dreadful cry of the Sufferer of a thousand years later, continuing through his agony on the cross to the abrupt change of tone between verses 21 and 22 (Psa. 22:21-22), significant of the silence of the grave, and concluding with the triumphal resurrection paean.

And what can be said of that most remarkable key to the Bible's last book, the 17th chapter of Revelation? These and many like portions are indeed "God-inbreathed" (Gk. *Theopneustos* - 2 Tim. 3:16) words, a reservoir of sublime truth, refreshing and stimulating -- particularly so in our day when the position of the Bible as sacred, infallible, and authoritative is constantly assaulted by modern scientific theories, anthropology, and comparative religion studies.

Let us consider in detail one such "mountain peak" of divinely revealed truth, the majestic second Psalm which celebrates the dignity, power, and ultimate triumph of an Anointed One; the world-dominion of a king who is a son of David and a Son of God. His is a universal Kingdom; the whole earth is his inheritance; all nations are subject to him, and under his sway righteousness and peace everywhere prevail. It is a Kingdom in permanent form and without end. Jehovah has found One who can be in the highest sense his King and his Priest; and this one, by whom he acts in all his works, both of judgment and of blessing, is thus distinguished from and lifted up above all his predecessors.

The occurrences of his time which determined the mood of the Psalmist and called forth these glorious words, are no longer clear to us. From these occurrences he is transported in thought into the end of the age, into the very midst of those commotion among the nations which eventuate in their becoming the "Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15). Hence this Psalm is of the nature of a prophecy which awaits its final accomplishment. It had a partial fulfillment, no doubt, in the banding together of Herod and Pontius Pilate against Christ, and was thus applied by some in the early Church (Acts 4:25, 27), but this was not the complete or final fulfillment which is yet to take place.

The Psalm divides naturally into four parts, of three verses each. In the first, Psa. 2:1-3, the presumptuous rebellion of the princes of the earth is mentioned. In the second, Psa. 2:4-6, Jehovah expresses his contempt for the rebels, and announces his purpose to overthrow them by the agency of his Anointed One. In the third, Psa. 2:7-9, the Anointed One declares his office, and his resolve to carry out Jehovah's will, and execute vengeance. In the fourth, Psa. 2:10-12, a practical and solemn warning and admonition is given to the princes and people of the earth. In this order, and using Darby's translation, let us consider the prophecy in detail.

THE MADNESS OF NATIONS

Psa. 2:1-3. "Why are the nations in tumultuous agitation, and why do the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the princes plot together, against Jehovah and against his Anointed: Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

The Psalm opens abruptly; it is an utterance of amazement, breaking from the lips of one who looks out upon the nations and generations of men. He discerns in his widespread view a rebellion against God, which in the vast ignorant masses of the world is half unconscious, but in their leaders finds utterance, assumes shape and formula. It is Jehovah himself who is assailed in the person of the King whom he has set on the throne. How can they succeed who set themselves against the Lord and against his Christ? Will men "fight against God?" Such an enterprise cannot but fail. In its very nature it is a "vain thing."

Positive interpretation of these strange words in their application to our day would be premature. We must await the future for full understanding of such expressions as "these shall make war with the Lamb" (Rev. 17:14). But as we consider the present state of world affairs, we may discern in the trend of human events a glimmer as to their ultimate direction, and, consequently, the significance of the prophecy.

The "shaking of nations" which commenced in 1914, has progressively increased and will continue to that terrible climax when, but for the grace of God, "no flesh should be saved" (Matt. 24:22). By all Scriptural indications we stand at the threshold of the Kingdom of God. "It is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Luke 21:31). Yes, "the morning cometh," but, "*a night* also" (Isa. 21:12). The "morning" is as yet undiscerned by the nations, but there is a gradual apprehension of a steadily increasing "night" descending on all the earth.

Two prostrating global wars have upset the economic and social equilibrium of nations. The resulting wave of discontent and disillusion sweeping all before it, has resulted in the rise of atheistic totalitarianism now dominating half the world and threatening to engulf it all. Peoples of all races and colors are in a state of terrible ferment in their search for political autonomy and economic freedom. Further, the decline of real faith in supernaturalistic religion, and the ad-

ditional corruption of spirit resulting from the crass materialism so rampant, have together gendered attitudes of mind in the human race causing grave concern to serious thinkers.

As "men's hearts fail them for fear" in apprehension of the things coming upon them, from all sides is heard the cry that the present "distress of nations" must be resolved by a new order, a worldwide collaboration in human affairs. Mankind now recognize that their safety and very existence necessitate a unity independent of race, creed, color, or language. Active search for practical means of attaining such a world order to embrace all nations and assure their well-being is a marked sign of these latter days.

With this hope, every Christian must be in sympathy, for not only the creation, but "we ourselves groan within ourselves" in view of the suffering throughout the earth. We cannot, however, ignore the inspired record which witnesses that all human efforts to establish a just and equitable arrangement of society are foredoomed to failure. The "desire of all nations" will not be brought about by human ability. Every such hope, commendable as it may be, is a "vain thing."

There can be no peace apart from the Prince of Peace. There can be no world order apart from the World King. Man must learn the lessons of his own insufficiency and utter dependence upon his Creator. Such has been God's purpose in the permission of evil. Our present generation is but reaping the consequences of six thousand years of sowing contrary to the law of God. This law requires (as requisite for well-being, happiness, and prosperity) first, love supreme for the Creator, and second, love for one's fellowmen. Violation of this law, whether as individuals, as nations, or as a world, is sin. And the wages of sin is death, for "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). The time has approached for the establishment of Christ's Kingdom upon earth and all things that can be "shaken" [that will not stand up under the present testing by "fire"] will be removed (Heb. 12:26, 27).

"BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD"

As we return to the Psalm, the scene abruptly changes - Psa. 2:4-6. "He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. Then will he speak to them in his anger, and in his fierce displeasure will he terrify them: And I have anointed my King upon Zion, the hill of my holiness."

The scene of the first act of this drama is laid on earth; the scene of the second is laid in heaven. The transition here is a sublime one, from the noise and agitation of earth to the safety and tranquility of heaven. As we pass onward we pass upward. Watching all the turmoil and rebellion below, and calmly surveying the nations as they rage, there sits the One against whose rule this unwitting revolt is made. He reposes far above them and beyond their reach, in undisturbed majesty.

The Psalmist sees the utter futility of revolt against God; he discerns the strength of the Almighty; the pillars of the eternal throne are before his soul; he can find no other words to express the vanity of man's revolt than to say, "The Lord shall laugh." There is something very awful in the representation here given of God. First, as if in calm contempt, "He laughs," then there is a bitter derision which in its effect brings their counsels to naught, and baffles their purposes "He mocks them"; "then," at last, with the thunder of his word, He discomfits them. "Who thought," says Luther, "when Christ suffered and the Jews triumphed, that God was laughing all the time?" Beneath this bold expression there is hidden a profound truth, namely, that to all superior beings, and above all to God himself, there is something in sin not only odious, but absurd; something which cannot possibly escape the contempt of higher, much less of the highest intelligence.

It may be asked, Why should the attempt of struggling humanity to set up a world order be thus so displeasing to the Almighty? Is not such an arrangement highly desirable and justifying men's greatest efforts? Is not the present global turmoil a natural prelude to a global order? Should not such an ambitious undertaking for the benefit of all receive instead the bounteous blessing of a benevolent Creator?

