

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## He is Risen

*"Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." - John 16:20.*

STUPENDOUS miracle, the basis of Christian hope! Come to the vacant sepulcher of Christ and sing for joy! Angels, spirits of purity and love, hasten to meet us here with their message sublime. Heaven and earth, angels and men, all happily together at the open tomb. Sorrow may be for a night; joy cometh in the morning. With grateful hearts, with uplifted heads, we repeat the great articles of our faith: "I believe in Jesus Christ, who was crucified, who died, and was buried; who rose again from the dead; and who is now at the right hand of God. I believe in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection, and the life everlasting." Our cups brimming with gladness, we exclaim with the Psalmist: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen."

Once again we direct our thoughts particularly to the great central fact of our faith. But now not so much to dwell upon the abstruse theological philosophy of that event so important to us all, but rather to linger over some of the touching human aspects related to it. We would see more of the wondrous Resurrection -story in the light of its immediate effect upon the disciples. We would have our hearts burn as through them we experience their unspeakable joy when the awe inspiring truth was made manifest. To aid us in visualizing some of the dramatic incidents of our noble theme, we shall consider four great paintings through which masters of art have augmented the sacred record in portrayals of deep feeling and understanding. These paintings may well be likened to four scenes in a stupendous play. For our meditation we shall so consider them.

### SCENE ONE

The poet has said:

"Calvary and Easter Day,  
Earth's blackest day, and whitest day,  
Were just three days apart"

Yet how long must have been the day between, and how filled with unutterable sadness! The Scriptures are silent regarding it, but it was a real day, a terrible day to that small group of disciples scattered "as sheep without a shepherd. They had awakened to a realization that the nightmarish scenes of a few hours ago were real after all, and their sense of loss must have been overwhelming

"Mourning each one the unfulfilled fair dream  
To which their dead hopes could no life impart."

We are indebted to the genius of the great Swiss painter, Eugene Burnand, for the painting "Holy Saturday," than which there is no finer portrayal of the stark tragedy that gripped the eleven men most closely associated with Jesus. Burnand portrays them dazed with blinding sorrow and confused of mind and heart, once again gathered in the upper room where on Thursday night the Master had washed their feet, partaken with them of their farewell meal, and talked to them with a tender, brooding sympathy. Gathered again; to seek in this hallowed place for quiet, undisturbed meditation and prayer. This is the 15th of Nisan, a great feast-day of Israel. Without, the streets are thronged with the celebrants. Garlanded and arm-in-arm, they troop the streets singing the old familiar songs of rejoicing. Within, the echoes of this merriment penetrate to pierce sword like the gloom filled hearts of the disciples. Some are seated at the table; others stand forlornly in the background. There is no ray of hope on any face. Peter, at one end of the table, his agonizing brain resting heavily on his hands, no longer able to think or talk, weeps and suffers in silence. His is a double grief. John, next to him, trying to comfort his impulsive friend, appears to feel the futility of words at such a time. James sits at the other end, his deep set eyes peering into vacancy as if trying to recall something from, the sayings of his dead Master that would bring order out of his mental chaos. Andrew stands with downcast eyes and sorrowing face just behind Peter, his conscience-stricken brother. The rest are grouped about the three at the table, some watching with sympathetic faces the suffering Peter, while others are lost in thoughts too deep for words, or are hushed in silent prayer. Only those who have loved much and lost can really know what that "Holy Saturday" meant to the bewildered disciples. The painting might well be called "The Death of Hope" for

"He died!  
And with Him perished all that men hold dear;  
Hope lay beside Him in the sepulcher,  
Love grew cold, and all things beautiful beside,  
Died, when He died!"

Though they as yet "knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead, we search their faces to see if, like bells in the distance, a faint melody of coming joy was not being rung to their numbed consciousness by those strange words of but yesternight:

"A LITTLE WHILE AND YE SHALL NOT SEE ME: AND AGAIN, A LITTLE WHILE, AND YE SHALL SEE ME. VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT YE SHALL WEEP AND LAMENT, BUT THE WORLD SHALL REJOICE, AND YE SHALL BE SORROWFUL, BUT YOUR SORROW SHALL BE TURNED INTO JOY. A WOMAN WHEN SHE IS IN TRAVAIL HATH SORROW, BECAUSE HER HOUR IS COME, BUT AS SOON AS SHE IS DELIVERED OF THE CHILD, SHE REMEMBERETH NO MORE THE ANGUISH, FOR JOY THAT A MAN IS BORN INTO THE WORLD. AND YE NOW THEREFORE HAVE SORROW, BUT I WILL SEE YOU AGAIN, AND YOUR HEART SHALL REJOICE, AND YOUR JOY NO MAN TAKETH FROM YOU."

