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"If a Man Die Shall He Live Again?"

*"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."
- 1 Cor. 15:20*

THIS question appears in one of the oldest books of the Bible, the Book of Job, chapter 14, verse 14 (Job 14:4), and today it has lost none of its interest to the intelligent mind. Its proper answer stands related to our own destiny, colors and influences our theology, and the entire trend of our lives. Its correct answer gives strength, confidence, courage, and assists towards the spirit of a sound mind.

Of course so important a question has had the most profound study ever since the reign of sin and death began. By this time the subject should be threadbare. The entire world should be so thoroughly informed respecting this question that there would be nothing new to say, and nobody curious to hear. But the number of intelligent, thoughtful people who come to our meetings, and the number who write to us, requesting our literature, indicate that after all the study the subject has had, very few are satisfied with their conclusions.

It is only a few years ago since a canvass was made of public personages whose opinions are highly regarded, with a view to securing a satisfactory answer to this question. An answer was sought from ministers of religion, scientists, authors, doctors, lawyers, statesmen, business executives, social workers; men and women whose opinions carry weight, and whose records entitle them to be heard with respectful attention. One of these was the famous inventor, Edison.

While a number of them expressed a *belief* in life beyond the grave, this belief was, admittedly, based only upon hope. From the purely scientific standpoint, no evidence was advanced to prove that the life we now live has any continuance after death.

The more one ponders the question, the more evident it appears that its true answer must lie in the power and purpose of God. If the Creator has the power, it *may* be so; and if it is his purpose, it *will* be so.

Concerning his *power* we do not doubt. That which we may see in his handiwork, in the physical universe, and in our own wonderfully made bodies, abundantly attests his power to perform all his will.

But is it his *purpose* to restore the dead to life again? It would be good news indeed to learn that this is God's purpose, would it not? Well, the word "gospel" means good news, and the gospel or good news of God-the glad tidings of great joy announced by the angels at the birth of Jesus-is that God has provided for the race of mankind an opportunity whereby all may have and enjoy everlasting life.

Through the Prophet Hosea God declares: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave."- Hos. 13:14.

Jesus said: "The hour is coming when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear [or hearken] shall live." - John 5:25.

Again he said: "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice-and shall come forth; they that have done good and they that have done evil." - John 5:28, 29.

NOTES ON IMMORTALITY

Some years ago, at the request of the president of one of our Middle-West colleges, the following "Notes on Immortality" were submitted to him by the writer. They are presented here with the thought that they may be of some interest to our readers -- particularly to the several hundred new subscribers to our journal, whom it has recently been our privilege to welcome. (Readers acquainted with the six volumes of *Scriptures Studies* will recognize the large debt these notes owe to those volumes, especially Vols. I and V.)

It will be found convenient to consider the matter under nine main headings, which may first be stated, and then discussed, in the following order:

1. The Terms Mortality and Immortality Examined
2. The Terms Immortality and Everlasting Life Distinguished
3. What is Man?
4. What is the Soul?
5. The Church Distinguished from the Remainder of Mankind
6. Athanasia
7. The Hope of the Church
8. The World's Hope
9. Summary

(1) THE TERMS "MORTALITY" AND "IMMORTALITY" EXAMINED

Immortality signifies a state or condition in which death is an *impossibility*. Most people limit the word to mean Everlasting Life. Immortality, however, means inherent life, a condition in which death could not occur. This point will be more fully developed later in these notes.

To the word *mortality*, however, more often than not, an entirely false meaning is assigned. The common idea is that it signifies a condition in which death is *unavoidable*. This understanding; is erroneous. The word signifies a state in which death is *a possibility*, but by no means a certainty.

With these points recognized we are prepared to consider the creation of Adam. Adam was created *mortal*; created in a condition in which death was a possibility or everlasting life was a possibility; according as he pleased or displeased his wise, just, and loving Creator. Had he remained obedient, he would have continued living until now -- and forever -- and yet all the time he would have remained mortal, liable to death if disobedient. Nor would such a condition be one of uncertainty; for God, with whom he had to do, is unchangeable; hence Adam would have had full assurance of everlasting life so long as he continued loyal and obedient to the Creator. More than this could not reasonably be asked.

Previous to his disobedience Adam enjoyed life in full measure, but not *inherent life* -- *not* immortality. His was a life *sustained by* "every tree of the garden" save the one tree forbidden; and so long as he continued in obedience and in harmony with his Maker, his life was secure -- the sustaining elements would not be denied. Thus seen, Adam had life; and death was entirely *avoidable*; yet he was in such a condition that death was *possible* -- he was *mortal*.

(2) THE TERMS "IMMORTALITY" AND "EVERLASTING LIFE" DISTINGUISHED

Everlasting life and Immortality are not synonymous terms, although such a view is commonly held. The word "immortal" means more than power to live everlastingly; and, according to the Scriptures, while millions may ultimately enjoy everlasting life, only a very few will be made possessors of immortality -- sharers of the *Divine* nature.

This quality of immortality originally inhered in Jehovah alone, as it is written: "the Father *hath life in himself*" (John 5:26); that is to say, his existence is not a derived one, nor a sustained one. Any being whose existence depends in any manner upon another, or upon conditions such as food, air, light, etc., is not immortal.

To any who suppose that the Bible abounds with such expressions as immortal soul, undying soul, never-dying soul, etc., no better advice could be offered than that they take a Bible concordance and look for these words and others of similar import. They will find *none*.

According to the Scriptures the holy angels are enjoying life-everlasting, but are nevertheless only mortal; that is to say, the everlastingness of their angelic existence is not because they are immortal (or death-proof) and so could not be destroyed by their Creator; but because he desires that they shall live as long as they will use their lives in accord with his just and loving arrangements. Not only are they not now immortal, but there is no intimation that they ever will be. Proof that they are mortal may be seen from the fact that Satan, who was once a chief of their number, is to be destroyed. (Heb. 2:14.) The fact that he can be destroyed proves that angels, as a class of beings, are mortal.

(3) WHAT IS MAN?

The answer to this question, if given from the so-called orthodox theological standpoint would be about as follows: Man is a composite being of three parts, body, spirit, and soul. The body is born after the usual manner of animal birth, except that at the time of birth God interposes, and in some inscrutable manner implants in the body a spirit and a soul which are parts of himself, and which, being parts of God, are indestructible, and therefore can never die. These two parts, spirit and soul, orthodoxy is unable to distinguish, and hence uses the terms interchangeably at

convenience. Both terms (spirit and soul) are understood to mean the *real man*, while the flesh is considered to be merely the outward clothing of the real man, in which he dwells for the years of his earthly life, as in a house. At death, orthodoxy says, the real man is let out of this prison house of flesh, and finds himself in a condition much more congenial.

In other words, orthodoxy claims that the real man is not an earthly being, but a spirit being wholly unadapted to the earth, except through its experiences in the fleshly body. When set free from the body by death, it is argued that a great blessing has been experienced, although the man, while he lived, made every effort to continue to live in the fleshly house, using surgery, medicines, and every hygienic appliance and invention to prolong the life in the flesh which, it is claimed, is poorly adapted to his uses and enjoyment.

Nor is this view confined to people of civilized lands; in a general way all heathen people have practically the same thought respecting man; the viewpoint finds support in all their philosophies.