At first thought it would seem indeed that such a proposed happy arrangement would be prospered by a loving God to the blessing of the nations. But as we look deeper into the provisions of the Lord for the ultimate and eternal welfare of all people, we discern that this humanly-instituted arrangement would actually be a direct expression of resistance to God's will. For though a beneficent worldwide government is the logical solution to the problems of mankind, no strength or wisdom of man can possibly effect such a solution. Rather, the inherited burden of individual sin, plus the hatreds and prejudices engendered by the conflicts of nations, have raised insuperable obstacles to such a Utopian scheme, and this truth is recognized by practical men. But whether man realizes this truth or not as regards his helplessness, God does, and has wisely provided his own arrangement for the welfare of mankind. Consequently, he "who ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Dan. 4:32), and guides the course of human history, as once to the literal sea, so now to the raging "sea" of humanity, says, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further" (Job 38:8-11; see also Luke 21:25; Ps. 104:5-9; Jer. 5:22). "Vain" will be any attempts to "break the bonds and cast away the cords" of restriction set up by divine omniscience as limits to the unhindered exercise of human ingenuity. To permit man to go further in his social experiments would be to endanger his very existence. "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" (Matt. 24:22).

So the Lord speaks, and here in the sixth verse (Psa. 2:6) we have God's own answer to those that oppose him: "I [the pronoun is emphatic in the Hebrew], the King of heaven and earth, have set my own King, my Son and my Vicegerent, on the throne. His, and his alone, shall be earth's world dominion, and he who dares to attempt accomplishing this through human ability is setting himself against me and my unalterable purpose. I have constituted my King upon Zion, my holy hill, and he, and none other, shall work my sovereign will, for he alone is worthy."

In the light of the above expression of the divine counsel, verse five of this Psalm, which speaks of an outpouring of wrath, can be linked with the judgments of Revelation 16 which terminate at Armageddon. And what a wealth of other Scriptures comes to mind! "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought . . . Say ye not, A confederacy." "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his King, and exalt the horn of his Anointed." "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect." "The heathen raged, the Kingdoms were moved: He uttered his voice, and the earth melted." "The nations were angry, and thy wrath is come" (Isa. 8:9-12; 1 Sam. 2:10; Psa. 33:10; Psa. 46:6; Rev. 11:18; Zeph. 3:8, 9; Isa. 2:11, 12, 19).

"O EARTH, RECEIVE THY KING"

And now with inimitable beauty the Messiah himself appears, and speaks, witnessing to his sonship and kingship, and to the constitution -- the grand charter of rights -- under which this fallen world is given to him as his empire.

Psa. 2:7-9. "I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; I this day have begotten thee [brought thee forth - Young]. Ask of Me, and I will give thee nations for an inheritance, and for thy possession the ends of the earth: Thou shalt break [shepherd -Rotherham] them with a sceptre of iron, as a potter's vessel thou shalt dash them to pieces."

No word of transition, no formula of introduction, marks this sudden passage from the words of Jehovah to those of his Christ. Just as Jehovah in opposition to the rebels acknowledges the King upon Zion, so in opposition to the same rebels the King upon Zion appeals to God. He pronounces the Father's counsel concerning himself, a royal decree which like that of the Medes and Persians is irrevocable. He reigns not by the will of man, but by the grace of God; not by right only as the Son of Jehovah, but by covenant and promise likewise. (Note the force of Hebrews 5:5.) The plain thought of the decree is: "This day, by anointing thee as King on my hill of Zion, I have recognized thee as my Son. This enthroning is my public and solemn recognition of this relation" -- a relation never brought to the knowledge of created minds till this momentous inauguration as King. So Paul understood this verse, for he finds it fulfilled in Christ's resurrection and subsequent ascension and enthronement in heaven. (See Acts 13:33; Acts 17:31; Rom. 1:4.)

Jesus is the Son of God, and therefore dear to him; his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased; and because the Father loveth the Son, he hath given all things into his hand (John 3:35; John 5:20). Being a Son, he is Heir of all things, and since God has said unto him, "Thou art my Son," it becomes each individual to say to him, "Thou art my Lord, my Sovereign." And since the nations are given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, there awaits a great unveiling of the glory of earth's rightful King the proclamation on earth of the decree of Heaven. This we believe will be accomplished at the time of the deliverance of natural Israel from "Jacob's Trouble," in a miraculous demonstration of divine power; the first *visible* evidence to an astounded world of the new heavenly arrangement for earth. Then shall every knee begin to bow to him (Phil. 2:9-11), and every voice acknowledge his right to lordship. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power" (Ps. 110:3). Then shall be revealed God's wonderful provision for the eternal welfare of the suffering creation; his answer to their groanings and prayers--and this, when evidently faith in a divine helper will be at its lowest ebb. Just when man will realize his necessity the most, when the consciousness of his own weakness will be well-nigh overwhelming, yea, when he shall cry out in fear and the despair of his soul, God shall answer by the revelation of his chosen King, who with his associated saints, shall commence the reign of righteousness which will more than satisfy the needs of mankind. But, there must first come divine judgment upon the institutions of man through this same righteous King, for "He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15).

"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, HEAR YE HIM"

Finally, the Psalmist, who has heard the words of Jehovah and the words of his Anointed, seeks by wise counsel to dissuade the rebels from their mad enterprise - Psa. 2:10-12: *"And now, O kings, be ye wise, be admonished, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, though his anger burn but a little. Blessed are all who have their trust in him."*

Thus closes this sublime and solemnly impressive Psalm. It will be observed that these last three verses of the Psalm correspond to the first three. The revolt against the Lord and his Anointed finds its parallel in the injunction to serve the Lord and to kiss the Son, for there can be no resisting his authority. For of him Moses truly prophesied, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he

shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22, 23). Therefore, "kiss the Son," do homage to the King, O ye mighty ones of earth "lest he be angry and ye perish in the way." Be quick to obey, for his anger may easily be kindled. In his Kingdom nothing shall be permitted to hurt or destroy, and the slightest opposition to his authority shall be summarily dealt with. But trust him, obey him, confide in him, and he shall bless you with a "feast of fat things," for he and those with him are appointed to "bless all the families of the earth." For "he shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.... Prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.... His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed" (Ps. 72:6-17).

What a glorious message does this. second Psalm hold forth! Oh that men could see within its beautiful and impressive words the lesson of submission to the divinely decreed arrangement! What a thrill of hope and joy would surge through the troublewacked earth! Praise God that men will yet see, and this we believe, in the not far distant future. *"Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name forever: And let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen, and Amen"* (Psa. 72:18, 19).

- W. J. Siekman

Life's Empty Victories

The following article was written, just prior to his death, by a regular contributor to a secular newspaper, namely "The Minneapolis Tribune" (December 19, 1932). When it was written, its stated purpose was to assist his readers in formulating their 1933 New Year resolutions. We thought enough of it at the time to publish it in the "Herald" (Feb. 1933) and have reprinted it once or twice since then. But at no time in the past have its lessons seemed more appropriate than today; so, once again, we commend this article to the thoughtful consideration of our readers. - Ed. Com.

AS A MAN grows older, yet has not reached extreme old age, when, presumably, all his past is mellowed and softened in the pleasant, tranquil light of sunset and both mistakes and right acts are equally overspread by the thought that nothing has mattered much, since the whole thing will be soon over; when he arrives at the stage in life's journey where he reviews the past, not alone for the gentle pleasure of reminiscence, but also to seek guidance for his remaining future, and while he still imagines that it is possible for him to mold his character into the secret ideal which he has all along vainly struggled to perfect, there comes, at least to the man of the average temperament, in this pause of review, this moment of rest before he completes his destiny, the thought of how much happier, and better and altogether pleasanter his life might have been had he avoided as he might easily have done, certain complications and conflicts which, at the time, seemed to him mightily important.

When they occurred, he was absolutely certain that the triumph of his opinion was a matter of tremendous consequence; it was essential that he should override the opposition and impress upon his opponent the pre-eminent truth and right of his position; and so he went at him, hard and strong, and in the heat of the controversy, which ripened into a feud and perhaps ended in the permanent estrangement of one who might once have been counted a friend, he said or did things which were hard and bitter, and better left unsaid or undone.

