

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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The New Year Sundry Reflections

"The joy of the Lord is your strength. "-Neh. 8:10

THE CLOSE of the past year marked the close also of sixty years continuous activity by the Pastoral Bible Institute. From its inception, in "troubulous times," its Christian ministry has conformed with the principles guiding the publication of its journal, "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom," as stated in the opening pages of the first issue:

"This journal is set for the defense of the Truth as expounded by the great Founder of Christianity, the central feature of which Truth is the *doctrine of the Ransom given once for all*, around which all the other features of Divine grace revolve. Our endeavor shall ever be to lift high the banner of the Cross -- that '*Christ died for our sins*, and rose again for our justification' ...

"The pages of this journal shall not be used to engage in any controversy with those who may oppose us, nor to quarrel with any one; nor shall we have either time or space to devote to evil speaking, misrepresentation, or for slandering our brethren who may differ with us. No, not even to our enemies shall we render such treatment, preferring to follow the example of our great Head, 'who, when He was reviled, reviled not again.' We trust that our hearts and hands shall find plenty to do along the lines above indicated; namely, that our mission is to preach the Word, and that for the purpose of provoking unto love and good works.

"Our Father's Word instructs us to bear messages to others that *will* have an ennobling effect. In his Word there is lifted to our view the standard or model of perfection. We have found in the Divine Plan of the Ages a most complete revelation of God's character and of his attributes. His Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Power are seen to blend most perfectly, and throughout that revelation we are taught the principles of truth and righteousness. At the same time we are taught the importance of a practical application of these principles in order that, so far as possible, we may measure up to those principles, in thought, word, and deed."

With these noble sentiments of our earlier brethren, we, who have entered into their labors and continue the Institute's work today, remain in most hearty accord. To the Judge of all, in humble confidence in his righteous appraisal, is left the true measure of the labor of these six decades. We

now would but raise to him our heartfelt gratitude for the multiplied blessings bestowed in the past; for his continued goodness confidently anticipated in our further service; and finally, for the privileges of sweet fellowship during this long ministry with beloved co-workers, many of whom have now laid down their burdens in death.

"For all the saints who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blest!
Alleluia!"

And now we enter the year 1959, feeling somewhat as must have the Israelites of old, who, after a long period of forty years, finding themselves before the Promised Land, justifiably expected the realization of their long deferred hope.

We also have come far toward the realization of our magnificent and God-inspired hope, namely, the setting up of Christ's Kingdom upon this weary and trouble wrecked earth.

"The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of Heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for,
The fair sweet morn awakes:
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
But day-spring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

This wondrous hope, so unbelievable to our fellow-men, continues our inspiration as we follow world events in the light of the Bible-predicted evidences of the Kingdom's proximity. The long period of waiting and watching, the seeming delay, has not left us discouraged. Our journal will continue to herald the approach of Christ's Kingdom! We sincerely believe there is far more basis today for our wonderful hope than when the first issue was published. There is now much more to substantiate our expectations than when we first believed. These evidences, in enlarged detail, will be considered in future "Herald" pages as the Lord permits.

In our day, however, our presentation of Bible truths contends with a vastly different world than that of the earliest Christians--yes, even that of but sixty years ago. We have entered the so-called Atomic Age, and recently, the Space Age! It is an age of fantastic ideas. Projects unbelievable a few years ago, are being soberly contemplated by practical men with the resources of governments behind them.

In this current atmosphere of unreality, we, as Christians with feet implanted on the Rock of Ages, continue firm in our acceptance of the Bible as the inspired revelation of the living God.

In consequence our reaction to the implication of present events is quite different from that of unbelievers. We know that probing outer space, regardless of its scientific and other values, in no wise resolves the immense social, racial, economic and other problems which plague man here on earth -- these present difficulties which are still best summed up in the prophetic words of Jesus:

"On the earth anguish of nations in perplexity; roarings of the sea and waves; men fainting from fear and apprehension of the things coming on the habitable; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." - Luke 21:25, 26, *Diaglott*.

Isaiah's words (Isa. 24:20) are also apropos:

"The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard."

This world-wide ferment of nations is most insistent in its demands for attention, and will not be put off by schemes for interplanetary travel. And always there looms in the background the shadow of annihilation -- the awful fact of the presence of titanic powers of destruction. These have made doubly significant for our day such a scripture as Matthew 24:22:

"Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved."

In 1945 a comparatively small atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and (according to the director of the Red Cross hospital there) killed 70,000 people outright, with about 60,000 more dying during the next two months. Only 6,000 persons out of a population of 343,000 escaped injury of any kind.

But compared to the hydrogen monsters available today that bomb was a pigmy indeed. There appears to be no limit to the size of a nuclear missile. One, technically, can be made to exceed in explosive force all the combined explosions since Man's history, including the original hydrogen bomb detonated at Bikini atoll in 1954.

Recently, as if to confirm indirectly this horribly grim possibility, Ellis A. Johnson, director of the Operations Research Office of Johns Hopkins University, warned that in an all out nuclear attack which ambushed the North American Continent, the U. S. dead could range from 15 million to as many as 90 million!

Such is the Specter facing our day; a horror unknown to our brethren in 1918. Must not our kingdom Gospel be oriented to the fact of this dread menace? For the Bible alone announces a merciful Creator's provision for the bewildered and frightened people of earth--the amazing message of his approaching Kingdom. In this service privilege we shall indeed be active, whether men "hear, or whether they will forbear." That men would "forbear" is indicated in the prediction of our Master:

"As a snare [a hidden trap] shall it [the day of God's Kingdom] come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." - Luke 21:35.

These words are the more strange, since our day numbers church-membership in the hundreds of millions, with Bibles flooding the earth in virtually every known language and dialect. In the presence of world events witnessed to by innumerable Scriptures as indicative of the Kingdom's proximity (see, for example, Matthew 24:33 and Luke 21:31), mankind plunges on from crisis to crisis, blind to the "signs" of the times, rejecting the testimony of the Bible since it has ceased to regard it as sacred, infallible, and authoritative.

An exhaustive analysis of the reasons for the unbelieving attitude of the present generation must await future articles, but in brief it has resulted from the assault upon the Bible's position from modern knowledge, anthropology, comparative religion, archaeology, modern Bible Scholarship and modern scientific theories. The phenomenal increase in knowledge, though conferring immense material benefits, has generated a mental climate of skepticism toward anything which cannot be evaluated in the scales of Science. The Scientific Method consists in the rigid use of but two tools -- observation and measurement. Knowledge arrived at thusly is defined as Science.

There can be no question that the world is greatly indebted to scientific research. But we may question (as have some scientists themselves) that truth cannot be searched out except by the Scientific Method. We need furthermore to differentiate between scientific facts and "scientific" guesses based on partial knowledge. Partial knowledge is all man can ever possess. It was Isaac Newton who, when congratulated upon his scientific discoveries, replied that he was like a child who had picked up a few pebbles of truth on the shore of an infinite sea of knowledge. The unraveling of even the slenderest thread of the vast interwoven fabric of the universe, discloses that it is connected with an infinite number of other threads which lead to mysteries where reason no longer avails as a guide. Albert Schweitzer has well said: "The highest knowledge is to know that we are surrounded by mystery."

As illustrative of modern "conclusions" fundamentally opposed to basic Bible teachings, we quote from high authorities in the fields of Philosophy, Biology, Astronomy, and Theology.

From Bertrand Russell's essay, "The Free Man's Worship":

"That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins -- all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that *no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand.*" (Italics ours.)