To the question, What is man? the scientific answer, stated in simple language, would be: Man is an animal of the highest type yet developed and known. He has a body which differs from the bodies of other animals, in that it is the highest and noblest development. His brain structure corresponds to that of the lower animals, but is of a better developed and more refined order, with added and larger capacities, which constitute man by nature the lord, the king of the lower creation. Man's breath or spirit of life is like that of other animals. Man's organism and spark of life are from his progenitors, in the same manner that the beasts receive their life and bodies from their progenitors.

Science recognizes every man as a sentient being; but as to the future, beyond the grave, science has no suggestion to offer, finding nothing whereon to base a conclusion, or even a reasonable hypothesis.

When we return to the Bible for an answer to our question we find that the Scriptures, while agreeing with both the orthodox and the scientific viewpoints in some respects, contradict both along some of their most important lines.

King Solomon, it is well known, was famous for his wisdom and learning. When to him it was suggested that, whereas the life of the lower orders of creation ceased at death, that of human beings continued on the other side of the grave, his comment was: "Who can prove it?" While he knew that human beings were endowed with moral attributes not possessed by the lower animals, yet, so far as the *kind* of life they possessed, his observation was: "That 'which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one [the same] thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one [kind of] breath; so that a man [in this respect] hath no pre-eminence above a beast ... all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." - Eccl. 3:19-21.

Nor was this conclusion which Solomon reached different from that of other Scripture writers. The thought which he expressed in another place, namely, that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave" (Eccl. 9:10) is their united testimony. David, in the Psalms, declares that in the very day one dies, his thoughts perish. (Psa. 146:4.) Job, discussing the same question, says: The dead man's "sons come to honor and he knoweth it not; they come to dishonor, but he perceiveth it not of them." - Job. 14:21.

(4) WHAT IS THE SOUL?

What, then, is the soul? The Bible account of the creation of man reads as follows: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed [or blew] into his nostrils the breath [or wind] of lives; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7.) From this account it appears that the body was formed first, but it was not a man, it was not a soul or being until animated. It had eyes, but saw nothing; a mouth, but no taste; nostrils, but no sense of smell; a heart, but it pulsated not; blood, but it was cold, lifeless; lungs, but they moved not. It was not a man, but an inanimate body.

The second step in the process of man's creation was to give vitality to the properly formed, and in every way prepared body, and this is described by the words: "blew into his nostrils the breath of lives." As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, which organ in turn propelled them to every part of the body, awakening all the prepared, but hitherto dormant, nerves to sensation and energy. In an instant the energy reached the brain, and thinking, perceiving, reasoning, looking, touching, smelling, feeling, and tasting commenced. That which was a lifeless human organism had become a man, a sentient being; the "living soul" condition mentioned in Gen. 2:7 had been reached.

This has been illustrated by the candle. For instance, the candle, unlighted, would correspond to an inanimate human body; the lighting of the candle would correspond to the spark of life originally implanted by the Creator; the flame, or light, corresponds to the sentient being, or intelligence; the oxygenized atmosphere which unites with the carbon of the candle in supporting the flame corresponds to the breath of life or spirit of life which unites with the physical organism in producing soul or intelligent existence.

If an accident should destroy the candle, the flame, of course, would cease; so, if the human body be destroyed, the soul, the life, the intelligence, ceases; or, if the supply of air were cut off from the candle-flame, as by an extinguisher or snuffer, or by submerging the candle in water, the light would be extinguished, even though the candle remained unimpaired; so the soul, the life or existence of man would cease if the breath of life were cut off by drowning, or asphyxiation, while the body might be comparatively sound.

As the lighted candle might be used under favorable conditions to light other candles, but the flame, once extinguished could neither relight itself nor other candles, so the human body, while alive, as a living soul or being, can start or propagate other souls or beings-offspring; but so soon as the spark of life is gone, soul or being has ceased, and all power to think, feel, or propagate, has ceased.

A candle might be relighted *by any* one having the ability; but the human body, bereft of the spark of life, wasteth away, returneth to the dust from which it was taken, and the spark of life cannot be re-kindled except by a miracle.

(5) THE CHURCH DISTINGUISHED FROM THE REMAINDER OF MANKIND

A fruitful source of confusion in the minds of Christian people, when attempting to obtain the Scriptural views as to the nature of man, is their failure to distinguish between mankind in general and the Church, the little flock, which during the Gospel Age (the past 2,000 years) God has been selecting from amongst men, fitting and preparing them for new and super-human conditions -- spiritual conditions. Failing to "rightly divide the word of truth," they apply to all men the statements and promises of the Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, which are addressed only to the Church, and which have no bearing whatever upon the hopes of restitution to *human* perfection, held out to all others of mankind. These great and precious promises are proportionately as untrue of the world as they are true of the Church.

There are literally scores of New Testament statements which are not applicable to mankind in general, but only to the Church, begotten again by the holy spirit to a new spirit nature. To realize this it is only necessary to notice carefully the salutations by which the Apostles introduce their various Epistles. *They are* not addressed, as is supposed by many, to mankind in general, but to the Church, "the saints," "the household of faith"; to those who will attain unto the "first resurrection" as distinguished from the general resurrection which is to follow theirs.

(6) ATHANASIA

Scholars tell us that immortality is the correct translation of only one Greek word, the word "athanasia" (deathlessness). It appears only three times in the New Testament, as follows:

"This mortal must put on immortality." - 1 Cor. 15:53;

"When this mortal shall have put on immortality." - 1 Cor. 15:54;

"Who only hath immortality." - 1 Tim. 6:16.

Evidently the first two of these Scriptures relate to the individual members of the *glorified* Church, and the third to our *glorified* Lord Jesus (the Father here, as elsewhere in the Scriptures, being excepted from comparison; see 1 Cor. 15:27).

(7) THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

The *hope* of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be made "partaker of the *divine* nature" (immortality), and share his glory as his joint-heir. - 1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

The *present mission* of the Church is the perfecting of its members for their *future* work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be Kings and Priests in the next Age. - Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; Rev. 20:6.

(8) THE WORLD'S HOPE

The hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom--the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church -- when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed. - Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35.

(9) SUMMARY

To sum up then: The proper recognition of the meaning of the terms mortal and immortal, and their use in the Scriptures, destroys the very foundation of the doctrine of eternal torment. That doctrine is based upon the unscriptural theory that God created man immortal, that he cannot cease to exist, and that God cannot destroy him; hence the argument is that the incorrigible must live on somewhere, somehow, and the conclusion is that since they are out of harmony with God their eternity must be one of misery. But God's Word assures us that he has provided against such a perpetuation of sin and sinners; that man is mortal, and that the full penalty of wilful sin against full light and knowledge will not be a life in torment, but a second death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

When incorrigible sinners have been destroyed (not continued alive in any sense of the word, anywhere, but destroyed, Psa. 145:20), both immortal and mortal beings will live forever in joy and happiness and love; the first class possessing a nature incapable of death, having inherent life-life in themselves (John 5:26); and the latter having a nature susceptible to death, yet, because of perfection of being, and knowledge of the evil and sinfulness of sin, giving no cause for death. They, being approved by God's law, will be everlastingly supplied with those elements necessary to sustain them in perfection, and will never die.

- P. L. Read

God's Table

"In this mountain will Jehovah of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." - Isaiah 25:6.