## SCENE TWO

The scene changes. It is the early part of the following day, the first day of the week. Again have the disciples -awakened to a despairing consciousness of their loss and inconsolable grief. Poor crushed spirits! How, little did they, know that the darkness was past, that a glorious light was about to break forth in their hearts never to be extinguished! For the sun had scarce risen when Mary of Magdala burst into their presence with the strange and terrible news that the grave was empty. Amazed and fearful at this new development, Peter and John are instantly on the way to the Garden; their eager haste hurrying them to the, utmost speed. This is the moment Burnand has chosen to transfer to canvas in his magnificent portrayal "Peter and John Running to the Tomb." The artist has marvelously caught the spirit of this incident. The two disciples are shown running at top speed, the brilliant dawn of the resurrection morn left behind. John's hair ripples backward as his body bends forward against the wind. The folds of his white robe stream behind. That Peter is the older and is losing out in the race is evident. His longer locks flare in the wind, his cloak tosses behind him, and his mouth opens to make labored breathing easier, while his hand presses back a heart near bursting from mingled emotion. John's hands are clasped together in front of his bosom in the attitude of prayer. He seems not to be conscious of the movement of his limbs; his thoughts are projected far ahead; his eyes appear as fixed upon the distant tomb. Anticipation is written over both their faces. What must be their most inward thought? Are they beginning to feel an awakening within, a stirring of vast implications? The eagerness of a strange expectancy is accentuated in every line of face and body as they race onward, our own hearts keeping pace with them.

The sacred record tells us: "So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, saw the linen clothes lying: yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulcher, and he saw and believed." Ah yes, John believed. Nothing is here said concerning Peter's convictions. But shall we question the result of that meeting of the Lord and his brokenhearted disciple when later, as Paul records, "He was seen of Cephas"? And can mere words describe the ecstasy of that reunion?

"He knows --  
How to steal the bitter from life's woes."

## SCENE THREE

We pass on to the wonderful experience of Mary Magdalene whose glory it is that

"Not she with traitorous kiss her Master stung,  
Not she denied him with unfaithful tongue;  
She, when apostles fled, could dangers brave,  
Last at his *cross*, and earliest at his grave."

We find her now returned to the tomb, her spirit overborne with longing anxiety to find him, and refusing to believe that she could not. She is alone, as the two disciples and the women had returned to the city. She peers into the sepulcher; the empty space where Jesus had lain is now no longer untenanted, but instead of the Redeemer, she sees two shining ones, one where the head and the other where the feet had rested. The strangeness of their presence seems lost to her as

with eyes half blinded from weeping, she enters and looks about her. And then -- then a Form suddenly stands at the threshold! O moment mystical and sublime!

This is the wonderfully dramatic setting of Edward Burne-Jones' painting, "The Morning of the Resurrection."

We see the two angelic messengers, great wings folded against the background, their faces turned in silent awe to One they recognize as far above all principalities and powers. A fold of their white robes raised to their lips as if thus to acknowledge their own unworthiness. The one farthest from the threshold, with raised arm gestures to direct Mary's attention. She, with head slightly turned, looks in startled timidity upon the Visitor's face. Is this the keeper -of the Garden come to rebuke her intrusion? With cloak caught up, she is prepared to flee. Yet she cannot take her eyes from Him who looks at her with an all-seeing gaze. Her, heart pounds from the tumult of emotion which surges over her spirit. What are these strange stirrings in her slumbering memory? What is there about that face? -- but no, it could not be! Her tear misted eyes must be deceiving her!

Only a moment intervenes until a heart full of the deepest sorrow is raised to rapturous joy, and that through the utterance of but *one* word! *One word* which will send her, fleet as a deer, to astound the disciples with the amazing truth,

"I HAVE SEEN THE LORD"!

#### **SCENE FOUR**

And what is our fourth painting? Ah, it has not yet been painted, though the Great Artist has been long preparing. It will not be painted on canvas but. on more durable material, which shall survive eternity. And when that glorious work is finished, strong men shall weep with joy as they contemplate it, and the heaven shall resound with the voice of angelic singing. For a stupendous scene shall it unfold. Its setting this earth, its subject all mankind, And its theme the everlasting love of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. For our three pictures are but miniatures of far greater scenes. The grief and sadness of the Eleven in the upper room is multiplied a million fold in the hopeless grief of humanity. John and Peter running to the tomb may well show forth the coming experience of the nations when the "word shall go forth from Jerusalem." And Mary at the tomb, the amazed awakening in the heart of all peoples that "One there is above all others well deserves the name of Friend." For we have all a nearer, a more special interest in the deserted tomb of Jesus Christ. For us all he died, and for us all he rose again. Firm and fast as the grave now seems to hold the buried generations of our race, it is doomed, as a fruit of Christ's resurrection, to relax its grasp and yield them up again. Empty as was Joseph's sepulcher when the angel spoke to the women, so empty shall be every grave of earth when another angel shall sound his trumpet, and it shall ring through the regions of the dead, and stir all to life again. Blessed was that morning which dawned upon the empty tomb at Calvary, but more blessed to us shall that other Morning The which shall dawn upon the empty graves of earth.