Perhaps he gained his point; beat down his antagonist and sent him, humbled and mortified, from the contest, to nurse his grievance ever after, and nourish to the end of his days a smouldering hate of the man who got the better of him; or worse, to cherish the feeling that he had been hardly used.

Strange it should be that, in his later years, the outcome does not seem to have been of very great consequence. What remains permanently is the memory of the incident, and a regret that it should have occurred.

Looking back, he realizes the exact moment when he might have refrained from pressing his man to the limit, have perhaps sufficiently satisfied his self-respect and vindicated the justness of his contention without sacrificing a possible friend. Probably it would puzzle him now to state exactly what it was all about then, this famous victory, but he remembers it was a great fight and he was in it and he is sorry.

Not sorry that he stood up stoutly in defense of his positive convictions; no man ever regrets that, but sorry that he should have esteemed it necessary to go to such lengths in pursuit of his ends that it put reconciliation and ultimate restoration of friendship beyond the bounds of the possible. He remembers these incidents with a vague discomfort. No matter which of the two was in the wrong, he holds himself responsible for the outcome.

Did he convince the other of his error? Scarcely. "He that complies against his will is of his own opinion still." Did the encounter seriously contribute to the upbuilding of his own character? Hardly, unless it was desirable to encourage in himself the love of fighting for the fight's sake. His later calm and deliberate conviction is that it was not worth while, and he grudges the vitality and energy he put into it, which might well have been conserved to later, more mature and far better use.

The thing the man remembers at this particular point in his life with the most satisfaction is not such a fruitless contest, but rather the time when, by conceding a point, by some exercise of forbearance in pressing an advantage, he made a friend of his opponent, although they differed irreconcilably. Touching these other encounters, which at the moment it seemed so necessary to win, but which in the end were so barren of real gain, he says, somewhat sorely, "Let them be forgotten and forgiven."

He recalls with secret gratification not his paltry and vainglorious victories, but his flabby and perhaps sentimental concessions: the small foolish, kindly things that he did, rare enough, he admits, but fruitful in pleasing memories. For, after all, we are men tarred with the same stick; more or less good, bad or indifferent, as the case may be, yet all capable of doing something kind for each other. He draws from his past the lesson of tolerance, for the future that is left to him, and resolves, perhaps vainly, but at least, for the moment, sincerely, that henceforth, while he may never falter in defense of a principle, he will try hard to so moderate his attacks upon the other man as to leave no sting past healing.

The assets he counts up with the most satisfaction are the friends he finds about him. What they may expect of him is the animus of his future. He will endeavor to be true to them and to his own convictions, but he will avoid the useless multiplication of enemies. This is his hope, as he takes stock of what lies before him.

Perhaps the writer could offer no suggestion to his readers, touching the form which good resolves, customary at this season of the year, should take, that would be better for ourselves and for the world we live in, than that we will lead kindlier lives; that we will be less sure and less harsh in our judgments; that we will refrain as far as in us lies from giving the other man "a piece of our minds;" that we will leave room for him to be convinced of his error, if he be wrong and we right, not through the might of our pounding, but rather through the gradual change in his own convictions; that we will finally try to, proceed on the way that we esteem the right and only one with less friction, believing

that which is true and right will prevail anyhow, and the surer and swifter if it be not enforced by contention.

In a word, to resolve to make friends, not at the sacrifice of conviction or principle, but by conceding to others the simple right of learning the truth in their own time and in their own way, helped perhaps by our, of course, pre-eminently wise suggestion and example, if truly they be such, but at least not hindered by our overemphatic dictum. . .

"The ill-timed truth we might have kept
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say
Who knows how grandly it had rung?"

Prepared for Service

"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart," - Matt. 11:28.

In sending us the manuscript for this article, the author accompanied it with a brief note, saying that it was for the encouragement of those who would serve Christ; and reminding us that:

*"All His are thine to serve;
They serve Him best who love Him most."*

It has made us feel very humble, but also very refreshed -- and extremely grateful, both to the Lord and to the writer. We are sure that this refreshment of spirit and sense of gratitude will be shared by our reader. - Ed. Com.

IT would be safe to say that there is no true Christian man or woman who does not desire to serve Christ. None could know Christ as Lord and Friend without being deeply moved to follow his example.

Christ's whole life was one of service for others; unstinted, unselfish service, full of the sweetest odor of sacrifice. He said of himself that he came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." (Matt. 20:27.) His life was a revelation to mankind of the very essence of God -- Love in the purest, most disinterested form. He came to serve, to give, to do good, to bless. From the heights of his own moral purity he reached down to the depths of man's depravity and sin. His *energy*, his thoughts, his life were poured out for others in his mission of salvation.

The Apostle Paul was a great imitator of Christ in his zealous service and ardent self-sacrifice. No Christian can read his devoted life without feeling his own spirit tingle with the thrill and eagerness to be up and doing-to dare all for Christ's sake -- to be his willing bondman or bondwoman.

To know and love Christ-to follow him, to be all given up to him, is to long to serve as he served, to live as he lived -- for others. In fact we could say quite definitely that he or she who does not know such a longing, who has never felt the spirit's urge to manifest Christ to others, however feebly, does not truly know him. No one can serve two masters; neither can one be Christ's and live for himself.

Mankind may be divided into several classes. The finest are those endowed with talents employed in the betterment and blessing of others. Among these might be named statesmen, philanthropists, liberators, artists, writers, musicians and singers. They have given to the world its blessings of good laws, ideals, the inspiration of beauty, the enchantment of music and song. While some have achieved fame and honor, many have labored for the sheer delight of creating; of giving to others the benefit of their genius. Many have encountered hardships, dying unhonored and in poverty, leaving a future generation to realize their greatness, to garland their name and memory with evergreen praise.

Greater than these are the men who have faithfully given to the world the Gospel of Christ. There is a long, shining roll of honor; illustrious names that quicken the heart-names of men and women who, "through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report" earnestly preached Christ, striving to give "no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed." (2 Cor. 6:3, 8.)

These, by their faithful striving, have brought the light and inspiration of the Gospel into the lives of their struggling fellow-men. And it is still true that by practice, as well as by precept, the radiance of Christ is to be shed abroad in the deepening gloom of the world's travail.

Because of the short span of human life and our limited capacity to comprehend the things of God, we are almost always in a hurry to perform, to get things done, forgetful that he who took time to frame the world, takes time also to fashion the vessels of his grace to his own liking.

There are no short cuts to anything worth while in this life. The higher the ideal the greater the effort to reach it. Time is an important factor in the purposes of God. So it must be with us. We must not be fired with zeal today and slack off tomorrow. The Christian life is not a thing of fits and starts. It is patient, persevering, courageous, determined application to the will of God as it is in Christ.

One must not consecrate himself to Christ's service one day, become fired with a burning zeal to serve him the next, in the expectation of achieving great successes the day after. Whoever thus seeks to enter the narrow way will meet with the same defeat as did Moses when he slew the Egyptian in an abortive attempt to deliver Israel. Moreover, the result will be the same -- enforced retirement into some desert of self-humiliation, there to learn the lesson of meekness.

Some of us may be disposed to chafe and fret during periods of inactivity, laboring under a sense of futility and uselessness, becoming a prey to doubts and fears, growing despondent or rebellious, when all the while the quiet seasons are a necessary part of our training for future work.