The Memorial Supper of our Lord, celebrated annually by Bible Students on its anniversary; was instituted by Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed to his death. It is symbolic of what may be regarded as a preliminary course--"that part of a meal served at one time, with its accompaniments" -- of the great feast that the Father promises to provide for "all people." Special food is supplied for this course, for specially invited guests. Some may desire to partake who we may think are not of those for whom the Memorial is particularly intended; but they are welcome at the Table, in accordance with the laws of hospitality so emphasized by the Lord in his Word. None may rightfully designate who may partake or who may not, except by the invitation extended in the Lord's own words. It is for each participant to judge his own heart and need. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." - 1 Cor. 11:28. The symbols of the Supper as defined by our Lord and by St. Paul, represent, by the bread, the counsel and example of Jesus-his body broken by three-and-a-half years of arduous sacrificial service; and, by the cup of wine, his death as the Redeemer of all mankind, "to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:6.) He himself said: "The bread of God *is* that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world.... I am the bread of life.... This is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. . . . The words' that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life." (John 6:33, 35, 40, 63.) Similarly, of the cup Jesus said: "This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many." (Mark 14:24.) Thus, if we would distinguish- between the symbols; the bread represents the life, the cup the death, of the Lord Jesus, which we memorialize "till he come" in power and glory, to bless "all the nations of the earth in accordance with God's oath-bound covenant with Abraham, as expounded by the Apostle Paul. - Gen. 22:18; Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:16, 29.

Some latitude of understanding is permitted by variations in the four accounts of the institution of the Memorial Supper--those of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul. Matthew's and Mark's accounts quote the Lord as saying when he served the cup: "This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out *for many*." Luke says he said: "*for you*," and mentions two cups, one served during and one after the Supper. *Paul's* account (1 Cor. 11:23-26) omits any designation--"for many" *or* "for you." His explanation of the significance of the emblems in the preceding chapter (1 Cor. 10:14-17) owing to the breadth of meaning of several of the Greek words he uses, may be taken to indicate either a sharing of the benefits symbolized in the loaf and the cup, or a personal participation in--what- they symbolize -- "a common union of the blood of Christ . . . a common union of the Body of Christ."

Perhaps this variation in the accounts *is intended*, under the direction of the holy spirit, to permit those who realize a mystic unity with their Head, in sacrifice and suffering and in present and future service, to see in the emblems a reminder of this relationship. Certainly such a view tends to add to the solemnity and impressiveness of the celebration. On the other hand, those who feel that this claim would be presumptuous on their part, yet who would "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," need suffer no loss of benefit. Holders of both views recognize the all sufficiency of the sacrifice of their Lord, and their paramount indebtedness to him. "Let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind," and let each respect the others' convictions. "Christ our Passover hath been slain for us." One of the most important lessons of his Memorial celebration, as emphasized by St. Paul (1 Cor. 10:17; 11:19-21, 27-30) is the *unity* of the Body of those who partake. A lack of heart-unity with other believers vitiates the significance and value of the observance to--the one cherishing a partisan or sectarian attitude. "For yet a little while -- how short! how short! -- the Coming One will be here, and will not tarry!" "Wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." - Heb. 10:27, *Rotherham*; 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

- H. E. Hollister.

Half Hour Meditations on Romans

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Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? -- Acts 26:8

HAVING discussed the narrative in Genesis concerning Abrahams justification, a narrative that was doubtless present to the mind of all his readers, the Apostle concluded his review with the words: "And therefore it [Abrahams faith] was imputed to him for righteousness" (**Rom. 4:22**). In the words which follow he "extracts the permanent principle contained in Abrahams case to apply it to us" (Godet).

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. -- Rom. 4:23-24

Abrahams Justification Is an Example and Pattern for the Church

Earlier (*Meditations No. 14*) our attention was drawn to the fact that the "faith of the Christian is the faith of Abraham." Here the Apostle makes this very clear. While it is true, of course, that the object of Abrahams faith was different in form from that of the Christian, yet in substance it was the same. *In each case the object of faith is God himself.* In Abrahams case faith rested in Gods promise; our faith rests in an accomplished fact. Abraham looked *for ward* to the birth of Isaac [which we noted in Meditation No. 39 was a birth from the dead] and looked *forward* also to that greater Seed who should come through Isaac. We look *back* to the resurrection of Christ. Both in his case and in ours faith and the disposition of mind and heart is the same: a firm reliance on *God*. Moreover the Apostle is not content to compare the faith of Abraham with that of the Christian in a general way.

He traces the parallel much closer by showing that in Abrahams case and in ours this reliance on God *has particular reference to his quickening power.* Neither the birth of Isaac, to which Abraham looked forward, nor the resurrection of Christ, to which we look back, being possible without the exercise of this power of God.

The Apostle, however, is concerned not only with comparing Abrahams **faith** with ours. The point of chief emphasis is that to us as to Abraham **God will reckon faith for righteousness.** Not only is the Christians faith identical with that of Abraham but it **will receive similar recognition and approval by God.** The record in Genesis of God counting the faith of Abraham to him for righteousness was not written for Abrahams sake alone but for us also. As a matter of fact, it was not written for Abrahams sake at all in the sense of being written for his assistance or encouragement, for it was not written until some 400 years after the events recorded. The meaning here would seem to be that the account of Abrahams justification was not written merely to relate a fact belong to **Abrahams** history but was written for our encouragement. So that we who share Abrahams faith may have the assurance that righteousness will in like manner be reckoned to us. Scholars tell us that in the Greek this point is brought out much more forcibly than in our English translation.

The Apostle does not, it seems, use the mild expression that faith "shall be" imputed to us for righteousness. What he really says is that it **is sure to be** imputed to us. One writer commenting on this passage expounds it thus: "Every time this condition [faith] shall be fulfilled, the same

imputation *will certainly take place*; such is the meaning of the word [translated *shall be*]" (Godet).

A Seeming Difficulty

It would not seem possible for the Apostle to have drawn more closely the parallel between Abrahams justification and that of the church, both in regard to the faith exercised and to the righteousness imputed, yet the fact that Abraham lived prior to the time when the great sacrifice for sins had been made by our dear Redeemer has been urged as presenting a difficulty in the way of accepting without some qualification the Apostles teaching. In this connection it has been intimated to us more than once that a discussion of the subject in this series of "Meditations" would be appreciated by many.

Thus far we have hesitated to act on this suggestion, but since this would appear to be the proper place in the series for the subject to be discussed if it is to be discussed by us at all, we are venturing to do so now.

In giving this question brief consideration here, we desire to state first that our aim is practical rather than doctrinal. We find in ourselves and in others a natural disposition to give attention to doctrine rather than to walk, whereas what attention we give to doctrine should ever be with a view to a closer walk with our Lord.

As an able writer has observed: "There is in this a great and imminent danger. One may hold the most accurate views regarding the fundamentals of Christian doctrine, may be able to state them in the most precise formulas, may be thoroughly instructed in dispensational and prophetic truth, and may know familiarly the teaching embodied in the types and ordinances and yet be barren of fruit. There is grave danger lest that which was Philadelphian become Laodicean in character: rich, increased with the best doctrinal goods (handed down from fathers with whom they were living, life controlling truths) and conscious of no need, but lukewarm. There may be little life where there is much light" (Mauro).

Now I Know In Part

Again, in expressing our views on this as on all other questions of interest to our readers, we would not be unmindful of the Apostles words that now "we know in part"; nor would we forget that in another place he cautions us: "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (**1 Cor. 13:9; 8:2**). Moreover we remember that while never contradictory truth is many sided, and perhaps no truth more so than that of justification.