O Earth, thou grain of, sand on the shore of the Universe of God; thou "Bethlehem" amongst the princely cities of the heavens; thou art, and remainest, the Loved One amongst ten thousand suns and worlds, the Chosen of God! Thee will his Son again visit, and then thou wilt prepare a throne for, him, as thou gayest him a manger cradle; in his radiant glory wilt thou rejoice, as thou didst once drink his blood and his tears, and mourn his death! On thee has he a great work to complete! Hear the word of the Lord!

"BECAUSE I LIVE, YE SHALL LIVE ALSO."

- *W. J. Siekman.*

## **The Christian Duty of Discrimination**

*"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." - 1 Thess. 5:20, 21.*

SINCE the word discrimination has more than one meaning, we should state at the outset in what sense we are using it now. Like some other words, discrimination is used in both a good sense and a bad. In the latter usage it means to make an unfair distinction. Needless to say, that sort of discrimination is no part of Christian duty. The dictionary gives another definition of this word, namely, "distinguishing accurately," and it is in this sense that we use it in this article to distinguish accurately as the result of close, careful, competent scrutiny.

In the first verse of our text we have this admonition: "Despise not prophesyings [or prophecies]." To what prophecies does St. Paul refer here? Were they the prophecies of the Old Testament, or perhaps the things foretold by our Lord and his Apostles, which they spoke by inspiration? We think not, for the connection shows that the "prophesyings" of our text were to be critically examined and sifted, and only what was found to be "good" in them was to be received and retained.

### **PROPHECY IN THE CHURCH**

We understand that by prophesyings the Apostle is referring to the utterances of those in the Church who were endowed with that special, miraculous gift of "prophecy," which is one of the nine so-called "spiritual gifts" enumerated by Paul in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians. These special gifts (bestowed through the spirit) called in the Greek "charismata," i.e., grace-gifts, were a part of the heritage of the Apostolic Church, and passed away with it. But, you say, "Why was it necessary to prove or test these prophesyings, since the holy spirit could not inspire any one to speak anything but what was right and true and good?" The Apostle John (1 John 4:1) gives the answer to the question: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." This warning was especially needed at that time, for if we infer correctly from what we read in 1 Corinthians 12, all the seemingly spirit-inspired utterances heard in the Christian assemblies were not of God, and one might even be heard shouting, "Jesus anathema."

The gift of prophecy was one of the most valuable to the Apostolic Church, but in view of what has just been said there were grave dangers connected with it. The Lord provided a safeguard for the Church in another of those spiritual gifts, called "the discerning of spirits." Those endowed with this special power were able to test the spirits and to discriminate what was really from God, and what was dross, or worse. This seems to the writer the true application of our text to the Church of the Apostolic Age. But we are far removed from that Age and its miraculous spiritual gifts. The gift of prophecy is no longer with us; the corresponding gift of discerning of spirits also has departed. Has our text, then, no application to our times, and to conditions now existing in the Church? We believe the Apostle's words are still important to us, a forceful reminder of our Christian duty of discrimination, and we shall attempt a present day application of them for the benefit of our readers.

The first exhortation "despise not prophesyings," or its lesson for us now, might be expressed thus: "Give those who minister the Word a respectful hearing." From ancient times "public teaching" was one of the meanings of the Greek word rendered "prophecy," and in that sense, of course, prophecy has always been practiced in the Church. Though preached in human weakness, the Word of God has been powerful to accomplish the will and purpose of him who sent it forth.

(Isa 55:11; Acts 15:14.) There are reasons why we ought to give a respectful audience to ministers of God's Word. The Lord himself instituted the ministry for the edification of his Church: "He gave some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:11, 12), and we must not "despise" (literally, set at nought) his provision. We know, too, that we are not yet perfected in knowledge, and therefore still have need of attending to teachers and can learn something of value from any who preach the Word in the spirit of its Author.

### **PROVE ALL THINGS**

Now, the second admonition of our text: "But prove [or test] all things." Here the word "but" is inserted by most editors on good manuscript authority, and it connects up this statement with the preceding. The first exhortation told us to listen, but this one puts us to work, sifting and testing what we have heard. There are obvious reasons why it is necessary to test the teachings that are being promulgated. The Lord warned: "Take heed that no man deceive you," and added that many would be deceived. A second reason is that because of imperfect knowledge, or faulty judgment, many godly men, even outstanding teachers, have held and taught error, or have been mistaken in some of their reasonings and conclusions. The piety or position of a teacher is no guarantee that he is correct in everything that he teaches. The words of our text still apply: "Prove all things." This statement is to be taken in connection with the preceding. The "all things" do not, of course, include every line of teaching and every theory that may come to our attention. We are to prove those prophesyings (teachings) which commend themselves as worthy of our consideration and study, holding forth a promise of "good." The substance of these teachings may be "new," or it may be "old." - Matt. 13:52.