THE TRAINING OF A VOICE

Most of us are familiar with the story of the Maestro and the young girl who had a lovely-but untrained-voice. Filled with youthful enthusiasm, and with her heart in her singing, she nevertheless had but little appreciation of the arduous training which would be necessary ere she could realize her ambition to bring joy and delight to the world through her songs. She had no idea that it required strict attention to diet; regular, daily hours in the gymnasium; much, often tedious, study of music. However, at length she was persuaded to submit to the discipline and, after years of patient effort, not without occasional rebellion at the Maestro's unrelaxing vigilance, the great night arrived on which she was to appear before a large audience, ready to delight and charm them with her voice. Conscious of power, technique and finish, she now saw the wisdom of all that had gone into her training. But now that the longed-for hour had arrived, she felt strangely nervous. The self confidence she had manifested from time to time during her training was gone. Suddenly she felt inadequate for the occasion, unequal to doing that upon which her heart had so long been set. She confided her fears to the Maestro, at the same time expressing to him her gratitude for all his patience and care.

"I know how you feel," he said, "but I shall be in a small box where none but you can see me. Keep your eyes on me and sing for me. Your fears will go and the audience will be delighted."

Thus it came to pass. Feeling an insignificant dot before that great sea of faces with hearts waiting to be satisfied by her efforts, she would surely have failed, but for the secret encouragement of the Maestro hidden in his box. Smiling his pride as the glorious voice pealed forth, the night was *a shared* triumph. "At last," he exclaimed, "you are truly great. You have fulfilled all my hopes and plans for you. My success is complete in yours."

THE TRAINING OF A SAINT

From this story we may trace a similarity in the methods of Christ, the Great Master, in the training of saints for his service. There are lessons in it for both young and old-for those just starting in the Christian way, as well as for those nearing the journey's end.

There are many of us who come to Christ in the bloom of youth-in the joy of life's fair morning. At a good mother's knee we learned those first small prayers which in later years were to become for us the door of communication between ourselves and God. Sunday School training and Bible studies fed and watered the early seeds of spiritual growth until in our teens and early twenties we became conscious of a knowledge of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ prompting to a desire to serve him.

In the life of each one there may be a special day or hour treasured as a sacred memory where the life was dedicated to Christ:

"Young hearts we bring Thee,
brimmed with love and laughter,
Swift, willing feet and eyes
aglow with truth,
Young hands and strong we
offer for Thy service,
Tasks wrought sincerely;
eyes with visions filled;
Eager young minds attuned
to hope and beauty,
Wistful young souls, with
faith and courage filled."

This is the consecration of youth in the service of him who was the Lord of youth, who loved children, who looked on the eager, questing face of the rich young ruler and loved him, who himself completed the great task of the world's salvation before he was thirty-four.

If Christ looked on that rich young man and loved him in spite of knowing his inability to part with his riches, how much more does he love the young hearts who give him unstintingly the riches of their youth!

In youth we are eager, enthusiastic. We have a tender pity for the suffering world. The strange hardness of sin in the human heart has not yet tired or disillusioned us. The fire and zeal of young blood urges forward to get things done. Think of Christ looking upon the hot zeal of James and John, lovingly applying to them a nickname "Boanerges -Sons of Thunder." Yet it was this same fiery John who later became John the aged, the gentle, saintly apostle of love. Dean Farrar describes his transformation through his long life under Christ's tuition as "a lovely garden planted in the burnt-out crater of a volcano." And what of Saul of Tarsus, that zealous young Pharisee breathing out slaughter in what he thought was God's service? Christ said to him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad."

He needed the gentle taming hand of the Master. Christ put him under the yoke with himself, as a young, spirited bullock is often placed under the yoke in the East with an older, quieter, animal to better learn the service of pulling the plough. As Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, he had a hard furrow to plough. At the end of his long service he said, "The time of my unyoking (*my release* -

Rotherham) is at hand." (2 Tim. 4:6.) He had pulled the Gospel plough with his Master over some rough ground. He was tired at the end of a toilsome day and the time of release was near.

Christian history is rich with the life stories of its brave exponents trained and disciplined, but dearly loved withal, by the Great Master of life and men. Foremost among the lessons to be learned from him are those of motive. *Why* do we wish to serve Christ? How and what do we propose to do?

James and John wished to call down fire from heaven on the inhospitable villagers. Saul of Tarsus sanctioned the death of Stephen and was on his way to drag more of God's saints to prison and probable death. They were set on destroying. They needed the Master's

rebuke-"I am not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." There can be no haggling about that. Christ teaches us the sanctity of human life. We may hate the sin, but the sinner never. Sec-tarian creeds, institutions, organizations, all of which hold mankind in bondage, will be destroyed, but personal life is precious to God. Christ came to salvage human life. God loved sinners when he gave his Son to be their ransom price. Our acceptance into Christ's school very much depends upon our possession of the same motive.

To share the spirit of Christ and be at one with him we must also know the meaning of unselfishness. It is not for our own aggrandizement we must work, or to see how fine a figure we cut in a pulpit or on a public platform-not for the adulation and flattery of men; or to parade a gift of eloquence. What we are, we are. Whatever others say of us makes us neither better nor worse. Many a promising servant of Christ has fallen over the stone of his own self-importance, giving God's glory to another, his unworthy self. "For what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

The Maestro stood on the edge of the crowd and recognized an untrained genius. He invited her to go with him and he would make her great and useful. His terms were obedience and loyalty. Christ watches our little efforts among the crowds of our fellowmen. He notes the sincerity of our desires and we hear his gracious invitation-"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matt. 4:19.) He chooses us. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." (John 15:16.) "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." -Heb. 5:4.

Christ always chooses the workers -- the triers. When he saw Andrew and Peter, James and John, busy at their tasks fishing and mending their nets, knowing their hearts he chose them for a greater task. We, too, must be triers; we must have enthusiasm; we must be chosen by the Master and trained by him, loyal and obedient to his will, if we would ever become useful vessels in his hand-instruments through whom his living voice may speak with power to the souls of men.

(Continued in next issue)

-F. A. Shuttleworth, Scot.

Half Hour Meditations on Romans

No. 35

I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of thine only (Psa. 7:16).

Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:9).

IN this "half hour" consideration of the last five verses of chapter three continues, studying them especially in relation to their context.

Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. For we reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law. Or is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also; if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through the faith. Do we then make law of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish law. -- Rom. 3:27-31 [Amer. R. V., Margin]

How are these verses to be understood? Some devout scholars, understanding the Apostle to have ended his argument with Rom. 3:26, prefer to regard these five verses "as a cluster of distinct and abrupt utterances, with which the preceding argumentation -- so triumphantly wrought out -- is jubilantly, as well as logically, crowned." Such a viewpoint is certainly worthy of thoughtful consideration; for there is no thing fanciful about it -- it agrees with the facts, and it does no violence to the inspired language. But while admitting this, we yet confess that the view which most strongly appeals to us as being the correct one is that these verses, while to some extent partaking of the nature of "conclusions drawn," *are yet to be understood as links in a chain of argument not yet complete.* Let us briefly review the trend of the argument.

Review

It will be recalled that in the first section of our Epistle (Rom. 1:18 to Rom. 3:20), the Apostle conclusively showed that the great need of the world, both of Jew and of Gentile, is righteousness, and that so far from their attaining righteousness by keeping the requirements of law, the moral law possessed by Gentiles only reveals their sinfulness; while that same moral law, as expressed in the written law given to Israel, similarly condemns the Jew -- for by law (moral law, not ceremonial law) is knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20).

In the second section, which extends from Rom. 3:21 to Rom. 5:11, man's extremity is shown to be God's opportunity. The age old question: "How can man be just [righteous] with God?" (Job 9:2; Amer. R. V.) is answered. God himself has revealed the way (the only way) in which this can be. It is a way of faith -- a righteousness (or justification) by faith.