Our answer, then, to any question propounded on this subject must necessarily depend upon the point of view of the questioner: upon the meaning which, at the time of his question, he associates in his mind with the word "justification." Some for example use the word "justification" as including not only the **instantaneous imputation of righteousness** which God makes to a man on his exercise of faith but also the **gradual impartation of righteousness** which after takes place in the believers experience. Others limit the use of the word "justification" to the first of these two experiences, employing the word "sanctification" to describe the second. While, as we have suggested previously (Meditations No. 17), we believe that it conduces to clearness of thought to thus distinguish justification by faith from sanctification, yet it is no part of our present purpose to insist on this distinction. The point we do desire to make is that unless a uniform use of the word "justification" be adopted it will invariably be necessary to inquire as to the meaning understood before an answer to any given question can be attempted.

Faith Justification Distinguished from Eternal Life

From one of Charles Russells numerous expositions we quote the following statement: "While the Ancient Worthies could come into harmony with God through faith in the operation of a plan not fully revealed to them and not even begun, it would appear that it would be impossible for divine justice to go further than this with any, until the atonement for sin had been actually effected by the sacrifice of Christ." (*Scripture Studies*, Vol. VI, pages F111, F112.)

With the line of thought here suggested we are in very good accord, and while we would not wish to speak either too positively as to what is or is not possible with our great God who "calletth those things which be not as though they were." And who said to Abraham not "I will make" but "I have made" thee a father of many nation. Yet we confess that to us also "it would appear" to be impossible for divine justice to have done more for the Ancient Worthies than offer them a *robe* to wear: a precious robe, tis true; a robe of righteousness that covered their imperfections from his sight, enabling them to live at peace with him and to enjoy his fellowship. But he could not release them from the death penalty until later.

But while it is true that not until Jesus had offered himself in sacrifice was **death** abolished and **life** (yes and even immortality for some) thus brought to light, it does not follow that we who now eagerly embrace this additional privilege of passing from death unto life wear any different *robe*. While none can enter upon this new and living way Jesus dedicated for us unless they wear the robe of righteousness, it is not another or a different robe from that worn by the "faith" class of every age.

Apart from Shedding of Blood There Is No Remission

In full agreement with the foregoing, we find the writer to the Hebrews assuring us in connection with his discussion of the typical arrangements that "apart from shedding of blood there is no remission" (**Heb 9:22**; *ARV*).

According to this scripture, since the blood of efficacy (that of Jesus) had not yet been shed in Abrahams day, there could have been no re mission for him. But it has been pointed out in connection with Psalm 32 (quoted in this chapter), "we are to distinguish sharply between forgiveness of sins and remission of penalties" (Russell, *Reprints*, p. 3260).

And as another able writer has observed, the Greek word translated in our Bibles as "remission" (**Heb 9:22**) is not to be understood "in the sense merely of forgiveness. In keeping with the thought of the whole passage, the word is used in the wide sense of release rather than of cleansing" (George Milligan). Abrahams sins were forgiven or passed over but he was not released from the death penalty. (See discussion on **Rom. 3:25** in Meditations No. 32.)

Again, in enlarging upon Davids case Russell goes on to state that while his sins were forgiven "yet the punishment which the Prophet had foretold came upon him in due time. Thus we see that forgiveness of sins here stands not for judicial forgiveness, which would have exonerated the forgiven one from all punishment, but it stands merely for the removal of divine disfavor, which had come upon the king as one of the results of his transgression."

In this connection it may also be observed that the ransom sacrifice of Christ was still only in prospect: at least far from a complete transaction while our Lord Jesus was yet in the flesh. Yet prior to his death he was able to *forgive* men but not to release them from the penalty of their sins.

"Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee" (**Matt. 9:2**). But it should be carefully noted that this was not said to every one, only to those possessed of genuine faith. Again, it was before he could release her from the penalty of death that he said to the woman whose tears of repentance wrought from living faith washed his feet: "Thy sins are forgiven." [Note: *are* for given, not *will* be.] "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (**Luke 7:47 50**).

[Not in the hope of finding peace after I have been crucified but go in present possession of it.]

*He turned with Daughter, be of good comfort,
Thy faith hath made thee whole,
And peace, that passeth all understanding,
Then straightway filled her soul.*

Justification by faith, then, in our view of the matter, would appear to be scripturally defined as a robe of righteousness (**Isa 61:10**) and is scripturally explained to mean forgiveness of sins (**Rom. 4:7**) but does not include release from the death penalty imposed on Adam and his race. This could be accomplished only by the payment of the ransom price to God. Furthermore it would seem that this precious robe of righteousness has been offered to all the "faith" class from the earliest times even unto now.

The wearing of it brought them all, Ancient Worthies and Gospel age Church members alike, peace with God and fellowship with him as they have realized that their sins were covered from his sight.

In addition to the wearing of this robe, believers since the death of Jesus have been permitted (still only by faith) to pass from Adamic death unto eternal life.

The Apostle has yet to unfold how this passing from death to life is accomplished by the believers union with the resurrection life of Jesus: the glorious "overcoming" which the supply of his spirit of life makes possible to such even now in this present life; the final victory which awaits those who "abide" in him, holding fast their confidence to the end; the whole process of sanctification. We are assured that in later chapters he will do so, plainly and adequately. But since the *first* requirement of all who would enter upon that narrow pathway *is to be properly dressed for the journey*, the Apostle has thus far confined his teaching to the elucidation of the only way whereby a sufficient robe for such a journey may be secured. It is a robe of righteousness granted not as a reward of it but as an unearned gift from the God of all grace on the exercise of faith in him as exemplified in the case of Abraham.

-- P. L. Read

Israel Today

"I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men" -- Micah 2:12.

Jerusalem, February 21, 1959

IT HAS been well stated that "this fragmented age of the split atom, split personality and split world has healed one fission-the Jew who needs a home and refuge, and the homeland that needs Jews." Today in Israel the welcome problem that preoccupies the people of the land is the resurgence of immigration, for truly the nation needs more Jews and many Jews need this country.

Right now the Rumanian Jews are pouring in by ship and plane. In December there were about 5,000 immigrants and in January nearly 6,000 more. In all, of 1958 only 26,000 immigrated to Israel, so the present influx is very pronounced after the easement of last year. The Rumanian Jews are being gladly received, because fifty per cent of them are under forty years of age and many of them are very skilled. For instance, during December, of the immigrants who came from Rumania 80 were engineers, 66 were doctors, 40 were pharmacists. On the other hand, some unusual problems are experienced, in the attempt to integrate these newcomers. For example, Israel already has a sufficient number of physicians, yet in this new wave of immigration, it is expected that one thousand more doctors will be coming. The question arises: How will they find employment? Obviously many of them will have to adapt themselves to new occupations.

Mr. S. Z. Shragai, head of the Immigration Department of the Jewish Agency, states that "there are still close to 400,000 Jews in Hungary, Rumania, and Poland, most of whom wish to come to Israel." All three of these countries behind the Iron Curtain are permitting their Jewish citizens to leave and if there is no dropping of the barrier, very likely the vast majority will be coming here in the near future. From Czechoslovakia comes a report that a new anti-Jewish drive has been started in Prague. So this Communist-dominated country may also be giving exit permits to its Jews before long.

It is most interesting to note the editorial comment that appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune* dealing with the emigration of Rumanian Jewry to Israel. We quote:

"The influx of Rumanian Jews continues to be one of the most significant and symbolic events of Israel's recent history. It demonstrates dramatically that the new State's role as a haven for the persecuted and unwanted far outlives the Hitler era which helped bring it into being.