How are we to prove the teachings? The Apostle does not say. Our only infallible touchstone is the Bible; by it we must test every doctrine. While this might seem a rather simple matter, it is not always so in practice. It is true that often the Scriptures are so plain and definite that there is not room for two opinions. We could wish that it were always so. But it is evident that our Heavenly Father has not given us that kind of Bible. For it is true that sometimes teachings are based on *interpretations* of Scripture, rather than a simple "Thus saith the Lord." Now, an interpretation of a Scripture may be based on a number of things, for example, the meaning of a word where it may be taken in more than one sense. Or, it may rest upon a point of grammar, or the relation of the Scripture to its context, or perhaps to some other passage. The interpretation may rest on punctuation alone, for that is the simplest form of interpretation, as may be seen in Luke 23:43 (the position of a comma).

### **TESTING INTERPRETATIONS**

Interpretations of Scripture are to be tested with reference to certain generally accepted sound principles of hermeneutics-the science of interpretation. First, the interpretation must be grammatical, not violating any rule of grammar or syntax. Second, the meaning assigned to words must be in harmony with their usage at the time the Scripture was written. Third, there must be a sound discrimination between literal and figurative or parabolic uses of language. Fourth, a Scripture must be explained in harmony with its context, or the general teaching of the Bible on the subject. In the main it is by these four rules or principles that we are to "test all things" presented-not alone interpretations of Scripture, but sometimes translations of it also. Does this sound simple and easy? We think not. It is scarcely necessary to add that if two (or more) interpretations of a Scripture pass the tests, they must be considered equally possible.

It will be generally admitted that the most difficult things to prove or test are statements and arguments concerning the Scriptures in the original languages, which are (chiefly) Hebrew and

Greek. And how much of that sort of discussion there is in these days, when almost every writer who has a different thought to offer, appeals to the Greek or Hebrew text in support of it! Among such interpretations there may be something of value to the student, but if he lacks a working knowledge of the original languages, how shall he separate the wheat from the chaff? He may turn to a good concordance for help (*Strong's*, *Young's*, or *The Englishman's*) and there find sufficient information (in *many* cases) to enable him to intelligently test the argument under consideration. In other cases this source of help will fail to provide the answer, for often in determining the true meaning of the original text it is not enough to know *what* word is used; it is important to know *how* that word is used--such grammatical details as case or tense or mood. These latter things belong to grammar and syntax, and are beyond the scope of a concordance like *Dr. Strong's*. Knowledge of the numerous idioms found in the original Scriptures, which is sometimes indispensable to the student, is to be obtained not from the concordance but from standard works on the Greek and Hebrew languages -- the larger lexicons and grammars, which presuppose some knowledge of those languages on the part of the student. "It is painful to reflect upon the slow progress which this qualification has made in public estimation. Judging from the conduct of many, they appear to deem it wholly unnecessary to aim at such an acquisition. And yet without it, they must acquiesce in received modes of interpretation or trite elucidations, without the ability to assign any reason except that they are held by a favorite commentator, or found in a certain system " (Samuel Davidson L.L.D. in his *Sacred Hermeneutics*, page 18.) The words quoted above were written over a hundred years ago, and since then the acquisition of a working knowledge of the sacred languages has been made much less difficult by the abundance of excellent helps now available (particularly for beginners), and ignorance on the part of those who handle the Greek or Hebrew is less to be condoned.

### AN EXAMPLE OF CRITICAL STUDY

Above we have pointed out the method to be followed in proving "prophesyings" which are based on particular applications of Greek and Hebrew words or phrases. It remains to illustrate it by an example. The Greek noun *Aion* (pronounced "I own") and its derivative adjective *Aionios* occur frequently in the New Testament, and are also of great importance from the standpoint of eschatology (doctrine of the last things). Moreover, there is found to be much difference of opinion even among prominent scholars and translators on the correct rendering of these Greek words into English. In the *Common Version* they are rendered mostly by such terms as "for ever," "eternal," and "everlasting." Some other translators (and writers) deny that *aion* and *aionios* can be properly so rendered. They assert that *aion* properly means "an age" and that the adjective derived from it can mean only "age-lasting" (not everlasting or eternal). Accordingly, Rotherham translates *aionios* "age-abiding," Young renders it "age-during," while the *Emphatic Diaglott* does not translate the word but merely transliterates it from the Greek. On the other hand several versions made in modern times (including, *the Revised Standard Version*) retain "everlasting" or "eternal" and "for ever." Whom is the student to follow? Which school of Bible translators appears to have the soundest approach to this moot question?