Faith Righteousness Attested By "The Law and the Prophets"

This new way of righteousness is grounded on a great historical fact (the central fact of history); namely, the ransom sacrifice of Jesus. Such, we have seen, was the burden of the Apostles message in the first six verses of this section (Rom. 3:21-26). The principal idea next developed is that this new way of righteousness (justification by faith) is not out of harmony with the Law. It is in agreement with and is attested by the Law. This idea, it seems to us, forms the subject matter of

the passage Rom. 3:27 to Rom. 4:25. That this would be his line of argument the Apostle had already given a hint in 3:21 with the words, "Now, apart from law, a righteousness from God stands displayed." He had accompanied this announcement by the assertion that such righteousness was "witnessed by the Law and the Prophets." This assertion he now proceeds to demonstrate, first in a general way by reference to the general tenor and spirit of the Old Testament (Rom. 3:27-31); and then in a special way by reference to the example of Abraham (Rom. 4:1-25).

General Spirit of Old Testament Harmonizes with "The Law of Faith"

In Rom. 3:9-20, we saw (Meditations No. 26) that the conclusion to which the Apostle had been led by the searching study of the law (of works) was that it was intended to shut the mouths of all men, and of the Jews in particular, before God by giving them the knowledge of sin. But the stopping of mouths, the bringing of all boasting to silence, is precisely that which is here shown to result from the Gospel, the "law of faith." Therefore the "law of faith" far from being out of harmony with the "law of works" is attested by it. Such would appear to be the gist of the Apostles argument in Rom. 3:27-28.

This same agreement of the general tenor and spirit of "the law" with "his" gospel of faith righteousness, St. Paul next develops from another point of view -- that of Monotheism, a doctrine dear to the Jew and in which the latter gloried. If instead of the one true God mankind had to do with several gods or with even two, there might be some question as to the truth of St. Paul's message. In that case there might be as many different methods of salvation as there were gods, one for the Jews, another for the Gentiles, etc. But since there is only one God, while he might deal temporarily and for special reasons of his own with only one nation, all such distinction must disappear as soon as the question of final salvation arises. "Monotheism has as its natural corollary the expectation of one only means of justification for the whole human race."

Now the principle of Monotheism forms the basis of "the Law and the Prophets." "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). When, therefore, the Apostle asks: "Is God the God of Jews only? is he not the God of Gentiles also?" he could reply with assurance: "Yea, of Gentiles also," for the entire Old Testament had already drawn from Monotheism this glorious inference. Throughout the Old Testament, Jehovah is celebrated as the God not of the Jews only but of all the earth. "Say among the nations: The Lord reigneth, . . . he will judge the peoples [not the Jews only] with equity" (Psa. 96:10). "Who would not fear thee, O King [not of the Jews only but] of the nations" (Jer. 10:7).

The Essence of the Apostles Teaching

"For we reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law." In verse 28 we have the essence of the Apostles doctrine. However, as it is obviously a condensed summary of the whole preceding discussion, we need not elaborately expound it here.

Each feature it contains has already been considered in our previous studies. The word "justified" as we noted in Meditations No. 17 is a judicial or forensic word; that is to say, it is a word derived from processes of law. When a court condemns a man on trial the court does not *make* him guilty. The prisoner might as a matter of fact be innocent. What the court does is to *declare* him guilty. Conversely if a court *justifies* a man under trial, the court does not thereby *make* him innocent. The man as a matter of fact may be guilty. What the court does is to *declare* him innocent. This judicial or forensic import of the words *to justify* (*dikaioo*) is its uniform significance throughout the New Testament, whether it be associated with faith (Rom. 5:1), grace (Rom. 3:24), blood

(Rom. 5:9), works (James 2:24) or words (Matt. 12:37). Most Protestant commentators admit this, although Roman Catholic expositors in general have maintained that the word is not used forensically but psychologically or ethically as meaning to make inherently righteous.

Two illustrations will suffice here to show the New Testament usage. In Luke 10:29 we read of one who "willing to *justify* himself said unto Jesus: And who is my neighbor?" The expression, evidently, does not mean that the lawyer desired to be made inherently righteous. It means that he desired to make himself out to be righteous; to be so considered by Jesus; to be reckoned or declared righteous without regard to his actual state. Again in Luke 7:29 we read: "And all the people that heard him [Jesus], and the publicans, *justified* God, being baptized with the baptism of John." The word here cannot mean that the people in general and the publicans in particular produced inherent righteousness in God. "Obviously it is a term of judgment: they *judged* that God had acted right in the mission of John, and they *declared* their judgment. . . . It would be absurd as well as blasphemous to speak of making God inherently righteous."

The other prominent word in this verse, "faith," was discussed in Meditations Nos. 15 and 16. There we sought to show what faith is and how it may be obtained. The question as to whether or not it is the gift of God, and if so in what sense, is there discussed.

Belief of the heart as distinguished from mere intellectual acquiescence is also considered in those two "half hours" and scriptural proofs produced to show that the only faith which St. Paul honors by that name, the only faith which in his opinion will justify, is that which worketh by love.

Does the Gospel Abolish Moral Law?

In Rom. 3:31 the Apostle touches on a subject that will be more fully elaborated by him later. "Do we then abolish law through faith? Far be it. On the contrary we establish law."

"The force of the Apostles query is this: Do we, preachers of the Gospel, introduce a doctrine which involves a species of moral lawlessness? -- Do we take off the reins of moral restraint? -- Do we paralyze the moral power of Divine law? -- Is it a legitimate inference from our doctrine, . . . that licentiousness may be indulged with impunity? Such ideas were supposed by some to be inseparable from the doctrine of justification by faith without works of law. Hence the Apostles subsequent query: Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound (Rom. 6:1)?"

This idea he once repels with intensity of dislike: "God forbid [or That be far from us]." "He, as it were, intimates that he could never be a party to the promulgation of any such doctrine. He could not for a moment engage in preaching and promoting any doctrine that had bound up in it as a legitimate invention the subversion of moral law."

"We cancel Law, then, by this faith of ours? We open the door, then, to moral license? We abolish code and precept, then, when we ask not for conduct but for faith? Away with the thought; nay, we establish Law; we go the very way to give a new sacredness to its every command and to disclose a new power for the fulfillment of them all. But how this is and is to be, the later argument is to show."

- P. L. Read

A Glimpse of God's Plan

"According to the eternal purpose which he [God] purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Eph. 3:11.

THE works of creation speak of a Creator. Great as is Creation, the Creator must be far greater. Look at the flowers in the garden or meadows. Notice their variety and different colors. They all spring out of the same soil, each according to its own kind. Out of the soil grow the many kinds of trees, each having its own distinctive form or shape, bringing forth leaves, flowers, or fruit according to its own kind, and according to the season of the year. Think of the many kinds of birds, all beautiful, some beautiful to look upon, some beautiful in song. Look up into the heavens on a clear night and behold the countless millions of stars, far greater than our earth. Each is in its place and moves in an orderly fashion and noiselessly in its own orbit. These things all the works of creation, have not come by chance, but are the handiwork of the great Creator, whose power and wisdom is far superior to that of man. He is the great First-Cause, who made and put into action all things in the universe.

THE BIBLE REVEALS GOD'S PLAN

THE Bible was given for man's benefit; therefore the Bible account of creation has to do with man and the place of man's habitation, the earth. The first words of the Bible tell us that *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* The "heavens" here mentioned is that great expanse in which God placed the sun, moon, and stars. The earth is the place of man's habitation. Before creating man, God created the birds, fish, cattle, and beasts of the field. Then he created man in his own image. He created them male and female and gave them power to bring forth children.

The account of man's creation is given in the second chapter of Genesis. There we read, *"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul"* (Gen. 2:7). Notice that God did not *give* man a soul. He made man's body out of the elements of the earth, and animated that body with the breath of life, in order that man might be a living being, to enjoy the blessings of life in that beautiful Eden home where God had placed him. Man was not given a soul, separate and distinct from himself, but when he was created he *"became* a living soul." In other words, no man *has* a soul, but every man *is* a soul. God designates the various animals as "souls." (See Gen. 1:20 margin and Num. 31:28.) Every living creature is a "soul."