From G. S. Carter's "A Hundred Years of Evolution":

"Our final conclusions must be (1) that, in a century since Darwin wrote, the truth of the occurrence of evolution has been so incontestably established that it is no longer in dispute in the general body of biological opinion and has not been for the last fifty years; and (2) that our present neo-Darwinian theory gives a reasonable and probably true interpretation of very many of the facts of evolution and that there is good hope that those facts that cannot yet be interpreted may be explained by future development of the theory."

From Raymond Littleton's "The Modern Universe":

"What is the meaning of it all? This is the question that down the ages puzzled all the thinkers and all the philosophers without any real satisfactory answer being found. And now it seems only Science is left to appeal to, and *what Science says is that there is no indication whatsoever in the whole Cosmos that there is any discernable purpose at all.*" (Italics ours)

From Millar Burrows' "An Outline of Biblical Theology":

"For many events, to be sure, we have abundant evidence of their occurrence in addition to the Biblical record, but unless the statement that they had been predicted is accepted on the authority of the Bible itself, there is nothing to prove that the supposed prediction was not written after the event took place. In other cases, where the prophecy was demonstrably written before the event which is traditionally regarded as its fulfillment, *the interpretation is open to question, if not obviously false.* This is true of the prophecies supposed to be predictions of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and used as such in the New Testament itself, from Matthew 1:22 on. . . . The argument from prophecy will not convince any intelligent and informed person who does not already believe that the Bible is inspired." (Italics ours)

That these four excerpts represent honest and sincere expressions cannot be questioned. However that each vitiates some aspect of Bible teaching must also be obvious. An extended commentary in this article is not feasible. Neither is it incumbent that we attempt crossing intellectual swords. The quotations have been given simply to indicate the type of opposition besetting the humble believer in the inspiration of the Bible. We can only go on *in* patient expectation of the eventual vindication of his Word by its Author. To his obedient children, God speaks through the Scriptures in an unmistakable language, easily understood, and internally evidenced as truth.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Let us courageously and in humble confidence continue to call attention to that which "is written" to all who manifest a hearing ear. And we may reasonably expect ever-increasing light upon the Scriptures to counteract adverse teachings. God's Word is exceedingly rich in Truth. Our hearts have been gladdened in these latter days by a clear understanding of the Two Salvations and the Philosophy of the Ransom, which truths remain ever fresh and crisp. But more shall follow. Each advancement in light stands as a milestone marking a stage in religious thought reached by those who formulated and accepted it, but not to become a hitching-post for the mind, or a stumbling block to be circumvented in the further search for increased knowledge. John Milton well said: "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all other liberties."

Consider further the salutary words of John Robinson, the pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers during their sojourn in Leyden. On the eve of their departure for the new world, in his wise and moving farewell, as recorded by Edward Winslow:

"He charged us before God and his blessed Angels, to follow him no further than he followed Christ. And if God should reveal anything to us by *any* other instrument of his, to be as ready to receive it, as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry: For he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy Word. He [bewailed] ... the state of the Reformed churches, who were come to a period in Religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their Reformation: As for example, the Lutherans ... could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw, for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so also ... the Calvinists ... stick where he left them; A misery much to be lamented; for though they were precious shining lights in their time, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them: And were they now living ... they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light, as that they had received, . . . He [exhorted us] to receive whatsoever light or truth shall be made known to us ... but withal to take heed what we received for truth before we received it. For ... It is not possible that the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-Christian darkness, and that the full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."

May such an open mind be our portion, we who have "a story to tell to the nations" -- sensational story indeed; but to nations now being acclimated to the sensational. We face difficult days in the future in the transition of the "Kingdoms of this world into the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ." But for our encouragement God may grant an increasing insight into the prophetic portion of his Word, particularly the Book of Revelation. This wonderful portion may provide special enlightenment and blessing. It is manifest that its fulness is yet to be known, and since it is hardly possible that its message is for the Millennial Age, we may anticipate a "showing to his saints" eclipsing anything yet revealed to us. Let us become very familiar with this precious legacy of Christ to his people so that our eyes of understanding will perceive as present world events unfold in clearer detail.

Finally, beloved brethren, since but a brief sojourning yet remains to us, continue to "be blameless and sincere, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse

nation, among whom shine ye as lights, in the world" (Phil. 2:15). As we enter the New Year, may we all find comfort and strength in the words of the Apostle Paul:

"Be strong -- not in yourselves but in the Lord, in the power of his boundless resource. Put on God's complete armor so that you can successfully resist all the, devil's methods of attack. For, as I expect you have learned by now, our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil. Therefore you must wear the whole armor of God that you may be able to resist evil in its day of power, and that even when you have fought to a standstill you may still stand your ground. Take your stand with Truth as your belt, Righteousness your breastplate, the Gospel of Peace firmly on your feet, Salvation as your helmet, and in your hand the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Above all be sure you take Faith as your shield, for it can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at you. Pray at all times, with every kind of spiritual prayer, keeping alert and persistent as you pray for all Christ's men and women." - Eph. 6:10-18, *Phillips Trans.*

"Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're trav'ling through
Immanuel's ground,
To fairer prospects nigh."

- *W. J. Siekman*

Half Hour Meditations on Romans

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise." -- Gal. 3:17, 18

ONCE again our attention is directed to Abraham, the friend of God, "father," exemplar or pattern of all believers, whether Gentiles or Jews. In our last two Half Hours we have seen the Apostle conclusively demonstrating the fact that Abraham was reckoned righteous by God, not because he was in fact righteous, having kept laws every requirement, but because it pleased God to regard Abrahams faith.

Moreover the Apostle was at pains to show that this standing in Gods sight was enjoyed by Abraham several years before circumcision was instituted, thus making it apparent that Abraham was justified (declared righteous) not only by faith but by faith alone.

But a further question would be advanced by the Jewish disputant. After being thus blessed with this standing before God, Abraham had received a magnificent promise. He and his seed were to receive a rich inheritance; they were to be heirs of nothing less than the "world"! Now surely, the opponent would argue, the seed to which this inheritance related could be none other than the nation of Israel: Abrahams issue through Isaac. And if this be granted, the Apostle must then concede that after all even though *justification* was by faith and by faith alone *inheritance* was not. *Inheritance*, the Apostle must admit, was by another means: that relationship to Abraham which was possessed by those who were his physical descendants and were under the Law Covenant mediated by Moses. St. Paul knew that this thought lay deep in the heart of every

Jewish opponent. There fore in the four verses we now consider (Rom. 4:13 16) "he attacks it unsparingly, demonstrating the very opposite is the truth; for the Law, far from procuring the promised inheritance for the Jews, would infallibly deprive them of it."

"For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the Law but through the righteousness of faith." - Rom. 4:13.

Three things claim our attention here: (1) the promise; (2) the seed to whom the promise was made; and (3) the grounds or means whereby the fulfillment of the promise is made certain.

The Promise

When we turn to the Genesis account, we do not find any of Gods promises to Abraham containing the precise words "heir of the world." But it is easy to see that this must be their outcome, and the Apostle in this comprehensive expression gives us the substance of them all. Thus we read: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2,3). Again we read, "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:17,18).

Inheritance of the world would necessarily include, of course, the inheritance of the land of Canaan, and indeed this feature is specifically mentioned. "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the *land of Canaan*, for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8; see also Gen. 12:7; Gen. 13:15; Gen. 15:18). Reference to this portion of the promise is also made in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we read: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into *a place which he should after receive for an inheritance*, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in *the land of promise*, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles [tents] with Isaac and Jacob, *the heirs with him of the same promise*" (Gen. 11:8,9).