Now, this writer realizes that any attempt on his part to answer these questions will appear presumptuous. More than once he himself has asked: "Where the best scholars cannot agree, what can the ordinary Bible student do?" Nevertheless, in what follows we shall endeavor to answer that question. At the outset we are impressed with two or three things. First, the scholars who disagreed regarding the proper rendering of *aion* and *aionios* all had before them the same information, the same important facts concerning the etymology of these words (so far as can be known), and their usage -- in the *New Testament*, in the *Septuagint*, and in classical Greek. Second, from the same facts the various translators drew their own conclusions, having used their best judgment in the matter. It is quite apparent that sometimes translators have found difficulty



in maintaining a truly objective attitude in their work; whether any of those whose work we are trying to judge were influenced in their decision by doctrinal prejudice, we cannot know. Third, we are impressed with the thought that the information regarding *aion* and *aionios* to which our translators had access, is in a substantial way available to us also, in the large Greek and Hebrew lexicons, in the *New Testament* and *Septuagint* Greek, and in the original Hebrew of the *Old Testament*.

Now let us summarize the information which these generally reliable sources yield, bearing on the question under consideration. (1) Lexicographers are not agreed as to the primary meaning of *aion*, many of them following Aristotle, who derived the word from *aei*, which means forever, while some believe it comes from a word meaning to breathe, and has in it the thought of life. (2) In the earliest of extant Greek writings, those of the poet Homer, *aion* does not denote an age or eternity, but the lifetime of a man. (3) In the classical period also the word is sometimes used of the duration of a human life, but it has taken on other, broader meanings as an indefinite period, an age, and eternity. (4) In the *Septuagint* (where it is used mostly as a translation of the Hebrew word *'olam*) *aion* has in general the same meanings as in the Greek writers, the context indicating which meaning is intended. The first occurrence of *aion* in that ancient version is in Genesis 3:22 for *'olam*. Here the Greek phrase is usually rendered "for ever for *'olam*, Rotherham gives "to times age-abiding," and Young has "to the age." While such phrases are based on "age" as one of the meanings of *aion*, it is obvious that they are vague and raise questions in the mind of the reader, such as: "To what age?" Since in Genesis 3:22 and its context there is no thought that eating of "the tree of life" would enable man to live only to some particular period or age, we are compelled to give *aion* in this passage its broadest significance: "forever." And from a linguistic standpoint there can be no valid objection to that rendering, as we have shown above. That *aion* and *aionios* can denote everlasting or eternal (and often do) is proved beyond any question by their application to Jehovah and his attributes, for example, Genesis 21:33; Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 9:7; Psalm 119:142, etc. On the other hand, in many occurrences of these Greek words the context definitely limits their meaning to: the lifetime of a slave (Exod. 21:6), the duration of the Aaronic priesthood (Exod. 40:15), the keeping of the Passover (Exod. 12:14), etc. (5) The writers of the New Testament follow the usage of classical Greek and especially the *Septuagint*, using *aion* in a variety of phrases, often reduplicated for emphasis, as, "forever and ever."

### IDIOMATIC PHRASES

A study of those various phrases in the original reveals the difficulty of translating them literally. For if we render *aion* by "age" (as some attempt to do in every instance) some of those phrases would literally be: "to the age" (1 Cor. 8:13), "to the ages" (Rom. 9:5), "to the ages of the ages" (Gal. 1:5), "to the age of the age" (Heb. 1:8), and "to a day of an age." (2 Pet. 3:18.) Most scholars agree that these and other similar phrases were not intended to be construed literally, but are idiomatic expressions -- expressions peculiar to a language and having a meaning apart from their literal translation. It is evident, however, that in the New Testament *aion* is sometimes used of an age or dispensation (in many passages mistranslated "world"), for example, "this [Gospel] age" (Matt. 24:3), or "the age to come [Millennial]" (Matt. 12:32), and other ages to follow that one. (Eph. 2:7.) But this use of the word must be clearly distinguished from the idiomatic usage or confusion will result.

From the facts which our study has yielded, we form our conclusion concerning the true meaning of *aion* and *aionios*. In Biblical as in secular Greek those words have more than one meaning, and in each occurrence the sense in which the word is there used must be determined from the connection, and usually this is possible. The several diverse phrases with *aion*, which do not lend themselves to literal translation, are usually best rendered "forever" and "forever and ever," as in

our common English versions. The adjective *aionios* may denote "everlasting" or merely "last:ng," according to the context. In that important and much-discussed text, Matthew 25:46, the parallelism between *aionos* life and *aionios* punishment, apart from the teaching of other Scriptures, favors the rendering "everlasting." The practice of some who instead of making an attempt at translating *aion* and *aionios*, merely transliterate them in the Greek or Latin spelling, would seem to have little to commend it. It may leave the reader with the erroneous impression that the Greek words are not translatable into English.

### **HOLDING FAST THE GOOD**

The third exhortation of our text, "Hold fast that which is good," reminds us that in our hearing and sifting of teachings our interest is ever in the good they contain-"that which is good to the use of edifying." (Eph. 4:29.) In this connection good is practically synonymous with truth, for it is only truth that edifies and sanctifies. - John 17:17, 19.