God then gave man a law to govern his life. The keeping of God's law meant the continuance of life and the blessings of Eden. Disobedience meant death and the loss of all the blessings man enjoyed (Gen. 2:16, 17). God had previously created the angelic hosts. These are his heavenly sons, who shouted for joy when he began his work in connection with man by laying the foundations of the earth (Job 38:4, 7). They would watch the work in progress and when the highest earthly creatures, perfect man and woman, were created in the image of God, there would be great joy in heaven. All God's creation being perfect (Deut. 32:4), there would be nothing then to mar the happiness of every creature in heaven and earth.

THE BEGINNING OF SIN

From the time of creation there was perfect peace and harmony amongst all creatures in heaven and earth. Not a stain of sin, nor mark of evil, marred the happiness of the sons of God, angelic or human.

One of the brightest and most beautiful of the angelic hosts was Lucifer. Like all of God's creatures, he was perfect from the day that he was created, but iniquity began to creep into him (Ezek. 28:15). He was "lifted up because of his beauty" (Ezek. 28:17). He became proud and selfishly ambitious, seeking to live like Jehovah himself (Isa. 14:12-14). By this we could understand that he sought the worship of man, which rightly belongs only to God. Thus he became rebellious against God, and planned how he might divert man's worship to himself. From that time Lucifer became "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" (Rev. 20:2).

By deception Lucifer induced Eve to break God's command, by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree and passing it on to her husband. Knowing this was against the command of God, he ate also, and God's law was broken in a simple act of disobedience (Gen. 3:1-6; 1 Tim. 2:14). Under the test, man had failed, and the justice of God must now bring the penalty upon him. They were turned out of Eden into a condition which was far from being perfect, there to gain their food by sweat of face, until they should return to the dust (Gen. 3:17-19). This is what Adam did for nine hundred and thirty years before he died (returned to the dust). Thus the wages of Adam's sin was his death, by gradual process lasting nine hundred and thirty years. Dying, he surely died, according to the command (Gen. 2:17).

His children were born after he was turned out of Eden and while he was in an imperfect condition, hence they were born imperfect, inheriting sin and imperfection from their father. This imperfection has passed to all of Adam's posterity; therefore all die (Rom. 5:12; 6:23).

Be it noted that the wages of sin is *death*, and not eternal torment. God does not eternally torment any; such a thing is contrary to his nature,- and never entered his mind (Jer. 19:5). Sin began in Lucifer by his rebellion. Sin entered the world of mankind by Adam's disobedience, and has passed upon all his children. Because of this all die. But God has made a loving provision for every man through the death of his only begotten Son. All who die in Adam will in due time have a full, fair opportunity to gain life for ever in perfect happiness, free from death and all it implies -- aches, pains, sickness, infirmity, and the ills which man is now experiencing (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22; 1 Tim. 2:4-6).

THE PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE

After a considerable lapse of time from the creation and fall of man God called Abraham and promised him that in his offspring all mankind should be blessed (Gen. 12:13; Gen. 22:15-18). God had previously stated that the offspring of the woman should bruise the head of "that old serpent the devil." This was when the first man and woman were about to be turned out of Eden, with the curse of death upon them (Gen. 3:15). This statement was God's promise of a coming deliverance for man from the power of the Devil. It meant that a deliverer should come from the offspring of the woman, who would destroy the Devil and bring blessing to man. The promise made to Abraham showed that the long-looked-for Deliverer was to be of Abraham's children. Perhaps Abraham thought his son Isaac would be the one; but not so. Isaac and his son Jacob were greatly blessed by God, but they did not fulfill the promise. Neither became the blesser or Deliverer of mankind.

At Jacob's death his twelve sons and their families, known as the Children of Israel (Jacob's name was changed to Israel), became a special people to God above all others (Ex. 19:5). They were the descendants of Abraham, and so long as obedient to their God, received many favors, but did not, as a people, become the great Deliverer of the world of mankind, as they may have hoped. Moses, their leader and lawgiver, prophesied that the great Deliverer should be one of their brethren (Deut. 18:15). Many great men arose in Israel after Moses, such as Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, and others, but none of these proved to be the Deliverer.

From time to time the prophets of Israel kept the hopes of the faithful alive, that God would send a mighty One who would fulfill the promise made to Abraham. In time this promise was limited to the house of David; the statement being that God would set David's children upon his throne for ever (Psa. 132:11, 12). This would give the thought that the coming Deliverer would be a great King, one who would sit upon David's throne -- the throne of the Lord (1 Chron. 28:23). The Prophet Jeremiah prophesied concerning the Deliverer, the great Messiah, that he would be a branch (offspring) of David, and that as a king he would reign and prosper, and execute justice and judgment in the earth (Jer. 23:5, 6). Thus the faithful in Israel would be looking for their long promised Messiah as a great Prophet and a great King.

When the great Deliverer came, the faithful recognized him, but the majority rejected him even though all were in expectation of him (Luke 3:15). *The great Deliverer, the seed of Abraham, is Christ* (Gal. 3:16).

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

The promise made to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), and often repeated to others, would thoroughly impress upon all true Israelites that at some future time there would be born of a woman of the Jewish people a holy child, who would in some way (which they could not then understand) become a great King and bring blessing to all peoples of the earth.

Words such as those of the Prophet Isaiah given to us in chapter 9, verses 6 and 7, would lead them to this expectation. The words of the Prophet are *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish with judgment and with justice . . . for ever."*

Christians realize that these words are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, though only partially fulfilled as yet. The greater fulfillment is yet future. The birth of Jesus is *one* of the greatest events in human history. The place of Jesus' birth, as all know, was Bethlehem. This was according, to the words of the Prophet long before the event took place (Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:5, 6).

There was no great pomp and show surrounding the birth of the Great One. Each one whom God chose to take part in this great act was humble, meek, and possessed of great faith in God's promises. Both Mary and her husband were poor, as no doubt were the shepherds to whom the angels brought their message of joy.

In heaven there would be great rejoicing and a host of angels were ready to take their part in this great event. While others slept, Jesus was born, and the angels, led by the angel of the Lord, brought their message of joy and song of happiness to the shepherds -- keeping sheep. The angel of the Lord brought glad tidings which shall be unto all people. All have not heard these glad

tidings yet, but we look by faith to the time when all shall have heard, and all shall bow to the name of Jesus (Phil. 2:7-11).

A RANSOM FOR ALL

When Jesus grew to manhood and was heralded by John the Baptist as the Messiah, the Jews were disappointed in him. They were looking for a leader greater than Moses, a general greater than Joshua, a king far greater than David or Solomon, who would deliver them from the subjection of the Romans, and make of them a great and mighty nation. The meek and lowly Nazarene was rejected by them, and thus Jesus became "despised and rejected of men" as the Prophet had said the Messiah would be (Isa. 53:3). They had set their minds upon the prophecies which spoke of the might and power and glory of their Messiah, but overlooked those which spoke of his humiliation and sufferings. They forgot that God's Prophet had said that he should be "led as a lamb to the slaughter," that he should "pour out his soul unto death," and "make his soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:3-12). These prophecies and many others were fulfilled in Jesus when he came to earth, but those which speak of his glory and power are yet to be fulfilled. Then the hopes of the Jews respecting the Messiah and the expectations of Christians respecting Christ's second coming will be more than fulfilled.

Why should Jesus pour out his soul unto death? Why should he make himself an offering for sin?