The Seed

But the promise was not limited to Canaan. The fact that the substance of these glorious promises to Abraham meant nothing less than the inheritance of the "world" would not be disputed by the Jewish opponent. Indeed he himself would have been only too ready to have multiplied scripture quotations in support of this teaching, perhaps recalling the promise through David to the Messianic Seed of Abraham: "I have given thee *the uttermost parts of the earth* for an inheritance" (Psa. 2:8). But the Apostle is about to show, to the great discomfiture of those who "rested in the law" and to the great encouragement of those whose rest is in God, that the seed which is to inherit the promise is not Israel after the flesh but Israel after the spirit. Not the nation which can claim *physical descent* from Abraham but the nation, composed of both Gentiles and Jews, who can claim Abraham as their "father" on higher grounds: because of a kinship of faith, because of the possession of a like confidence in God to that which Abraham manifested to such high degree.

Some years before this the Baptist had uttered the warning: "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. 3:9). In harmony with these words of our Lords forerunner, the Apostle is now to point out (what he will later in chapter 9 more fully elaborate) that the physical descendants of Abraham are not the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). From Gods stand point "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither, because they are the [natural] seed of Abraham, are they all children" in Gods sight. On the contrary, in Gods estimation the "children of the promise [they which are of faith -- Gal. 3:7] *are counted for the seed*" (Rom. 9:6 8).

A Heavenly and An Earthly Seed

For the purpose of his present discussion the Apostle does not enter on the question as to *how* the promise is to be fulfilled. He is concerned here only with the condition, the grounds, the means whereby it is to be fulfilled. Elsewhere the scriptures distinguish between a heavenly and an earthly seed and show how the blessing will proceed from one to another of various groups within

those two main divisions. First our attention is drawn to the fact that *all* the promises of God, and therefore this Abrahamic promise, are yea and amen in one particular Seed. God hath appointed the Anointed Jesus heir; not of the world only but of "all things." Thus indicating that the promised blessing of all the families of the earth must come to them through him (Matt. 1:1,2; 2 Cor. 1:20; Heb., 1:2).

In another illuminating passage the Apostle shows that in the Fathers plan Jesus is not to be alone in this glorious work. He is to have a company of anointed ones closely associated with him: as closely associated and united as the members of a body are to each other and to their head. His words are, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12). Comparing scripture still further with scripture, we are confirmed in the above understanding. In a powerful passage we are expressly informed that the Seed to whom the promise was made is Christ; if we be Christs, then we are Abrahams seed and heirs according to that promise: joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with him. (See Gal. 3:16,29; Rom. 8:17.)

But while this "choice" seed (the Anointed Jesus and his anointed Church with whose calling, character qualifications and development the New Testament is chiefly concerned) is to be highly exalted (from human to spirit conditions, even to the Divine nature itself) this class will not constitute the whole of Abrahams seed. There are others who will be raised to spirit conditions, though not to Divine nature, and the willing cooperation of these will also be enlisted.

According to our understanding of the Scriptures, the Church, which is his Body (Eph. 1:23), will be assisted in the work of blessing and re storing all nations by the rest of the Church of the Firstborns (Heb. 12:23): "the virgins her companions that follow her. . ." (Psa. 45:14).

Others again will be raised to human conditions, indeed the greater number of Abrahams seed, and will enjoy an earthly paradise. Of these Abraham and others of the faithful ones of a prior age will have exalted stations: they will be princes in all the earth (Psa. 45:16). These one time "fathers" will have become the "children" of Christ Jesus, their everlasting Father, by his Bride, the Lambs wife (Isa. 9:6; Rev. 21:9).

In full harmony with those on the spirit plane and in co- operation with them these perfected men will be occupied in turning many to righteousness throughout the Millennial Age. As a result they will shine amongst their fellow men as the stars for ever and ever (Dan. 12:3).

Does Israel After the Flesh Constitute the Earthly Seed of Abraham?

We thus see that five groups or divisions may be distinguished amongst the posterity of Abraham- -amongst the true God recognized faith seed of Abraham. First, our Lord Jesus himself, the Seed most excellent: the Messianic Seed. Second, the Church which is his Body. Third, the rest of the Church of the Firstborns, sometimes referred to as the Great Multitude or Great Company (Rev. 7:9). Fourth, the Ancient Worthies, and fifth, the Restitution Class composed of the remainder of the world of mankind who *embrace the faith of Abraham, who walk* in the steps of his faith.

The Apostle, however, in the passage in Romans we are considering, does not distinguish these groups or divisions. He does not even distinguish between the Gospel Age Church and the Restitution Class of the Millennial Age. For the purpose of his present discussion he is content to regard them as together, forming one large group: the seed of Abraham. He is concerned with

emphasizing the one distinguishing characteristic common to them all. Together they constitute the household of *faith*, and that is the point of emphasis.

But some one may be inclined to ask, Are not Israel after the flesh part of the seed of Abraham? To this we would make answer: Not according to our understanding of the scriptures. But, it may be insisted, Do they not constitute the *earthly* seed? We answer No.

Many Gentiles will be found amongst his earthly seed.

If Israel after the flesh share the faith of Abraham they may together with Gentile believers constitute his earthly seed; if they share his faith, they may be found even amongst his heavenly seed. Indeed, we know as a matter of fact that some (for example, the Apostles) will be found amongst Abrahams spiritual, heavenly seed. But in whatever group individual members of Israel after the flesh may be found, it will not be because of their flesh relationship. It will be because of their faith relationship to Abraham. And they will not be counted for the seed in any sense of the word if they are found destitute of the faith which characterized him.

Believing Israelites to Form Nucleus of Abrahams Earthly Seed

In a later chapter in this Epistle (Rom. 11), the Apostle will tell us of his hopes, nay of his firm conviction that the great majority of Israel after the flesh will come to embrace Abrahams faith and share his inheritance.

When the Gospel Age has ended, "after those [Gospel Age] days" (Jer. 31:33), God will make a New Law Covenant with Israel. Like, yet oh so different from, their Old Law Covenant. It is the Apostles confident expectation that *then* they will be found with Gods law written on their hearts instead of on tables of stone. Instead of the great mass of his countrymen being blinded as at present and only the few showing faith, conditions will be so changed that the great majority will believe and turn to the Lord and only the few will reject him. Indeed it is his happy belief, inspired by scriptures we cannot now take time or space to discuss, that his brethren according to the flesh will form the nucleus of the Restitution Class, the earthly Seed of Abraham. To this nucleus and largely as a result of their missionary efforts all nations shall be drawn, to them all nations shall be joined, in them all nations shall merge.

Faith Not Law the Ground of the Promise

But these thoughts are not uppermost in the Apostles mind now. Here (Rom. 4:13-16) he is occupied--intensely occupied--with the fact that the present condition of his countrymen is that of blindness.

Ignoring the faith which was the sole instrument in Abrahams case, both for justification and inheritance, they "rest in the law" and think the promise will be secured to them on that account. This cannot be, he insists, "for, if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect (Rom. 4:14)."

-- P. L. Read

Israel Today

Below we take pleasure in submitting the third "Land of Promise" report just received from Brother Casimir Lanowick, Editor of Jews in the News.

In his letter of transmittal, Brother Lanowick reminds us of two Scriptures:

"What do these feeble Jews?" - Neh. 4:2.