He who seeks to prove all things by the Word learns that the Bible itself has suffered at the hands of men, and not always at the hands of its enemies. That priceless Book has been "wounded in the house of its friends" -- by well meaning but misguided Christians, who, due to doctrinal prejudices, have fallen into the error of "wresting the Scriptures" (2 Pet. 3:16) by mistranslating or misapplying them. The lesson of our text has been an important one for the Church even from its earliest days (2 Tim 2:15-18), and is not less so now especially for those who as teachers occupy positions of greatest responsibility.

The writer would say in closing that the "all things" of our text include the thoughts set forth in this article. Conclusions based on judgment must of necessity have a tentative quality (even scholars have been known to change their minds); it is otherwise with well established facts. It is with the latter that we have been mainly concerned in preparing the present article.

"Truth, how sacred is the treasure!  
Teach us, Lord, its worth to know"

- *W. A. Eliason.*

## Israel Today

*"And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses." - Nehemiah 4:14.*

New Plymouth, New Zealand,  
March 1, 1960

Two months have slipped by since we set foot upon this fair land. Our lecture work here has progressed very well and we have been reaching many with the story of Israel's redemption and its significance in the light of God's Word. It is always a joy to direct the thinking of our audiences toward the only hope for the world -- Messiah's Kingdom.

During the few weeks we were able to spend in Auckland, the principal city in New Zealand, we reached at least 1,000 people in the public meetings we addressed, besides the many we contacted in numerous home gatherings. The other night in Hamilton (population, over 40,000), despite the inclement weather conditions that prevailed, well over 100 people turned out for our illustrated lecture on Israel (for only \$10 worth of advertising). We find that the interest here in Israel's restoration is as good as any where.

### ISRAEL MILITANT

In view of the recent serious outbreak of hostilities around Israel's border, this would be as good a time as any to review the present situation concerning Israel's relationship--with-her neighbors, comparing it with Bible times, when the Lord fought for his ancient chosen: people. Certain basic facts should be established in the minds of Gentile believers these days concerning the manner in which the Jewish people have occupied the Promised Land. In the days of Moses, when the Israelites were instructed to possess the land of Canaan, it is clearly implied in Scripture that the inhabitants of that land were unworthy of it and had defiled it. (Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:25; Deut. 18:12.) Furthermore, the Lord did not permit the children of Israel to leave Egypt until the people of Canaan had proved themselves undeserving of that "good land."

In our time we have seen similar grounds for Israel's occupation of the territory deeded to Abraham and his seed as an everlasting possession. The Arabs, the Turks, and others who dwelt in Palestine, made it nothing but a desolation, through neglect and indolence. Therefore, the time came in the purpose of God for Jacob's posterity to once again establish themselves in the land of their forefathers, this time never to be plucked up again. (Amos 9:15.) But unlike the return in Joshua's time, which was a process of conquest under divine guidance and instruction, the Jews from 1878 onwards have bought land in Palestine, in fulfillment of prophecy. (Jer. 32:44.) The Jews who purchased land in Palestine during these past decades paid the Arabs a good price for it. So no injustice was done to any one in the Middle East on this score.

When, in November of 1947, the United Nations adopted a resolution granting the Jews in Palestine the right to create a Jewish State there, the proposed borders of this new nation were drawn around an area comprising 5,500 square miles of territory, most of which was already owned by Jews. As soon as the State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948, the Arab armies moved in from every side in a mass assault to crush the newly-founded nation before it could

strike roots. With vehemence *they* declared their avowed purpose -to push the Jews into the Mediterranean. The utter failure of the Arab military campaign is history. Israel's deliverance was truly miraculous. The armed forces of the fledgling state were able to throw back the sons of Ishmael, even though the Arab population in the Middle East totaled at least 40 million while the Jews in Palestine numbered 650,000. (See Lev. 26:8.) The young Israel army pushed back the Arabs and occupied 2,500 square miles of territory beyond that which was granted by the United Nations to the Jews of Palestine for their state.

When the armistice was signed some months later, Israel was left with a total land area of over 8,000 square miles, instead of the proposed 5,500, but, contrary to the actions of other nations in history, Israel has time and again declared her intention-upon the signing of a peace treaty-of reimbursing the Arabs for the property that they lost by their invasion efforts. The old adage has been, "To the victor belongs the spoil." In good faith Israel has clearly stated its willingness to come to an equitable agreement with the hostile Arabs. It is true that the fleeing Palestinian Arabs in 1948 left behind much land and property and had every expectation of reoccupying it after the Arab armies would succeed in wiping out the Jews. What is admirable on Israel's part is that she stands ready to come to a financial settlement whenever the Arab leaders are willing to talk peace.

As students of the Word of God we must recognize the fact that God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their posterity a much larger land area for an everlasting possession than what Israel-has today. (See Gen. 15:18, etc. ) ,lust how and when the sons of Jacob will gain control of the estimated 240,000 square miles of territory that has been deeded to them by the Lord remains to be seen. Somehow they will come into possession of it. The expansion of Israel's borders may come about in a similar way to what it did in 1948, as it is very evident that the Arabs are still intent upon obliterating their neighboring cousins, the Jews.