Briefly the answer is this: Man, because of sin, dies. "*The wages of sin is death*" (Rom. 6:23). Sin entered the world by one man's disobedience -- the disobedience of Adam (Rom. 5:12) -and has passed upon all men, for the offspring of Adam are all born imperfect, he having fallen from his perfect condition before any children were born to him. Thus "all in Adam die" (1 Cor. 15:21, 22). Before man can have hope of everlasting life a ransom must be found for him, a "corresponding price" for the first man whose sin brought death. If such could be provided, then all who die because of Adam's transgression could be given hope of life. God had promised to ransom man from the power of death (Hos. 13:14). Where was the ransom to be found? Not amongst fallen man. None of these can redeem his brother nor give to God a ransom for him (Ps. 49:7). They are all imperfect, therefore cannot provide the ransom for man. Jesus was a perfect man, because he was "the only begotten Son of God." God was his Father (Luke 1:30-35). Jesus said that he came to give himself a ransom (Matt. 20:28), and the Apostle says that the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). Jesus further said, "I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus by reason of his great sacrifice provided the ransom price, which "in due time" (1 Tim. 2:6) will bring to every man (*He died for all*; Heb. 2:9) a release from the death in Adam, and give to all, one full, fair opportunity of salvation and life everlasting. Thus "all the families of the earth" are to be blessed in him, according to God's promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). Jesus' teaching and example are the finest ever given to man, and have done much to make the world better, but his death was the all important matter. From the Cross there radiates the only real hope for humanity.

Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day, highly exalted (Phil. 2:7-11) and given "all power" (Matt. 28:18). As the risen, exalted Lord, he has power to bring to mankind the benefits of his sacrifice, but that work will not be completed until other features of God's plan and purpose are fulfilled.

THE TRUE CHURCH

The blessing and deliverance of mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ is the purpose of his Second Coming. All the prophecies relating to his power and glory will then be fulfilled, as those relating to his suffering and death were fulfilled at his First Advent. Meanwhile, another work has been in progress—the development of the Church of Christ. The true Church is not composed of one nor all of the church organizations or denominations. It is made up of the faithful followers of Jesus, whether they have been inside or outside of church denominations.

Those who are truly followers of Jesus are given many precious promises (2 Pet. 1:4). They will be with Christ in his Kingdom (Luke 12:32; 2 Pet. 1:5-11). They will share his throne and his glory (Rev. 3:21; Rev. 20:4; Col. 3:4). Theirs is a heavenly inheritance (1 Pet. 1:3, 4). As the Gospel has been preached amongst the nations, those with an ear to hear have responded to its invitation, and conformed to the conditions of discipleship. These have not been a great number, but few, "a little flock." These have lived and died, and slept in death, awaiting the return of the Lord for their reward. At the Lord's return they rise from the dead first and are made partakers of the First Resurrection to share the honor and glory of Christ. Those of the true Church living at the Lord's return, do not sleep in death; but death to them is a change from a human to a heavenly condition. See 1 Cor. 15:20, 38, 50-52; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:4-6; Phil. 3:7-11.

This class is spoken of under different figures of speech. In 1 Cor. 12:12, 27 they are spoken of as the body of Christ, Jesus being the head. As a class they are spoken of as the "bride" of Christ. The union of the members of the Church with Jesus their Head is the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7). When this has taken place, then the true Church of Christ, with him in power and glory, sharing his great Kingdom, will share his work, and with him invite "whosoever will" to come and "drink of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

"THY KINGDOM COME"

For nineteen hundred years the hope of the Christian has been the Second Coming of the Lord, and the establishment of his Father's Kingdom on earth. These have prayed from the heart: "*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*" This is the kingdom which will bring deliverance to mankind, and which will bless all the families of the earth with the opportunity of life, liberty, and happiness eternal. The Revelator saw in symbolic vision the present order of things passed away and all things made new. After seeing the Devil, the adversary of God and oppressor of man (Rev. 20:1-3), bound, he saw a new heaven and a new earth, a new order of things, and the present order of things passed away. He saw the time when death will be no more, when sorrow and suffering and pain will be ended.

He saw One on the throne (Christ, the new King of all mankind) saying: "*He that overcometh shall inherit these things*" -- the blessings of life, and freedom from sorrows and suffering, and the oppression of the Devil (Rev. 21:1-7). These blessings are for all, even those in the grave. To this end God has provided a resurrection of the dead through Christ his Son. Jesus said that the time was coming when those in the graves would hear his voice and come forth (John 5:28). The Revelator further saw a river of life proceeding to man from the throne of God and the Lamb, and Christ and his Bride, the Church, glorified, inviting whosoever will to come and drink of the water of life freely (Rev. 22:1-3, 17). The Apostle Peter spoke of "times of restitution of all things" when Christ should return. Restitution means a restoration of something lost. Through sin, man lost life and his Eden home. Jesus said that he came to "seek and to save that which was lost." In his Kingdom, the earth is to be made beautiful and fruitful. (See Isa. 35:1-10 and Ezek. 36:35 for proof that earth will be like Eden.) Man will then be given a full opportunity to live for

ever (Ezek. 18:19-23), but those who are disobedient will be destroyed from amongst the people (Acts 3:19-23).

When Christ's work on behalf of man is complete, every knee shall bow to Jesus' name; all living creatures in heaven and earth will praise God (Rev. 5:13; Phil. 2:7-11). Every follower of Jesus desires his kingdom to come. The disciples asked him when it would come and for signs of his return and kingdom (Matt. 24:3). The Lord's reply (verses 7 and 8) tells us plainly that world wars and events following are the signs that his Kingdom is near. Before man gets the blessings of this kingdom he is to pass through a great wave of trouble which will completely destroy the present order, upon the ruins of which Christ's Kingdom -- the new heaven and earth -- will be established. The Bible message for today is *"The Kingdom of God is at hand,"* which should be a message of joy and hope to all who desire better things for mankind.

- *Fred Musk, England*

The Question Box

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." - Dan. 12:1.

DURING the past few years a number of questions have been raised in connection with this verse; questions which, for convenience in preparing answers, may be classified as falling within the scope of one or other of the seven listed and discussed here.

On all these questions there is room for difference of opinion. Below we set forth our own views; conclusions which to us seem well supported by the Scriptures. In doing so we do not urge them upon any one, and most certainly claim no infallibility in regard to the same. All the brethren who are disposed to review them are counseled to accept as much or as little as their heads, and hearts can endorse. They may reject them all, and still be regarded by us as our "brethren," -- if only they continue in the path of faith and obedience; if only they remain consecrated believers in the precious blood of Christ.

Question No. 1:

Thrice in this verse a certain "time" is mentioned. When does it occur?

Answer:

Whatever the date (or period) intended, one thing seems clear -- a proper understanding of this verse is to be had only in connection with its context.

In the verse immediately preceding (Dan. 11:45) we read of a certain king who "shall come to his end and none shall help him." It is at *that* time-whensoever that time is.

Again, in the verse immediately following (Dan. 12:2) we read: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." This, too, is to occur at *that* time.

So far as we are aware no competent expositor questions that Daniel 12:2 refers to the resurrection.

Opinions differ, however, as to who the king of Daniel 11:45 is. Some, including Brother Russell, have believed and taught that this king is the same as the one mentioned in Dan. 11:36, and that he was Napoleon; the king of the north (verse 40) being England. (S. S. Vol. 3, pages C44 and C45.) Against this view, however, it is urged that Napoleon did not "plant the tabernacles of his palace" in Palestine nor "come to his end" there, as the prophecy seems to require. According to the historian, Napoleon's exploits in Palestine formed a very small, unimportant, part of his career, and took place in 1798-99, sixteen years before his defeat by Wellington at the battle of Waterloo, June 18, 1815, and twenty-two years before he "came to his end," not in Palestine but on the island of St. Helena, May 5, 1821. Moreover, the language of Daniel 12:1, while admittedly much condensed, seems to require that Daniel's people (Israel) are to be delivered, at the hands of Michael, in immediate connection with the downfall of the king of Dan. 11:45.