O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and bring fruit; and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." - Ezek. 36:8-11. - *Ed. Com.*

Jerusalem, December 1, 1958

A week ago we terminated a one month tour of the Land of Promise, in the company of some friends from America close to us in the faith. We journeyed not only all the way "from Dan to Beersheba," but well beyond from Metulla to Eilat -- traveling a total of 2700 miles, all within the borders of present-day Israel, of course. So, for the third time in eight years we have been able to get a good over-all view of the developments taking place in this dynamic little nation.

After traveling the length and breadth of Israel, it is understandable why the Hebrew word "ties" (miracle) is used so often here. What seemed to be impossible has become a reality in the Land of Promise. We well recall when the late President Roosevelt flew over the Negev at the time of the Yalta Conference and made this statement:

"The Jews will never do it." If he were alive today he would have to admit his miscalculation, for already the northern part of the Negev is almost completely tilled. And at the Yuval Gad cement pipe factory in Migdal Ashkelon we witnessed the beginning of the construction of 108-inch pipes (fully 9 ft. in diameter!) that will be carrying water in the near future from northern Israel down beyond Beersheba, deep into the central Negev. This, of course, will make arable thousands of acres of and land.

The astonishing thing in the eyes of Gentiles is the fact that all this work is being accomplished by Jewish hands, at the sweat of the brow, and in saying this we are not unmindful of the powerful unseen hand of God that is assisting this land redemption process.

A very inspiring sight is to be seen along the southern part of Israel's Mediterranean coastline and flanking the Gaza Strip (where the Philistines dwelt in Bible times), for here very intensive cultivation of the land is taking place. In this area are vast stretches of such industrial crops as cotton and sisal, the latter being used to make rope. Here Jewish refugees from Arab countries have been absorbed, as well as many from other lands. For instance, since the spring of 1957, 35,000 Polish Jews -- half of the remaining Jewish community in Poland -- have been integrated.

As a matter of fact, the other day Mr. Ben-Gurion stated that Israel must "prepare the desert for the immigration from the Soviet Union, which will open its doors in one, five, or ten years."- Jeremiah 3:18; 23:8; 31:8; Isaiah 43:6.

And veritably the desert is being pushed back, acre by acre. On the other hand, the Arabs who have vast desert territory have done comparatively little to redeem it and nothing to settle the Arab refugees.

"I Will Give Them . . . One Way" - Jeremiah 32:39.

A student of prophecy living in Israel is daily rejuvenated, even by reading the newspapers here. When we picked up *THE JERUSALEM POST* on November 3 it was thrilling to read the following news item:

"BEN-ZVI AND B-G IN BIBLE STUDY GROUP"

"A new Bible study circle was begun last Saturday night at the Prime Minister's Jerusalem residence, with the active participation of President Ben-Zvi and Mr. Ben-Gurion.

"The first meeting of the group was devoted to a study of the Book of Joshua, with special reference to Joshua's conquest of the Land of Canaan. The group, which is to meet every other Saturday night, includes many leading Bible scholars and public figures in the Capital.

"Among those present at the first meeting were: Prof. Y. Kaufmann, Prof. B. Z. Dinur, Prof. Haim Rabin, Eliezer Eliner, B. Z. Jurie, Zalman Shazar, Dr. Z. Vilnai, David Zaka, Dr. Yigael Yadin, Yitzhak Navon and Haim Gvaryahii. The circle was led by the Relieving President of the Supreme Court, Justice Cheshin."

We would like to call special attention to the fact that in this Bible study group there are no rabbis. Dr. Yigael Yadin is the former Chief of Staff of Israel's Army and one of the foremost, archeologists in Israel. Dr. Zalman Shazar is head of the Jewish Agency, and the other gentlemen are important figures in the nation. This action on the part of the leaders of the Government will no doubt meet with favor from the Lord. What a great step toward world peace would be taken if the heads of all the governments would thus convene regularly for a study of the Word of God.

It will be of particular interest to the brethren to also know that in the home of the President of Israel during the past four years has been held a weekly women's Bible class on Monday evenings-spring, summer, fall, and winter, with consistently good attendance. It was our privilege to observe one of these classes, at the invitation of one of the leaders of the Pioneer Women's organization which sponsors this class as well as fifteen others held in Jerusalem. At the gathering we attended, held in the home of the President, we found over 50 women absorbing the lesson under consideration, which happened to be devoted to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Here it is eleven years since these scrolls were uncovered and they are still eliciting a deep interest on the part of the people of the Land. At present this women's Bible class is analyzing the Book of Nehemiah, a most engrossing historical account that parallels what has been experienced in Israel in recent years. We would like to emphasize the fourth chapter.

In addition to the fifteen Bible Classes in Jerusalem for the Pioneer Women (labor Zionist organization), the WIZO group (Women's International Zionist Organization) also sponsors similar classes in the Holy City and elsewhere. The Histadrut (Israel Labor Federation) does the

same, as do other organizations. All these studies are bound to have a salutary effect upon the people as a whole.

Arthur Saul Super, writing in the "Marginal Column" on the front page of *THE JERUSALEM POST*, recently stated:

"Teaching of the Bible in Israel has restored the Book of Books to its premier position among the Jewish people. In no other land does the whole of the school population of the country get as thorough a general knowledge and grounding in Scripture as they do here. One would hazard a supposition that there is no sacred book anywhere which bulks so large in the school curriculum as does the Bible in Israel."

Mr. Super also makes note of the fact that in past generations the Jewish religious leaders placed much emphasis on the "traditions of the elders," instead of the pure Bible teachings. "To some of our sages," he writes, "at certain periods, even in comparatively recent times, the undue concentration on direct Bible studies often carried with it a suspicion of near heresy. Many students of the Talmud often knew their Bible through the Talmud and Midrash rather than directly ..."

JESUS BECOMING THE CENTRAL FIGURE

Just a few weeks ago we were informed by a believing Jewess in Israel of a meeting she attended that had to do with instituting some reforms in the synagogues of the country. Up until the present time all synagogues in the Jewish State have been Orthodox. Now there is a move under way to, change the form of worship in some synagogues, or to establish Reform Synagogues that would break away from much of the ritual and ceremony-which many Jews in Israel feel is unnecessary in worship. At this meeting that was called to consider such reforms, an Orthodox Jew stood up and made the following comment: "If we want to reform our synagogues, Jesus of Nazareth is the only one to do this." The amazing thing about it is that no one in the audience raised a clamor nor even a word of dispute, although prominent religious leaders were present, including Chief Rabbi Nissim. Certainly this reform will come -- as suggested by this Jew.

How Jesus of Nazareth is being brought to the fore continually here could also be well demonstrated by the following report we have asked Moses Immanuel Ben-Maeir, a native-born Israeli believer in the Messiahship of Jesus, to submit regarding what took place behind the scenes of the International Bible Quiz finals held in Jerusalem this past summer. He writes:

"A Messianic Jewess from North America was chosen by God to bear witness to the Messiahship of Yeshua (Jesus) during the Bible Quiz held in Jerusalem in August, 1958.

"Her name is Sara Rabinovitch and she represented Mexico. It has been remarked in the press that the Jews in Mexico protested her election to represent Mexico in the Bible Quiz because of her positive stand towards the Messiahship of Yeshua of Nazareth. The Israel Embassy, however, ruled that since she was Champion No. 1 in the Bible Quiz held in Mexico they could not hinder her being sent to represent her country at the International Bible Quiz in Jerusalem.

"The press here introduced her as a woman who looks like a typical 'Yiddishe Mamma,' even though being 'a fanatic disciple of Yeshua, Whom she believes to be the Messiah-Saviour of Israel.'