Very recently another serious outbreak of trouble occurred on the Israel-Syrian border south of the Sea of Galilee. It began with a sporadic five-day long exchange of gun-fire and led to a mass assault by the Israel army upon the Arab village of Tawafik, which lay in the demilitarized zone just below the Syrian-held hills, in an area that has been the subject of 755 complaints to the U. N. from the Israeli since 1951. The constant provocation on the part of the Syrian Arabs led to this retaliation. When the Israel infantry moved into this demilitarized zone, according to *Time Magazine* they bumped into a machine-gun nest in the presumably unarmed village and wiped it out. Then they placed two tons of dynamite under the village walls and withdrew. An hour later most of Tawafik's 40-odd houses blew up with a roar that shook the Jordan River *Valley*.

Through the years Israel has endeavored to be patient, seeking, via diplomatic channels, to put a stop to Arab infiltration, marauding, murdering, etc. After an accumulation of such incidents, with no respite in sight, Israel is provoked to making a retaliatory raid. However, it is amazing how few of these have actually been carried out during these past 12 years. One must bear in mind that the Jewish pioneers who settled in Palestine from 1878 onwards were pacifists and believed in non-violence. But this is a language that the Arabs do not understand and the Israeli will tell you that to the Arabs this speaks weakness.

Any one who has resided in the Land of Promise for a period of time knows the earnest desire the Israeli have for peace. They have seen enough bloodshed and they fully realize that they are far outnumbered by the Arabs, so all in all they have no reason to be looking for trouble and have sought every means of coming to a peaceful settlement. But, as in the days of Nehemiah, Israel, in its rebuilding efforts, is being thwarted by her neighbors.

In view of the conditions that now prevail in the Middle East, it is of special interest to read again the 4th chapter of the Book of Nehemiah, to see what a parallel condition exists today. It is stated there that upon the second return of the children of Israel to the land of their forefathers, "Every one had his sword girded by his side and so builded." Yet in the 20th verse of that chapter, Nehemiah says, "Our God shall fight for us." It is indicated likewise that half of the people held the weapons while the others labored in construction. So today Israel is required to maintain a large army to shield the nation as it goes about its restoration work.

We must bear in mind that in the first return of the children of Israel to the land of Canaan, the occupation occurred in a militaristic fashion, Joshua leading the way in fulfillment of the commission to "go up and possess the land." There was bloody conflict, but God was for and with Israel.

Therefore, if the Jews had such violent opposition and had to resort to warfare in the first and second returns, in spite of the fact that God was with them, is it any wonder that this third and final return of Israel is coming to pass under similar circumstances? Some would call this history repeating itself. Even in such miraculous deliverances as occurred in the days of Gideon, there was still active combat necessary on the part of the Israelites in overthrowing the enemy. The cry was, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." (Judges 7:18.) In Deut. 1:30 it is stated, "The Lord your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you." In reality the people of Israel wielded the sword, but the Lord was with them in battle. And was it any different in the days of King David?

We are apt to think only of the kind of deliverance that occurred in the extermination of Sennacherib and his hosts as being of the Lord, but in fact most of the time Israel's enemies were defeated in mortal combat, in accordance with God's command. The avenging of the Midianites, as related in Numbers, chapter 31 (Num. 31), is a good case in point.

The amazing success of the Israel Army in its thrust through the Sinai Peninsula in the fall of 1956 still causes wonderment in the minds of military authorities. In the matter of a few days the forces of Israel occupied the Sinai desert, which is several times larger than Israel itself, and drove the heavily armed Egyptians beyond the Suez. This invasion on the part of the Israel troops was goaded by a prolonged period of infiltration, pillage, and killing committed by the trained Egyptian "fedayeen." It became so violent that no Israel household was safe even miles from the Gaza strip, whence the nighttime assaults came. When intelligence reports revealed that Nasser was massing great stores of military equipment in the Sinai to use against Israel, the Israeli did not wait but beat the Egyptians to the draw, so to speak.

In addition to the injury that has been done to Israel in violent manner by the Arabs day in and day out through the years, the economic-boycott war they have waged against the Jewish State has taken its toll. The worst part of it was the blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba to Israel shipping, opened by the Sinai Campaign, but the Suez Canal remains closed to shipping either to or from Israel. In all these things the Arabs have been asking for trouble. It is questionable whether any other nation in the world would put up with as much as Israel has. The spirit the Arabs have manifested is comparable to that outlined in the prophecy of Obadiah.

David Ben-Gurion, the Prime Minister of Israel, recently gave a militant warning to his people when he said, "During the next decade we are liable to face a grave and perhaps decisive military test." However, Israel is not depending so much on its military might as some may think. The Prime Minister has told his people a number of times that Israel's strength does not lie in its

military forces alone. He has stated that "Israel's survival was brought about by superior spirit and spiritual values rather than superior arms."