Some of those who do not believe Napoleon is referred to, have argued, not without reason, we think, that the king of Dan. 11:45 is the same as the king of the north (verse 40) and is the

Othman-Turkish power -- the king of Dan. 11:36 being the Roman power in its aspect of Papal Rome.

Our own attitude is one of watchful waiting. If it should turn out to be the case, as we are inclined to think, that the king of Dan. 11:45 is the Turkish power, then we might expect "tidings out of the east out of the north" to trouble him. Indeed this expression might have reference to the return of the Jews from those quarters. These tidings cause him to "go forth with great fury to destroy." (Dan. 11:44.) In that case the planting of the "tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain" is an event yet to take place. This language would seem to imply his attempt to control Palestine, by the establishment of a government there. Such a government, however, no matter how strong, could be a temporary one only, for "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him," that is to say, none shall help him effectively, so as to deliver him from destruction. The death throes of the Mohammedan apostasy are here foretold, or we are much mistaken.

To return to our question: "When does it occur?" We answer: Now in this our day. We would not be wise above that which is written. Precisely how the events will transpire we cannot say. The crisis will come soon -- very soon, we think. Let us watch and pray.

Question No. 2:

What does the expression "stand up" signify?

Answer

To "stand up" signifies "to assume control" -- to assume authority or power, such as is exercised by a ruler.

The expression; "stand up," occurs ten times in the Book of Daniel, and always has the significance above mentioned. The other nine instances are:

- (1) Dan. 8:22 - "four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation."
- (2) Dan. 8:23 - and "a king of fierce countenance shall stand up."
- (3) Dan. 8:25 - "he shall stand up against the Prince of princes."
- (4) Dan. 11:2 - "there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia."
- (5) Dan. 11:3: - "a mighty king shall stand up.
- (6) Dan. 11:4 - "when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken."
- (7) Dan. 11:7 - "out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate. "
- (8) Dan. 11:20 - "then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes."
- (9) Dan. 11:21: - "in his estate shall stand up a vile person."

Question No. 3:

Is Michael another name for Christ?

Answer:

Yes. Why do we think so? Because of the events associated with his name. In each of the nine verses listed foregoing those who "stand up" are human rulers. However, the conditions when Michael stands up are such as to require the presence of the long-promised Messiah -- the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Only on his shoulder could the government "at that time" be secure. The assumption of power and authority by any one else would not suffice in that "time of trouble." At the hands of none other could the deliverance of Daniel's people (Israel) be possible. Moreover, as we have already noted, the context shows that at that time, or during that period, the dead are to be raised. Daniel's own resurrection is to occur at this time "Thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot [rise to *thy lot -Rotherham*] at the end of the days." (Dan. 12:13.) Who but our Lord Jesus Christ could be referred to as standing up here?

Against our view it has been urged that Michael cannot be Christ for the reason that Michael is referred to by the unnamed person of Daniel 10:5, 6 and that that unnamed person is himself Christ. However, as we shall endeavor to show in our answer to Question No. 6 we believe the angel of Daniel 10:5, 6 is the same as the one of chapters 8 and 9, namely Gabriel.

We conclude then, that "at that time" Michael, he who is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ, shall stand up -- shall take unto himself his great power and reign -- and none shall say him nay.

Question No. 4:

Has Michael stood up yet? If so, when? If not, when will he?

Answer

Yes -- Michael has stood up. He commenced doing so some years ago, we think, and since that time has continued to exercise the control he then assumed; a control which has become increasingly manifest as the years have passed, and which before much longer will be plain to all mankind -- so much so that "every eye shall see him, they also which pierced him." Moreover this control will not be relinquished by him until, at the close of the Millennial Age, he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. - 1 Cor. 15: 24.

Once again, the reader is reminded that there are a number of dearly beloved, competent, consecrated brethren who do not agree with us. Not only so, but we ourselves reserve the right to change our mind, too, if views which appear to be better supported by the Scriptures, are brought to our attention. However, this is the way it looks to us as these lines are being written.

It is, of course, recognized that by the phrase "at this time" we must understand not a "moment" but a "period" of time. This is true in the case of the nine rulers to whom we have previously referred. In each case they stood up for a period, not for a moment, of time. Their "standing-up" periods were of comparatively short duration; a few short years at most. In the case of our Lord --in the case of Michael -- "of *his* Kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33) -his shall be "an everlasting dominion." - Dan. 7:14.

With this thought in mind, then, that the expression "at that time" is to be understood in the sense of "during that period" let us look again at our Question. It may be that it is intended to be put in a qualified sense, thus: Has Michael stood up yet, and delivered Daniel's people? -- which according to the context is to take place "at that time." To this question, thus qualified, our answer, of course, must be No. The deliverance of Daniel's people awaits its accomplishment in the closing scene of the time

of trouble -- that time of trouble through which the nation of Israel and indeed the whole world of mankind is now passing.

It is "at that time" that Daniel's people shall be delivered -- the time of Jacob's trouble. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." - Jer. 30:7.

It can scarcely be doubted that of all the momentous events scheduled to take place "during that period" the one of all-absorbing interest to Daniel would be the deliverance of Israel, *his* people; and the fruition of his own hopes at the same time. And doubtless *he* would understand the time of trouble out of which they would be delivered, was to be a time of trouble such as was not *since the nation of Israel was*. This thought, however, would not conflict with the thought more generally held that it would be a time of trouble for the whole world, such as was not *since there was a nation*. Jeremiah 30:7, of course, refers only to the trouble to be experienced by Israel; and Daniel 12:1 may also be limited in its scope to the nation of Israel. Many other Scriptures, however, support the teaching that "at that time" the whole world will be experiencing a time of "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world"; "upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear"; -- days such that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." - Matt. 24:21, 22; Luke 21:25, 26.

It must not be overlooked that deliverance is not promised to all of Daniel's people; only to those "that shall be found written in the book." Obviously if, as we have endeavored to show, Daniel's people are under discussion, this "book" cannot be the same as the one mentioned in the Revelation as the Lamb's book of life. (Rev. 21:27.) The Lamb's book of life records the overcomers of spiritual Israel.

In the book mentioned in Daniel 12:1 are recorded the names of the overcomers of fleshly Israel - those who continued to the end to hold to the "hope of the consolation of Israel" -- the hope of deliverance through the coming Messiah; those who held to the Old Testament as being the inspired Word of God. We fully expect that "at that time" many who have long lost it will embrace the faith again and not only so, but will recognize our Lord Jesus as that Messiah who was to come, the one for whom they have been waiting, as they witness his strong hand in their deliverance. This seems to be suggested by the Prophet Zechariah (Zech. 12:10) as likely to occur in the time of their extreme trouble -- in the time of Jacob's trouble. We quote

"I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him."

Daniel was absorbingly interested in these things, for they touched the deliverance of himself and his people. Are we of the Gospel Age Church similarly interested? Yea, verily -- even more so. "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." - Heb. 11:39, 40.

The deliverance of Daniel's people mentioned in Daniel 12:1 is an event scheduled by God to take place *subsequent to the deliverance of the Church*.

Recently Deceased

- Sr. Lottie Ivey, Chicago; Ill. - (Aug.)
- Bro. Walter D. Johns, Calgary, Alta. - (July)
- Sr. D. E. Mines, Sydney, Aus. Late of Portage la Prairie. Man.- (July)
- Sr. Susan Monahan, Brooklyn, N. Y. - (Aug.)
- Sr. Silvia Rodis, Somersworth, N. H. - (Aug.)
- Sr. Rosa Ruegsegger, Rome, N. Y. - (Aug.)
- Sr. Mary Sheasley, Mercer, Pa. - (July)
- Sr. Margaret Tart, Boston, Mass. - (July)