"Together with all the other Bible champions, who represented many lands, she attended the various parties arranged in their honor. Present at these gatherings were also many and various persons in the higher class of citizens -men who occupy leading positions -- magistrates, professors, civil and military officials. Sara was not hesitant in witnessing for the Lord Yeshua on all these occasions. She had an inspiring conversation with one of our famous judges during a party in a first-class hotel.

"She drew into conversation the other Jewish champions who represented France and Sweden. To Amos Hakham, the International No. 1 Champion, she talked very earnestly, asking him how it is possible that he knows the Bible so well and yet does not know Him of Whom the Bible speaks so incessantly and so much. She told him that knowing the letter of the Bible without knowing Him to Whom the letter points is a very serious matter.

"Sara herself did not boast about the witnessing she was engaged in. It leaked out through casual remarks in the press, which reported the doings and impressions of the champions. Thus Amos is reported as having remarked that 'Sara Rabinovitch is so foolish, trying to tell him he must believe in Yeshua to be saved.'

"The first thing she did upon coming to Jerusalem was to call on Hava, one of our brave Messianic Jews, to whom she was directed by Moshe Gitlin of the U. S. A.! With Hava it was easy to contact other Jewish believers. She attended the Shabbat (Sabbath) Services at the Jerusalem Assembly of Messianic Jews and blessed them with her personal testimony. Had it depended upon her, she would have preferred spending her time in the company of fellow-believers, but, being a guest of the State, she felt she must attend the sundry parties and events arranged for the group of champions-and 'stand up for Yeshua.'

"Like a good soldier, she was not ashamed of her colors. She has sown the good seed. God has said that His Word shall not return empty-handed. We shall yet see the result of this sowing in the life of the new-old nation of Israel."

All these significant events are leading up to the complete fulfillment of the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10:

"And 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, as one mourneth for his only, son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."

A Day at a Time

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." - Isaiah 41:10

ARE YOU living a day at a time? It is emphatically the will of the Lord that you should be. The earthly home where the parents' watchful care of all their needs is so obvious that it is taken for granted by the children, is the illustration Jesus uses to picture what should be our carefree attitude as children of God. "Your Father knoweth what things you are in need of" -- this he gives as the solid reason why we should live a day at a time. How completely unnatural to think of children in a proper home to be saying to themselves anxiously day by day, "What shall we eat and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" This would be excusable and natural if not members of the family, for "after all these things do the Gentiles seek," in anxious care.

If we as God's children really limited our daily horizon to twenty-four hours, what inward peace would be our portion. Not only are we prone to bear today's burden ourselves instead of laying it at the feet of our Lord and bearing a song away, but we are prone to lead up with yesterday's and tomorrow's also, piled on top. When traveling, how much more comfortable it is to send our luggage in advance, taking the "lug" out of it by getting the Railway Company to look after it for us. Verily as our Lord declares, "The children of this-world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Even a David, the chosen and anointed of God, however, can get so depressed and discouraged as to say, "I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul."

How clear our Lord's instructions are! Pray, saying, "Give us this day, our bread for the day." "Sufficient unto the day" is the evil thereof. The assurance of God to his own is "As thy days so shall thy strength be." So foreign, however, is this carefree attitude to us, that we may find ourselves bound by the chains of habit to the practice of laying the burden at his feet and lifting it up again instead of bearing a song away. We may find ourselves inwardly questioning if it is really possible to live carefree, a day at a time, in spite of our Lord's insistence upon it. And this happy experience may take time to mature. We must claim it as our privilege every day and invoke the Lord's help at every tendency to anxiety.

"A life which Jesus guides alone,
O'er which he has control;
A life which others seeing say
That Jesus owns the whole."

Only by a daily surrender to him is victory possible. Let us hearken to his own words as given in *Weymouth's* translation, making them personal to ourselves.

Matthew 6:11,12: "Give us today our bread for the day."

Matthew 6:25,26: "Be not anxious about what you are to eat or what you are to drink. Look at the birds which fly in the air: they do not sow or reap or store up in barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them: are not you of much greater value than they?"

Luke 12:25, 26: "Which of you is able by anxious thought to add a moment to his life? If then you are unable to do even a very little thing, why be over-anxious about other matters?"

Luke 12:27: "Observe the lilies, how they grow: They neither labor nor spin. And yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was as beautifully dressed as one of these. But if God so clothes the vegetation in the fields, that blooms today and tomorrow becomes fuel for the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you men of little faith."

In the familiar words of the *Authorized Version* we have the grand climax, which constitutes a comprehensive policy of insurance against every possible risk, in Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

As expressed in an old-time "Zion's Glad Song," No. 21, entitled, "The Keys of Tomorrow":

"You're groaning today 'neath a burden of care;
'Tis more than your sad, fainting spirit can bear.
Don't seek from the future new trouble to borrow,
But leave in Christ's hand, the keys of tomorrow.

"Your way may be clouded, your future concealed,
And scarcely the present is dearly revealed;
'Twill strengthen in weakness and comfort in sorrow,
To leave in Christ's hand the keys of tomorrow.

"Don't take anxious thought for your raiment and food,
Your Father will give you whatever is good;
No lines of despair on his brow will e'er furrow,
Who leaves in Christ's hand the keys of tomorrow.

"Then lift up your head, though your eye-lids are wet,
The clouds may be dark, but the sun's shining yet;
Trust fully in Jesus and banish your sorrow,
And leave in his hand the keys of tomorrow."

- A. D. Kirkwood

The Coming World Potentate

(A study in Psalm 2)

Most Bible expositors are agreed that in the Second Psalm we have vividly portrayed the dignity, power, and ultimate triumph of the long-promised Messiah.

This theme has been developed, by our Brother W. J. Siekman, in a manner which cannot fail to profit all who read.. Originally published in the *Herald* in 1943, and reprinted in October of last

year, his exposition will now be issued in handy reference form and doubtless find a still larger audience, as a small booklet of the same size as our other recent titles, listed on the back page. Each *Herald* subscriber will receive a copy, by first-class mail, in a few weeks. For distribution to friends, additional copies will also be available without cost, on request.

The Question Box

"I have said, 'Ye are gods ... but ye shall die like men.'" - Psalm 82:6, 7.

Question:

Will you please review Psalm 82, with special reference to Psa. 82:6-7. In your discussion will you please say if the "gods" in Psa. 82:6 are the same as those mentioned in Psa. 82:1. Then, too, I was told recently that the Hebrew word which, in Psa. 82:8, is translated "God" (singular), would better be translated "gods" (plural), and that in both Psa. 82:6 and 8 the reference is to the Church. Your comments on this point also would be appreciated.

Answer:

To my understanding the word "gods" in verse 1 refers to the judges of Israel. The Hebrew word *elohim* here translated "gods" has this meaning elsewhere. See, for example, Exodus 21:6; Ex. 22:8, 9, 28.

These judges were as gods to the rest of the nation. They were not to be worshiped as God, but they were to act in his stead. They represented him. Insofar as they discharged the duties of their office faithfully, their decrees were as the decrees of God. This principle should be true of all judges everywhere, but it was especially true in the theocratic state of Israel. The office was sacred, no matter how far short of faithful performance of its duties the incumbents fell.

Expositors, generally, are agreed that the "gods" in verse 6 are the same as the "gods" in verse 1.* Thus understood, the Psalm bears the descriptive title given it by Rotherham in his *"Studies in the Psalms"* as "The Judgment of Unjust Judges." Moulton, in his *"Modern Reader's Bible"* gives the caption: "God in judgment on the gods." The Westminster Study Edition of the Bible supplies the title: "God Condemns Unrighteous Judges."