"It shows too how the newcomers suddenly released from behind the Iron Curtain are just like the earlier Zionists carving out new lives in a new land, in some cases indeed almost literally creating the land in which to live.

"The entry of new immigrants into Israel provokes outcries from the Arab governments which contend that a rapidly-growing Israel population is an inevitable prelude to attempts at expansion. But Israel's efforts are bent towards making the wasteland within its own borders habitable. And its present population density of 250 per square mile leaves considerable room for absorption.

"What the new immigrants from Rumania represent is not a menace to the Arabs, but a challenge to Israel itself, which must undergo sacrifice and shortages to meet the needs of the penniless newcomers. It is a challenge that has been triumphantly met before, and it is safe to say that it will be answered once again."

How meaningful is the Scripture at the head of this report, as we witness the restoration of the people of Israel actually taking place as foretold so many centuries ago!

ISRAEL'S NINE-POINT PROGRAM

With Russia, India, and other countries declaring their objectives for the coming years, we would like to call attention to the nine-point program for Israel's development and growth during the second decade of its existence as a nation, which was outlined by the Prime Minister, Mr. David Ben-Gurion. He said:

"As I see it, we must attain the following goals during the next ten years:

"1. Welcome, absorb and integrate additional hundreds of thousands of our brethren from distant lands who yearn to come to Israel, to walk in dignity and raise their children as free Jews. It is my hope that these will include our brethren from Eastern Europe.

"2. Complete the integration of the multitudes who have already come.

"3. Complete our long-range irrigation plan and the Jordan River Project, so that water from the abundant north can bring life to the arid south, as a primary move in the conquest of the Negev desert.

"4. Cover the Negev with a rich network of agricultural settlements, cities, rail and road communications, pipelines, industrial plants and mineral workings, and a large port at Eilat.

"5. Establish peaceful relations with our Arab neighbors.

"6. Prepare the country for the utilization of atomic energy for constructive development.

"7. Maintain and strengthen the spirit of pioneering of our people.

"8. Continue raising our standards of education, with twin accents on the teachings of our ancient Hebrew Prophets and the knowledge of modern science.

"9. Strengthen the bonds between Israel and World Jewry."

A PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS

A most unwelcome immigration that has taken place in Israel has been the invasion of seemingly billions of those pink (sometimes yellow) devourers of vegetation, none other than locusts, prominently referred to in the Bible. It has been the worst locust invasion in the history of the new Jewish State and a round-the-clock battle has been waged.

Airplanes spraying insecticides had to virtually cover the country from Metulla to Eilat as the locusts spread out over the length and breadth of the land. This devastation, coupled with the

almost one-year drought that prevailed in the Land of Promise, struck a severe blow at the agricultural output.

We call to mind the promise of Joel 2:25 and 26, "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be ashamed." Furthermore, in this same chapter (verses 23 and 24) the Lord promises, "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil."

In view of these prophetic passages, the fulfilment of which, in some degree, many believe to be due at this time, the question is being raised: Why is it that Israel is now plagued with drought and locusts? Is this not rather a continuance of God's disfavor to Israel, than a sign of his returning favor? In answer to this question more than one observer has noted that these unfortunate experiences coincided with the hypocritical conduct of the nation's religious leaders last fall. As all are aware, the Jewish New Year begins in the fall. Last fall, with the Jewish New Year a Sabbatical Year also commenced, during which, according to Leviticus 25:4, 5 the land should rest. However, to avoid keeping *the spirit* of this explicit instruction, without appearing to violate *its letter*, the religious leaders had resort to the following scheme. They arranged fictitious sales of government lands, as well as acreage owned by private interests, to a Gentile, namely an Arab sheik, *for the duration of the year*. This would permit the land to be worked, without the law being violated, as it would not be owned by Jewish interests this year.

A number of editorial comments in the press here, as well as observations by other Israeli supposedly non-religious (non-orthodox), deplored such deceit. That the damage to the crops could be the Lord's answer to such conduct, there is no question. God is surely dealing with his people Israel today, and in sundry ways he will reveal to them his returning favor. However, this will not be without chastisement. - Jer. 32:37-44.

THE BIBLE KEEPS COMING TO THE FORE

Very recently another Bible quiz was held in Israel -- this time a "National Junior Bible Quiz," the finals of which were broadcast over radio station Kol Israel (Voice of Israel), and a healthy interest was evinced which made frontpage news. *Davar* (daily newspaper, official organ of the Histadrut, Israel's labor federation) had this to say:

"The triumph of Shimon Shitrit in the countrywide pupils' Bible quiz that took place at the Mann Auditorium on Thursday is the triumph of all those who participated as well as of the Bible itself. This is conclusive proof of the extent to which our children have struck roots in the Book of Books and should give pause to consider whether we should not expand Bible instruction in schools."

The other day a couple of Jewish missionaries called on us and in our conversation with them one of the gentlemen expressed his pleasure and amazement at the interest manifest in the Bible and the extent to which the Bible is being taught in the public schools of Israel. He stated that he was surprised at the amount of knowledge of the Scriptures his own son had amassed from his class studies.

The production of the first volume in a series of four entitled *Views of the Biblical World* (in Natural Color Photography) by the International Publishing Co., of Ramat Gan, Israel, is contributing to the growing interest in Sacred Writ here. These four volumes on the Old Testament now coming off the press, full of colored illustrations helping in the understanding of the meaning of the Bible by covering the background, customs, history, and geography of the 39 books, are destined to make a further deep impact on the thinking of the local populace regarding the Book of Books. When we were given the English edition of Volume One of *Views of the Biblical World* to examine, we marveled at what a superb printing job was done on it by the printing establishments here. In every respect it measured up to the finest printing done in America. *Views of the Biblical World* is being produced in a Hebrew edition as well as in English. Editions in other languages are also contemplated.

Lately, the nation of Israel suffered the loss of one of its outstanding publishers, Max Lion, who died at the age of 74. He came to this country in middle age from Germany, where his reputation as an expert in the art of printing was second to none. He loved the Bible and the Land of the Bible. But above all, he favored the letters of the Bible the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which, he was sure, were responsible in large measure for the presentation of the Law to the Children of Israel, and, later, its perpetuation through the prophetic writings.

His most outstanding work was the annual art calendar. Its appearance coincided with the years Lion lived in Israel. This calendar was very close to his heart and he sought to improve it year after year. It must, he felt, include a verse from the Bible on each page and a slogan emphasizing current Jewish needs in Israel and Jewry the world over, against a background of the country's scenery. Going into the homes of tens of thousands of Jews throughout the Diaspora, these calendars took with them the scent and spirit of the old-new land.

NEW TESTAMENT TRANSLATED BY JEWISH SCHOLAR

The Authentic New Testament, in English, that came off the press a year ago, translated by an eminent Jewish scholar, Dr. Hugh J. Schonfield, of England, may find a wide distribution in Israel. It has been produced in pocketbook form by The New American Library of World Literature, 501 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y., in their Mentor Book series, and sells for 510 cents. Dr. Schonfield has endeavored to bring together all the information unearthed by historians and archeologists, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, and has weighed it carefully against his extensive knowledge of the ancient Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek documents, according to the publishers of *The Authentic New Testament*. They state that "his vivid, readable translation and helpful explanatory notes capture the authentic atmosphere of Biblical times and bring the modern reader closer to the people, the country, and the period."

There is little doubt that this translation will be eagerly read by the Jewish people here. Many in Israel read and speak English fluently, while more than half the four thousand students at the Hebrew University are studying English.