* Brother Russell at one time shared this view. However, he then believed that in both verses 1 and 6 the reference was not to unjust judges but to the Church (Reprints R338, R421, R1410). Later, he came to agree with the generally accepted view of the scholars that in verse 1 the reference is not to the Church but to unjust judges; however, he did not abandon his belief that verse 6 applied to the Church. - S.S. Vol. V, pages E68, E69.

Psa. 82:1 is attributed, generally, to the Psalmist, Asaph, as is also Psa. 82:8, while the intervening verses, Psa. 82:2-7 inclusive, are understood to apply, in their entirety, to the unjust judges of Psa. 82:1.

In this generally held viewpoint, Psa. 82:6-7 are understood to be the concluding words of God's judgment of the judges, and may be paraphrased thus: "Gods though I myself have styled you, you are, nevertheless, but mortal men. As mortal men ye shall die; yea, as princes whom I have overthrown in their rebellion, ye shall ignominiously fall."

In Psa. 82:8 the Psalmist, having listened to this righteous judgment of God on these unjust judges, calls on God to arise, and put an end to the perversion of justice, by himself judging not Israel only, but all nations.

To my understanding, there is nothing in our Lord's reference to this Psalm, in John 10:34-38, which conflicts with the interpretation given foregoing. He there appeals to Psa. 82:6 of our

Psalm in his argument with the Jews, when they charged him with blasphemy "because he being a man, made himself God" (John 10:33). The point of his argument seems clear: "If earthly judges are Scripturally termed 'gods' -- and in Psalm 82:6 they are -- how can you justly charge me with blasphemy for saying that I am God's son? Moreover, this title of 'gods' was given to those *to whom* the word of God *came* (consecrating them to their office, and requiring them to conform their judicial decisions to that word). In my case, I am not one *to whom* that word *came*, but the one *who was himself* consecrated and *sent*."

In the interpretation of the Psalm presented foregoing, its *primary* reference has been shown to be to the unjust judges of Israel who lived in the days of the Psalmist Asaph; men who, though placed by God in exalted stations would, nevertheless, die as other mortals, and who would first suffer ignominious ruin for their unrighteous course.

But this primary reference by no means exhausts the teaching of the Psalm. It *is* a fact, which no scholar would dispute, that many of the Old Testament Scriptures are Messianic in character. This is particularly true of the Psalms. Examples may be seen in whole Psalms such as Psalms 2, 16, 22, 45, 46, 72, and 110; also in selected passages from other Psalms such as Psalm 31:5 (Luke 23:26); Psalm 34:20 (John 19:36); and Psalm 41:9 (John 13:18). Such a Messianic application is hinted at by Rotherham in his comment on Psa. 82:8 of our Psalm. I quote:

"We seem to be carried forward on the wave of a Messianic flood as we read in the concluding couplet: As if to say, *Oh arise, Elohim, oh judge the earth* -- thyself, in a clearer and nearer Divine Manifestation than at present; no longer permitting Justice to be perverted as now; and do this the rather that *all nations* are thine by right; thine by the claim of thy birth as earth's King, into the full possession of which wilt thou be pleased soon to enter."

And here we are brought back - rather we are brought forward - to Brother Russell's illuminating exposition, as condensed in the footnote to S.S. Vol. V, page E69. I quote it here in full, except for the reference to Psa. 82:6-7:

"This entire Psalm (82) seems to refer to our Lord Jesus as the divinely appointed Deliverer and Judge of Christendom, now, in the time of his *parousia* To him we apply the words, 'God [*elohim*, Christ appointed by the Father to judge the world now] standeth in the assemblage of the mighty [amongst the financial, political, and ecclesiastical princes]; he judgeth among [these] *gods* [*elohim* - mighty ones].' He is represented first as reproving these princes and calling for equity, but 'They heed not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness [respecting what will be the result of their policy]: all the foundations of the earth [the social world] are out of the course'; is his decision: it is useless to attempt to patch present institutions; they must all be 'dissolved,' that the new heavens and new earth-the new social world-may come instead. Then . . . -- when all the 'elect' Church by dying shall have passed beyond the veil - then Christ will be called upon, 'Arise, O God [*elohim*], judge the earth for thou hast inherited all nations.' It will be to establish his Kingdom that he will let loose the judgments which in 'a great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,' shall abase the proud and exalt the humble and usher in the 'times of restitution' long promised by all the holy prophets. - Acts 3:19-23."

One question remains: "Would the word translated 'God' in Psa. 82:8 be better translated 'gods'?"

The answer to this question may be traced in S.S. Vol. V, pages E66-E69. There Brother Russell discusses the word *elohim* at some length. On page 66 he correctly states that "like our English word 'sheep' *elohim* is used either in the singular or plural as occasion may require."

What does the occasion require in Psalm 82:8? I reply: The noun *elohim* must here be translated in the singular (God) for the reason that it is the subject of three verbs, "arise," "judge" and "inherit," *all of which are in the singular*. The fact that the verb forms are in the singular rules out as ungrammatical any interpretation which gives *elohim* in this verse the plural meaning which it does in fact have in verses 1 and 6.

To utilize Brother Russell's "sheep" illustration: If told that the sheep *was being sheared*, we would understand that the reference was to only one animal; whereas, if told that the sheep *were being sheared*, we would understand that the reference was to more than one animal.

Since writing the foregoing, one additional related question has reached me, as follows:

Question:

In recent years conflicting views have been expressed as to whether the last members of the Church are to die, or whether their change is to occur in some other way. As you doubtless know, in S.S. Vol. III (pages C238, C239). Psalm 82:6, 7 is adduced as a "proof text" that the last members are not to be exempt from experiencing death, but must all "die like men." What is your thought?

Answer:

It is my conviction that the last members of the Church are to die, but I do not think Psalm 82:6, 7 so teaches.

In the preceding paragraphs I have endeavored to show that, in the view of expositors generally, including Rotherham, the "gods" of verses 6 and 7 are the same unjust judges as are first brought to our attention in verses 1 and 2. If, as I believe, this view be correct, there can be no reference in verses 6 and 7 to the Church, for *unjust* judges, in the very nature of the case, could not be used to represent any of the members of the Body of the Christ, all of whom are just -- their faith being reckoned to them for righteousness.

The manner in which the change of the last members of the Church is to be effected is, of course, an intensely interesting question--more interesting today than ever. But it is a question which, in my judgment, lies outside the scope of Psalm 82 and is, therefore, one to be decided, if it is to be decided in this life at all, not by reference to Psalm 82, but to other Scriptures; e.g.: 1 Cor. 15:51-59; Rev. 2:10; 14:3.

- P. L. Read

Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." - Romans 8:18.

THE Christian life is light and shadow, cloud and sunshine; tears in the evening, joy in the morning. In sickness of body we have sanctification of heart; in pain in the outer man, we have great peace in the inner man. Thus our sufferings in the present life, even when greatest, have interwoven in their texture, and intermingled with their current, and ever bubbling up from their depth, constant compensatory joys; but in the life to come, our joy will have nothing to interfere with it. It will be undiluted, unmingled ecstasy, perpetual happiness, unclouded joy. Moreover our present sufferings, even the worst, never exceed the strength of our powers of endurance. In the glory of the Kingdom our capacities will be infinitely enlarged, our susceptibilities of bliss made infinitely sensitive, and the joy that we shall experience will rise to the measure of the great capacities that our Father will give us. And in that wonderful Kingdom what delight it will afford to renew the sweet counsel we have taken together, to recount the toils of the combat, the labor of the way, and to approach, not the house, but the throne of God, in company, there to join in the symphonies of heavenly voices in the hallelujah chorus.