(Foregoing is the sixth report from the Land of Promise, from Brother Casimir Lanowick, Editor of Jews in the News. --Ed. Com.)

Unity or Uniformity? Which?

LAST month, under the caption, "The heavens rolling together," we saw a recent summons of Pope John XXIII or an Ecumenical Council, and the reactions thereto of Protestant leaders. As we watch with keen interest the developments in the ecclesiastical heavens, shall we not do well to examine our own hearts that no sectarian prejudices may hold sway there. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many is waxing cold, and today many are beginning to feel that if it is impossible for men to be united in the fellowship and service of Christ, then Christianity is either an idle dream, beautiful but impossible, or an empty fairy tale. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the scoffs and jeers of the world, and the bickering and wrangling of worldly-minded Christians; in spite of the irritation outside the Church, and the agitation within, all truly consecrated followers of Jesus long for a larger fellowship. When that longing becomes a determination, when the wish becomes a will, where there is a will there will be provided *a way* to overcome the lethargy that is upon us, to overcome the sectarian vanity from which perhaps none of us is entirely free.

When the Gospel first began to be preached by our Lord and his Apostles, what a oneness was manifest in the Church, as the little band of followers sought to walk in the footsteps of the Master! They were only a humble folk, without wealth, or scholarly attainment, or social standing, but they seemed to catch the spirit of the Master, and after Pentecost such a spirit of joy and love and faith and hope possessed them, and such a fervor of missionary zeal, such a oneness of heart and action, that it seemed almost as if the prayer of Jesus would find speedy fulfilment, and that the whole world would soon believe on him. (John 17:21.) In the early centuries the Gospel message seemed to spread like fire. In the language of the Revelator: "It went forth conquering and to conquer." (Rev. 6:1.)* Just to read the story of those early days is enough to make the heart beat faster. Well might the powers that were in those days be astonished as they witnessed the power of the Gospel in the lives of those who received it, giving to believers such a vision of our glorious hope as enabled them to stand undaunted in the face of cruel deaths, to meet the furious hate of their persecutors undismayed; nay more, to meet that hate with a gentleness, a love, a compassion, which only close followers of Christ can display.

* See "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," "Vol. 1, pages 305-309.

Alas! the rider on the white horse, which seems to symbolize that period of the Church's history, was followed by other horsemen, as those of us who are familiar with our Lord's revelation are aware, and ere long, as history shows, a great compromise was effected between the world and the Church. Since then, the story of the Church has often enough been a history of hatred, of narrowness and stupidity, of inconceivable bigotry and brutality. What crime against God and man has the Church not committed? How appalling is the record! As we read the pages of history, the outrages there revealed fill our minds with horror, remembering as we do, that they were perpetrated in the holy name of Jesus.

Yet through all the centuries, amid wrangling bigots and proud tyrants, the true faith was kept alive. Though the Church as a whole was not Christian, became indeed anti-Christian, some few were found at all times who had not defiled their garments. These have been the salt of the earth, the light of the world. As another has said: "If one seeks the Apostolic succession, here it is, unbroken and uninterrupted, a shining tradition of vision and service. It is in their gentle lives, silhouetted against dark backgrounds, that we trace the history of the hidden Church, the 'little flock.'" Though not inspired as were the Apostles, they were entrusted by God and by Jesus with

the Gospel, and they guarded it, dear brethren, for us. They kept watch over it as of a sacred treasure, as keepers of a holy fire, which must never be stamped out. They yielded their lives to the sweet, mellowing influence of the holy spirit of love and truth, though it meant for them certain privation, loss and hardship beyond our experience, enjoying withal a fellowship of spirit which not even the curse of sectarianism could destroy. And if these, with their feeble light, were enabled to preserve a fellowship of spirit even in the midst of sectarian bondage and in the darkness of the Dark Ages, will not the Lord expect at least as much from us as we face the issues which confront us today?

For ourself, we are more interested in unity of Christian spirit, and in fidelity to Christ in thought and deed, than we are in unity of name, creed, or organization. Jesus said, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." We are more concerned about attaining that sort of unity in the Christian family than about any other person's definitions, or efforts, to limit the Church by any name or professed unity of his own.

Christian unity is a spiritual fact. (Eph. 4:3.) Christian uniformity will never come, and would not be a good thing if it did. There was unity without uniformity in the early Church. The message of the Church is more important than its machinery.

- *P. L. Read*

"Blessed Are the Dead Which Die in the Lord From Henceforth"

"Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them." - Rev. 14:13.

UNIFORMLY throughout the Bible except this one instance, death is represented as a dreadful disaster, a terrible enemy, a devouring monster, and the grave as a great prison, permitted of our loving Heavenly Father, only because men had become sinners and must be destroyed....

In view of the general expression of enmity to death in the Scriptures the above solitary text speaking of it as a blessing is rather peculiar, until we notice that the application is limited by the word "*henceforth*." Not always, but henceforth, death may be a blessing. But notice another limitation; it will not henceforth be a blessing to *all* mankind, but only to those in the Lord -- members in particular of the Body of Christ, the little flock to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom -- to all others *death* will continue to be an *enemy* until its final destruction in the Millennial reign (Hos. 13:14).

Again, it is unusual to speak of those already *dead* as dying; but the spirit uses this seemingly incongruous expression, evidently desiring to limit the application of the death blessing to a certain class, "Blessed are the *dead* (dead to the world -- crucified with Christ -- "ye are dead and *your* life is hid with Christ in God,") who die in the Lord from *henceforth*."

Now, we are full of interest to know when, from what time forward, will it be blessed for the special class mentioned to die. These words were written for our edification, and we should be able to know *when* they apply, especially if we are *in* the Lord and *dead* to the world; for it was part of our Master's promise that the spirit should guide us into an understanding of the truth and show us things to come (John 16:13). If, as we believe, the last members of the Body of Christ are now living -- "The feet of him" -- it is time that we understood this passage, which clearly refers to *the feet*...

But we inquire: In what respect will death be a blessing to us now, that it has not always been to other members of the Body? We answer: The difference is that we shall not *sleep*, but we will be instantly invested with our heavenly, spiritual bodies, being changed in a moment, dropping all that is human and earthly and being clothed with our heavenly condition. In the case of Jesus, there were nearly three days of sleep-the unclothed condition between the times when the earthly body was resigned and the heavenly body was received. Paul and others have been nearly two thousand years waiting "*unclothed*" or "asleep in Jesus" and this is one of the principal reasons why death was undesirable even to Christians. We don't wish to be unclothed even for a moment, but we do desire to be clothed or have the *change* an instantaneous one (1 Cor. 15:52).

Herein consists the blessing to those of the Body now taken. Death of the *human* will be instantaneous with the perfecting of the *divine* nature, hence it will be a *blessed* "change." "Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow *with* them."

To the class thus "blessed" there will be no interruption of work. Already dead to the world and alive toward God', their work is in harmony with the Kingdom work now going on, and they merely step to their higher plane of "divine" perfection and power and there continue the same work. It is only the *labor* (toil) incident to the mortal body, the frail "earthen vessel," which ceases. Not so highly favored in this regard was the lot of any of the members of "the Body"

which preceded us. Quite a period elapsed in Paul's case between sufferings and glory. When he had fought a good fight and finished his course, he looked forward, not to a change "in a moment," but to a sleep from which he would be awakened to receive his reward in the Kingdom. So he expresses his hope, "Henceforth there is *laid up for me* a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me *at that day*" (2 Tim. 4:8).

Nowhere in the Scriptures is death represented as in any sense a blessing, except in this one instance; and here it is particularly limited and made applicable to a certain specific time" -- from henceforth." And even then, notice, it is blessed only to a special *class* -- "*the dead* who die." This expression must not be considered a blunder, but as a very pointed and forcible description of the small class to whom death will be a blessing. This class constitutes "the feet of Him." And, as already shown, each member of the Body of Christ must finish his sacrifice in actual death.

These alone are "*the dead* who die." They are reckoned of God as being already dead, and they are exhorted so also to reckon themselves: "Reckon ye yourselves *dead* indeed unto sin." No other dead men can be said to die but this class of dead ones, who must finish their course of sacrifice in actual death.

Thus will God help Zion in the dawning of her morning -- in the morning of the eternal day of Christ's triumph. Thus he is already helping her. One by one, imperceptibly to the world, the saints are now being changed, and are joining the company of the Church triumphant; and those who remain to the last, proclaim the everlasting Gospel until the door is shut and all opportunity to labor is at an end. Then they will "*stand*" in faith and patience and await their change, accepting deliverance joyfully through whatsoever agency God may be pleased to permit its accomplishment.

Thus they will be saved from that great hurricane of trouble which will follow their departure, as well as preserved in the forefront of the battle in which *a thousand* will fall into infidelity, and be overcome by the various pestilences of error, to *one* who will stand (Ps. 91:7).

- *Condensed from the writings of C. T. Russell.*

The Question Box

Matthew 25:1-13

Question:

Why is the Bride not mentioned in the Parable of the Ten Virgins? - Matthew 25:1-13.

Answer:

There are some who believe that the Bride is mentioned. According to one noted expositor the scene of the parable does not refer to the coming of the Bridegroom to receive his Bride, but to his return to his home with his Bride. Others similarly hold. Indeed some of the later translations supplement the text "to meet the Bridegroom and the Bride." In Cranmer's Bible the translation is "to mete the brydgrome (and the bryde)." The supplement, however, is wanting in the oldest manuscripts, and is rejected by the great body of authorities. It was doubtless an early note in explanation (based on what we think was a misconception) of the scene. Had the Bride been mentioned, considerable interest would have been shown in her; the parable would have required modification in a number of important respects. The virgins would have gone to meet her and the lesson of the parable would have been a different one. Looking beyond the parable to the great reality represented, we have little difficulty in understanding it to picture Christ's return to the earth for his Bride, and the condition of the five wise virgins to teach the proper heart attitude of the prospective members of the Bride class, as they make haste to welcome him.

In the conviction then that the Bride is not mentioned, we return to the question: "Why is she not mentioned in this parable?" Two reasons suggest themselves:

(1) At the time our Lord spake his parables the truth that the GospelAge Church was to be related to him as a bride to a husband had not been revealed.

(2) Even if the relationship of the Church to Christ as Bride to Husband had been taught and had become well understood, it would have detracted from the Master's main lesson in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, to have mentioned her there.

Without doubt the Bridegroom of this parable represents our Lord. He is also the King's Son for whom, in the parable of the Marriage Feast (Matt. 22:2), the King (Jehovah himself) has prepared a nuptial feast at his house. But neither in that parable nor in this one is the Bride mentioned—apparently for identical reasons.

As a matter of fact, nowhere in the Synoptic Gospels, that is to say, in the Gospels by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, is the Bride of Christ mentioned. And even in the Gospel by John, the Bride mentioned by the Baptist in John 3:28, 29 was the Jewish Church or nation, not the Gospel-Age Church. The figure of the Bridegroom had been used in the Old Testament of Jehovah and his relationship to Israel. When Christ came, he came as the Father's representative, to claim this Jewish Church for his own. "And his own," we read, "received him not." - John 1:11.

This, indeed, was the first significance of our Lord's parable of the bridechamber, although doubtless there was a deeper meaning in it (a reference to the Gospel-Age Church) which neither the disciples of the Pharisees nor the disciples of the Baptist could grasp. (Matt. 9:14, 15.) But in the days of our Lord's flesh there was no spirit-begotten Church to whom he could be betrothed. Not until after he had given his life for her sake; not until he had been raised from the dead by the

Father's power; not until he had ascended on high, there, at the Father's right hand, to appear' in his presence on her behalf; not until the waiting followers of Jesus received the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, was there even the nucleus of a Church to whom, as a spirit-being, he could be betrothed. Then indeed, it was, on the day of Pentecost when the holy spirit was given, that our heavenly Bridegroom betrothed the Gospel Church to himself in love.

To the question as to why the Bride is not mentioned in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, our first answer, then, must be that it would have anticipated a truth not expounded until after our Lord's might or might not prove true. Speaking of those who shared these views with him, he wrote: "Whether all of their conclusions may be accepted or not, they are at least worthy of consideration, inasmuch as they furnish a new interpretation of some Scriptures not previously understood. *Whether they have the times and seasons properly divided is another matter, upon which each individual Christian should use his own judgment.*"-*Reprints, Vol. 6, page R5523.*

Elsewhere he wrote: "The oil, or the spirit of consecration, and its attendant light cannot be communicated from one virgin to another. Each for himself must be filled with the spirit; each must get his own supply of this oil (the Truth, and its spirit of consecration and holiness); and the cost is considerable in the way of self-denial and misrepresentation and fiery trial." (S. S. Vol. III, page C94.) And again: "The fruits and graces of the holy spirit cannot be had for the asking; they must be bought in the market of experience-they are of gradual growth, and cost painstaking care of words and thoughts and doings. It is because these fruits of the spirit are so difficult of attainment and cost such a price of self-sacrifice and sacrifice of worldly interests that they are valuable in the Lord's sight." (*Reprints, page 3868.*) And again: "Experience in the great time of trouble will be the market in which the foolish virgins will purchase their oil." - S.S. Vol. III, page C94.

"Our lamps are trimmed and burning,
Our robes are white and clean,
We've tarried for the Bridegroom,
And now we'll enter in.

"We know we've nothing worthy
That we can call our own
The light, the oil, the robes we wear,
Are all from Him alone.

"We see the marriage splendor,
Within the open door;
We know that those who enter
Are blest forevermore;

"We see the King, more lovely
Than all the sons of men;
We haste because that door, once shut
Will never ope again."

- P. L. Read.

"Fashioned Like Unto His Glorious Body"

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." - Philipians 3:20, 21.

THIS passage has been generally misunderstood to teach that our human bodies are vile things, but that, in the Lord's due time they are to undergo a miraculous change, becoming like the glorified body of Christ.

It is true that we, the Church, if faithful, are to be made like our Lord (1 John 3:2), but that thought is not under discussion in Philipians 3:20, 21. Here, as in all true Scripture study, we must first satisfy ourselves that we have a correct translation, and then study it in the light of its context. A preferred translation is given in the American Revised Version:

"For our citizenship [margin: commonwealth] is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself."

In studying this text in relation to its context two points are at once apparent: (1) The word "body" is in the singular, not the plural, and (2) the Apostle is contrasting, not the body of one member of the Church on earth with the body that member will have in heaven, but the status of Christ's Body (the Church) on earth with its status when the Lord returns for her.