BETHANY

One of the most beautiful and touching scenes in the Bible on this subject is to be found in Bethany, the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. There are many sacred memories associated with our dear Redeemer in his earthly sojourn: Bethlehem, the scene of the nativity; Nazareth, where Jesus grew to manhood; the river Jordan, where he was baptized; Tiberias, an area he frequented much; the Mount on which he uttered the beatitudes and announced the principles of his Kingdom, -- the place where he spent whole nights in prayer; Calvary, where he poured out his soul in death for us. However, wonderful and blessed though these and many other associations may be to us, there is yet one other place where love fondly dwells in sanctified thought -- the home and village of Bethany.

It is only a memory now, and yet the place is fragrant with his presence, the echoes of his voice, the kindness of his manner, his sharing of the burdens and anxieties of others for their encouragement. If the story of Joseph and his brethren in the Old Testament is invested with surpassing interest, here is a Gospel home scene in the New, of still deeper and tenderer pathos, a sweet oasis in the toil-worn pilgrimage of the Master. We follow him to Bethany from the courts of the Temple -- the busy crowd, the lengthened journey, the miracles of mercy, the hours of vain and ineffectual pleading with obdurate hearts, and see him in the midst of a peaceful family, spirit blending with spirit in sanctified communion.

Doubtless many incidents of the Lord's sojournings at Bethany have been left unrecorded, because more than once the inspired narrative makes the simple statement that Jesus retired to the village of his friend Lazarus. We certainly can be grateful for what is recorded, giving a comprehensive intermingling of doctrine, consolation, comfort, and instruction in righteousness. At first glance it may seem strange that the story of Bethany and the resurrection of Lazarus, forming so noble and important a phase in our Lord's life, should have been recorded only by the Evangelist John. Two reasons have been suggested: (1) that John narrates the work of Christ in Judea and especially in Jerusalem, while the other evangelists restrict themselves to his Galilean ministry; and (2) that John was the best qualified to do justice to this matchless picture. Baptized

himself with the spirit of love, his inspired pen could best portray the lights and shadows in this lovely household. Here for a brief moment he lifts the veil which enshrouds the private life of our Lord to exhibit him in the character of a true and loving friend.

MARTHA, MARY, AND LAZARUS

Let us visit the home in Bethany and be introduced to the members of the family that we may better understand the lessons as they unfold. It is thought by some that the head of the family was Simon the leper, the husband of Martha, and now deceased (Matt. 26:6). Martha has been accurately represented as a type of activity; bustling, energetic, impulsive, well-qualified to be the head of the household, and to grapple with the stern realities and routine of actual life; quick in apprehension, strong and vigorous in intellect, anxious to give a reason for all she did, and requiring a reason for the conduct of others; one who combined diligence in business with fervency in spirit.

Mary was a type of reflection; calm, meek, devotional, contemplative, sensitive in feeling, ill-suited to battle with the cares and sorrows, the strifes and griefs of an engrossing and encumbering world. Her position was at her Lord's feet, drinking in those living waters which came welling up fresh from the Fountain of life; asking no questions, declining all arguments, gentle and submissive, the picture of a childlike faith which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things."

Of Lazarus we have fewer details to guide us in giving individuality to his character. Some think he was the rich young ruler who came to Jesus to inquire what he should do to inherit everlasting life. However, while he did not then possess the spirit of sacrifice necessary to, enable him to carry out the instructions of Jesus, the Lord nevertheless loved him for his many excellent qualities. Whether or not he was that young ruler, we may think of Lazarus as being gentle, retiring, amiable, forgiving -- a very fine member of a closely knit family.

And then, most wonderful of all, we find Jesus personifying true friendship. While he loved the world and gave himself a ransom for all, yet he had sinless partialities for individuals whose spirits and minds were more congenial and kindred with his own. Thus he had an ardent affection for all of his disciples, but even among them there was an inner circle of holier attachments -- Peter, James, and John. And even of these three, there was one preeminently beloved (John 13:23). Do we not find it true that there are some heart sanctuaries where we can more readily rush to bury the tale of our sorrows or unburden our perplexities, that in communion together there might be found peace! What was it but a noble and touching tribute to the longings and susceptibilities of his own heart for human friendship that, on entering Gethsemane, he thus sought strength in his hour of need -- "Tarry ye here and watch with me!" (Matt. 26:38).

JESUS IN THE MIDST

But to return. Such was the home and its members about whom we love to think. Perhaps the Lord had Bethany in mind when he said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). We can fancy, but no more, these oft happy meetings, when the Lord, weary and worn, was seen descending the rocky footpath of Olivet -- Lazarus, or his sisters, from the flat roof of their dwelling, or under the spreading fig tree, eager to catch the first glimpse of his approach. Standing back in the shadows we watch and listen with deep interest to the conversation, unchronicled by the inspired penmen, dealing, we may be sure, not with the sordid details of Jewish enmity toward the Savior, but with sublime and heavenly truths which sank deep into the hearts of his listeners, preparing them for a time of unexpected sorrow. If we find pleasure and comfort in

fellowship one with another, what must it have been to be seated in his presence drinking in the wonderful words of life!

May we pause here to ask ourselves the nature of our own fellowship when we meet together. Do we ourselves come together conscious of the need to get away from the bustling affairs of the world that we might refresh our spirits with the sublime promises of the Kingdom? Alas, are not our meetings spoiled sometimes by the introduction of the things of the world, the things that we have done or said; sometimes, indeed, by an argumentative spirit which turns the searching for truth into a debating society?

Not so at Bethany. There would be no interruption of the Savior there as he discoursed on his Father's plans and purposes; as he explained the need for the Ransomer and Redeemer; as he underlined the certainty of Messiah's Kingdom with its wealth of blessing for the Jew and also for all men everywhere. That we cannot all grasp the truth to the same extent or depth is shown as the story unfolds. The principle enunciated by Jesus still holds good: "According to your faith be it unto you." It is, therefore, as we grow in grace and understanding, and as the ripened character of the Christian develops, that the depths of the Lord's teachings become understood and we "lean not unto our own understanding, but in all our ways acknowledge him" trusting him to direct our paths (Prov. 3:5, 6). In this modern, materialistic day, we need the more to "enter our closets" (Matt. 6:6) and "open our window toward Jerusalem," as did Daniel (Dan. 2:10), and commune more and more with our Father and our dear Redeemer. From such communion we derive strength and grace to fit us for the burdens of life, and to enable us to do what St. Paul urges us to do: "having done all, to stand" -- (Eph. 6:13). Let us remember that the Lord can be served in the lowliest as well as in the most exalted stations, and we can become a center of holy influences to all around us.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET

One of these hallowed seasons of the Lord's presence is referred to in Luke 10:38-42, where Martha and Mary are first brought to our attention. It was natural that the presence of the Lord would cause some stir in the little household, and Martha, the busy, eager-hearted hostess, hurried to and fro with excited energy to prepare for his proper entertainment. Mary, likewise, intent on welcoming the Lord, and knowing that her sister was only too happy in attending to his material comforts, sat at his feet and listened to his words. Martha enjoyed the task which she had chosen and was quite able, without any assistance, to do everything required. She was not to blame for her active service, but a little touch of jealousy disturbed her peace of mind, when she saw Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus. It seemed to her that there was a certain amount of injustice in the situation, although we can be sure that if Martha had appealed to Mary for help, the help would have been forthcoming immediately. Being vexed in spirit, Martha, somewhat impatiently and not quite reverently, hurried in to ask Jesus if he really thought it all right for Mary to sit before him while she, herself, was taking care of all the work, and would he please tell Mary to give some help with the evening meal. How true is this picture of the Lord's people down through the Gospel Age even to our own times! The little petty jealousies which have plagued the household of faith and brought discouragement to so many! Yet, as we more nearly attain the measure of the stature of the perfect man in Christ, there grows a calmer and gentler view of these weaknesses and more patience and understanding in improving them.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The answer of Jesus -- "Martha, Martha" -- makes us imagine the half-sad, half-playful, but wholly kind and healing smile which lightened his face -- "Thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." In saying this, Jesus did not mean to exalt the contemplative life over the active life. Either may be necessary--both must be combined. Jesus was reproofing the spirit of fret and fuss--the lack of repose and calm in his follower, and he wanted Martha to understand that at the time of his visits to their

home she should provide only for their simplest needs, so that the remaining time could be devoted to higher things. In this sense Mary had "chosen" the better part. It was the decision she made in putting first things first that brought the Lord's approval. Martha, on the other hand, while properly filled with the true spirit of hospitality, was nevertheless overdoing the part, and thus her mind was troubled and she would be unable to enjoy the evening's fellowship.

Has not this same thing been true in our experiences? Can we not think back over the years to the occasions when greater preparations seem to have been made for the "natural" man to the detriment of the "spiritual" man? In our meetings from week to week we are but reproducing the Bethany scene over and over again. Do we find Christ drawing us to the meeting? Is he the center of our thoughts, the object of our devotions, the altogether lovely One? And when we leave our "upper rooms," do we carry with us the fragrance of the Lord's presence and the blessings he has left with us? Are we growing in that gentler, kindlier spirit, and thus increasingly becoming what St. Paul once said - "fellow-helpers" of the truth? Here is the measuring rod to indicate our progress in the way of the Lord, an activity working from within and reaching outward into the everyday affairs of life. As St. Peter would say: "If ye do these things ye shall never fall." This is the true test of character and something we each can watch and pray about day by day.

"OUR FRIEND LAZARUS SLEEPETH"

Our next scene is to be found in John, chapter 11. In verse one we are told of the sickness of Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and Martha. It is instructive to note, in verse 5, that although Jesus had previously approved of Mary sitting at his feet, John here records that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." Thus does the noble Apostle beautifully show the impartiality of Jesus; his appreciation of the sincerity, of those who serve him and seek to please him.

This experience with sickness and sorrow was evidently anticipated by the Lord and in an effort to strengthen the members of the family, he had visited them as discussed previously, lifting their thoughts to the true and eternal verities. And is not this always the way of the Lord toward his people? As we look back over our Christian experience, do we not find that the Lord prepared us for each heavy trial, by first bringing us a great blessing. Sometimes this came through the medium of a gathering of his people. Perhaps at other times as the result of a personal visit in our home by a fellow-saint, or some other rich Christian experience was sent us which buoyed us up and gave the silver lining to the clouds of trouble. Hence the couplet:

"The inner side of every cloud
Is bright and shining;
I therefore turn my clouds about,
And always wear them inside out,
To show the silver lining."

(Continued in next issue)

Compensation

Oh, the compensating springs! Oh, the balance-wheels of life,
Hidden away in the workings under the seeming strife!
Slowing the fret and the friction, weighting the whirl and the force,
Evolving the truest power from each unconscious source.

How shall we gauge the whole, who can only guess a part?
How can we read the life, when we cannot spell the heart?
How shall we measure another, we who can never know
From the juttings above the surface the depth of the vein below?

Even our present way is known to ourselves alone,
Height and abyss and torrent, flower and thorn and stone;
But we gaze on another's path as a far-off mountain scene,
Scanning the outlined hills, but never the vales between.

How shall we judge their present, we who have never seen
That which is past for ever, and that which might have been?
Measuring by ourselves, unwise indeed are we,
Measuring what we know by what we can hardly see.

Ah! if we knew it all, we should surely understand
That the balance of sorrow and joy is held with an even hand;
That the scale of success or loss shall never overflow,
And that compensation is twined with the lot of high and low.

The easy path in the lowland hath little of grand or new,
But a toilsome ascent leads on to a wide and glorious view;
Peopled and warm is the valley, lonely and chill the height,
But the peak that is nearer the storm-cloud is nearer the stars of light.

Launch on the foaming stream that bears you along like a dart,
There is danger of rapid and rock, there is tension of muscle and heart;
Glide on the easy current, monotonous, calm, and slow,
You are spared the quiver and strain in the safe and quiet flow.

Oh, the sweetness that dwells in a harp of many strings,
While each, all vocal with love, in tuneful harmony rings!
But oh, the wail and the discord, when one and another is rent,
Tensionless, broken, or lost, from the cherished instrument.

For rapture of love is linked with the pain or fear of loss,
And the hand that takes the crown must ache with many a cross;
Yet he who hath never a conflict hath never a victor's palm,
And only the toilers know the sweetness of rest and calm.

Only between the storms can the Alpine traveler know
Transcendent glory of clearness, marvels of gleam and glow;
Had he the brightness unbroken of cloudless summer days,
This had been dimmed by the dust and the veil of a brooding haze.

Who would dare the choice, neither or both to know,
The finest quiver of joy or the agony-thrill of woe?
Never the exquisite pain, then never the exquisite bliss,
For the heart that is dull to that can never be strung to this.

Great is the peril or toil if the glory or gain be great;
Never an earthly gift without responsible weight;
Never a treasure without a following shade of care;
Never a power without the lurk of a subtle snare.

For the swift is not the safe, and the sweet is not the strong;
The smooth is not the short, and the keen is not the long;
The much is not the most, and the wide is not the deep;
And the flow is never a spring, when the ebb is only neap.

Then hush! oh, hush! for the Father knows what thou knowest not,
The need and the thorn and the shadow linked with the fairest lot;
Knows the wisest exemption from many an unseen snare,
Knows what will keep thee nearest, knows what thou could'st not bear.

Hush! oh, hush! for the Father portioneth as He will
To all His beloved children, and shall they not be still?
Is not His will the wisest, is not His choice the best?
And in perfect acquiescence is there not perfect rest?

Hush! oh, hush! for the Father, whose ways are true and just,
Knoweth and careth and loveth, and waits for thy perfect trust;
The cup He is slowly filling shall soon be full to the brim,
And infinite compensations for ever be found in Him.

Hush! oh, hush! for the Father hath fulness of joy in store,
Treasures of power and wisdom, and pleasures for evermore;
Blessing and honour and glory, endless, infinite bliss;
Child of His love and His choice, oh, canst thou not wait for this?

- Frances Ridley Havergal

Recently Deceased

Bro. Daniel Butler, Watford, Eng.-(Oct.)
Sr. Lillian Curtis, New York, N. Y.-(Dec.)
Sr. Inez Fraser, Lancaster, Pa.-(Nov.)
Bro. H. C. Hurd, Clinton, Conn.-(Dec.)
Bro. C. W. Janke, Tonawanda, N.Y.-(Nov.)
Bro. Kaesehagen, Clarence Pk., S. Aus.-(Nov.)
Bro. Harry Paynter, Millville, N.J.-(Oct.)
Sr. L. Richerson, Independence, Mo.-(Nov.)
Sr. R. Schultz, N. Brookfield, Mass.-(Nov.)
Sr. Eva TaBois, Detroit, Mich.-(Nov.)
Bro. M. R. Wildey, Seaford, Va.-(Nov.)
Bro. A. Winski, Grand Rapids, Mich.-(Oct.)