St. Paul's general line of argument seems clear: In the company of professing Christ followers there are two main groups—the true and the false. They are easily distinguished, not by slight differences of viewpoint on some "hard to be understood" points of doctrine on which even inspired Apostles differed (2 Pet. 3:16), but by the general tenor of their lives. The false are described as of earthly mind—who live as enemies of the cross of Christ. (Phil. 3:18, 19.) The true are not to be content with merely adding to their store of knowledge, but, as Moffatt's choice translation puts it, "We must let our steps be guided by such truth as we have attained." (Phil. 3:16.) This must be true both of the mature and the immature. (Phil. 3:15.) It is mandatory in the Christian experience that each fresh item of truth understood be promptly put into practice. At once it is to have its place in "guiding the steps." This principle was so elementary with Paul that he could, in all humility, consistently urge upon the brethren not merely that they pay attention to his teaching, but that they copy him—and even were to take note of those who lived by the example he set. - Phil. 3:17, 18, Moffatt.

Then comes the great contrast, which we may well believe was ever present to his mind—the state of humiliation in which the true Church, the Body of Christ, was to complete its course, and the state of glory to which she would be changed. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:4). "Then," as Brother Russell has so well expressed it (*Reprints*, p. R1102), "the Church shall in reality be a glorious body, a body suitable in every way for the high position she shall fill as the Bride of Christ—the companion of the Son of God for all eternity, his joint-heir in all things, and his efficient and thoroughly capable coworker in the great mission to which Jehovah hath appointed the Christ -- Head and Body -- Bridegroom and Bride. Together they shall constitute the great Prophet, Priest, and King, whom Jehovah hath anointed; and their glory shall appear to all intelligent creatures in heaven and earth."

- P. L. Read

The Jesus Tower of the Jerusalem YMCA

From a leaflet issued by the Jerusalem Y.M.C.A.

THE JESUS Tower is a sermon in stone. At the base of this 152 foot structure in the center of the Jerusalem Young Men's Christian Association is a cornerstone with the words of dedication, "These buildings are given to the glory of God and in remembrance of his only begotten Son."

As one enters the central doorway, and turns to the left, he may see the inscription above the entrance to the Oratory, "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." The Oratory, at the very bottom of the tower, portrays the first step in this sermon in stone, the primary importance of reconciliation and forgiveness. In four bas-reliefs are shown the story of Jesus, told in Matthew 5:23, 24. In the first, two brothers are quarreling. One then presents his gift upon the altar, but with no response. The two brothers meet again and embrace in reconciliation. Again the gift is placed upon the altar and fire from heaven indicates the acceptance of the sacrifice. In the center of the room is an altar of remembrance, built of twelve unhewn stones from Bethel, untouched by tools. In front of the altar, carved deeply in the floor, is the lesson of humility illustrated by the dogs eating the crumbs which fall from the master's table.

On the first floor is the second step in the sermon, shown through the Upper Room. Here, in the room in memory of the supreme service of Christian fellowship, are portrayed in eight bas-reliefs the scenes from the Last Supper. The second stage in worship is clear: to seek God through Bible study, group discussion, and fellowship.

The climax of the sermon is found only after one ascends to the very top of the Jesus Tower, passing the carillon with its 35 bells from which Christian hymns sound out across the Holy City on Sundays and other sacred days. A small gate opens to a stairway leading to the Room of Silence. Over the stairway are the Greek characters, CHI RHO, standing for Christ, found also in the emblem of the Y.M.C.A. The small chapel at the head of the stairway is for private prayer. Its ceiling is a double dome, the upper with its star-studded blue vault speaking of the vastness of God, and the inner bearing the command, "They that wait upon Jehovah shall renew their strength." Here, at last, with the memory of the whole panorama of Jerusalem fresh in his mind—the Mount of Olives with its Garden of Gethsemane, the strong walls of the Old City, and the long reaches of the Palestinian hills—the pilgrim to Jerusalem may kneel and fulfill the injunction carved on capitals in the gallery of the tower, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee."

The Jerusalem Young Men's Christian Association buildings were erected from funds supplied in the main by Mr. James N. Jarvie of Montclair, N. J. It is under the direction of the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States and Canada.

Notice of Annual Meeting

Membership in the Pastoral Bible Institute is, and always has been, open to any consecrated brother or sister who "is in full harmony with the purpose, spirit, and policy of the Institute," and who intends to support it "in all reasonable ways as he or she shall deem to be the Lord's will."

As stated in its charter, the purpose for which the Institute was formed, is "the dissemination of Bible truths in various languages by means of the publication of tracts, pamphlets, papers, and other religious documents, and by the use of all other lawful means which its Board of Directors, duly constituted, shall deem expedient for the furtherance of the purposes stated."

The membership fee is five dollars (\$5.00) which should accompany the application. If an applicant lacks the membership fee, but is otherwise acceptable, the fee will be paid out of a special fund provided for that purpose.

In order to participate in the election of directors at the next annual meeting, those desiring to apply for membership should do so promptly as, according to our by-laws, "the registration of such membership must be made twenty days prior to the election."

Members of the Pastoral Bible Institute are hereby reminded of the privilege which is theirs of nominating in the pages of this journal the brethren they wish to elect as directors for the fiscal year 1959-60.

All should be aware of the fact that the affairs of this Institute are in the hands of seven brethren who are elected from the Institute's membership to serve for a period of one year or until their successors are elected. In accordance with the by-laws, the next annual meeting will be held Saturday, June 6, at 2 p.m., in the parlors of the Institute, 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, New York.

The brethren whose term of service will expire are:

F. A. Essler
J. C. Jordan
J. T. Read
P. L. Read
P. E. Thomson
W. J. Siekman
H. V. Warren

The brethren named above are pleased to report that a spirit of Christian love and harmony exists in their midst; and they have every reason to believe that the Lord has seen fit to bless their association in this ministry. They realize, however, that those carrying on any work may fail to see opportunities for improvement and expansion apparent to others not charged with such responsibility, and that for this reason changes in office sometimes have beneficial effects. They therefore urge upon all the members of our Institute that they make this a special occasion for prayer, that our Father's will may be expressed in the vote of the members. If after prayerful meditation any are led of the Lord to nominate brethren, and will forward the names and addresses of such brethren so as to reach this office on or before April 1, 1959, such names will be published in the May issue of the "Herald," that all members may have an opportunity of voting for them.

Beliefs That Matter

It is to be expected that most young people will have some difficulty, and require time and study, before arriving at the basic values which will bring them into spiritual harmony with the Creator and his Plan. But there are also *many* adults of all ages-firm in faith-who indicate that they would welcome a brief guide to help them increase their acquaintance with God in these tempestuous days.

A new booklet, *Beliefs That Matter*, summarizes four practical, simply expressed steps, by which the individual may strengthen his acquaintance with the Father, and with the manner in which his purposes are being carried out; and be assured as to the forthcoming rule of righteousness. As a reminder of things already known, or as fresh food for thought, the booklet will spur our own thinking, and that of friends *who may* not have heard the contents in a discourse by the author, or read the message in the *Herald*. The format matches other recently issued booklets.

A copy of *Beliefs That Matter* will be sent soon to each subscriber by first class mail, without charge. Additional copies will be supplied free on request.

Recently Deceased

Sr. Ida M. Baumgartner, Miami, Fla. - (Feb.)
Sr. Elizabeth Doe, Somerville, Mass. - (Feb.)
Sr. Mamie Gardner, Easton, Pa. - (Feb.)
Bro. Otis Howard, Zeigler, Ill. - (Mar.)
Bro. D. Kittinger, Broad Brook, Conn. - (Mar.)
Bro. E. L. Wagner, St. Louis, Mo. - (Feb.)