In any future conflict that Israel will have to engage in, they could confidently say, as in ancient day, "Our God shall fight for us," for he has indeed been with them during these past 12 years. If he had not, there would be no State of Israel today. In a great conflict that is yet future, we have the assurance that "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle." - Zech. 14:3.

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it. . . . And it shall come to pass in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." - Zech. 12:2, 3, 9.

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

## Some Lessons in Prayer

*"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." - Colossians 4:2.*

IN A previous article on prayer\* we discussed some of the principles which must ever characterize our attitude of mind and heart when we would avail ourselves of the privilege of addressing the throne of heavenly grace. In brief, our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with the divine plan, and submission to the divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgement of sins and shortcomings and desire for forgiveness, with a forgiving disposition on our part toward others, and a humble craving for divine guidance and protection.

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\* See the Herald for Oct. and Nov. 1950.

The Lord knew how necessary this communion with himself would be to our spiritual life. When we are tempest-tossed and tried, how much we need our Father's care and the comfort and consolation which the realization of his presence and sympathy imparts. And do we not have the promise of the abiding presence of both the Father and the Son? (John 14:21-23). The same thought of the Father's loving care and interest constantly upon us is conveyed by the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 3:12. Similar passages may be found in Luke 18:1; Romans 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; and Psalm 103:13, 14, 17, 18.

At any time, in the midst of cares and perplexities, we may turn our prayerful thoughts to our Father for wisdom, strength, and fortitude, or for comfort and consolation for ourselves and others.

### THE DESIRES OF OUR HEARTS

What are the deep desires of our hearts? What do we seek after in our daily lives? Whatever they are, they are our real prayers, and they may be quite at variance with the words -- the carefully phrased petitions, we address to God. "This people ... with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me" (Isa. 29:13). This was said of God's people of old. Let us beware lest it be true of us today. When we come to the throne of grace, with our conventionally proper petitions, it is awfully possible for us to have in our hearts unvoiced but controlling desires which are, nevertheless, not hidden from our Heavenly Father. These are the deep prayers of our lives, because our hearts are set upon them. Ordinarily prayer is regarded as the act of our best hours, but in this deeper sense, prayers may be offered in our worst hours. Let us be especially on guard respecting this danger. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." The ounce of prevention that we can take against it (far better than any pound of cure after it has entered in) is to have our hearts permeated with the spirit of love, of which we are told: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Rom. 13:10); "Love envieth not; seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. 13:4, 5). However, we should "covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. 12:31), the gifts of divine grace.

Once we see the power of dominant desire in our prayers, we begin to see why we have unanswered prayers. It suggests that while our outward petition may have been denied, yet the inward controlling desire may be granted. This was true of the prodigal in Jesus' parable (Luke 15). When, in the far country, he came to himself, with friends gone, reputation gone, willpower almost gone, and found himself poor, hungry, feeding swine, he was suffering from the

consequence of an answered prayer, a dominant desire fulfilled. In a similar sense Lot desired Sodom and got it, with tragic results. Ahab craved Naboth's vineyard and seized it. Judas desired thirty pieces of silver for betraying his Master and obtained them. Many are the answered prayers of the Bible that ruined the individuals. How true are the words in Psalm 106:15: "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul."

### **HAVE FAITH IN GOD**

The lesson of faith to those who have become the Lord's consecrated people is not merely faith in doctrines and theories, nor, indeed, chiefly present truth. The chief feature of faith is confidence in God: that what he has promised he is able and willing to fulfill. This faith grasps not only the things to come, but also the things present: this faith rejoices not only in the glory that shall be revealed, but also in the sufferings and trials and difficulties, and in all the rich experiences which an all-wise Father sees best to permit. Let us therefore rejoice evermore, "in everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20).

The best illustration of this true faith, this continuous confidence in God, is found, as we should expect, in the narration of our dear Redeemer's experiences. Realizing that he was in the world for the purpose of serving the divine plan, he experienced continually the supervision of divine wisdom in respect to all his affairs; consequently, he not only went to the Father frequently in prayer and searched the Word for guidance, but recognized every experience through which he passed, and all the opposition with which he met, as being under divine supervision. His dominant desire was to do the Father's will, and, being fully consecrated to him, he knew that the Father's providential care was over all the affairs of his life.

Similarly with us, if we can feel sure that we have fully surrendered ourselves to God according to his call, we may also feel sure that all things are working for our good; we may realize in every emergency in life that the Father has prepared the cup, and will sustain and bless us while we drink it. This knowledge should not only enable us to take joyfully the spoiling of our goods (anything that we deem precious; trade, influence, good name, etc.), but should enable us also to entreat with kindness and gentleness and with a spirit of forgiveness those who prepare and administer the cup of our sufferings. But none can have this confidence of faith except those who have believed in the precious blood unto justification and who have, as members of the Body of Christ, consecrated themselves unreservedly to walk in their Redeemer's footsteps, to suffer with him, and to be finally glorified together.

### **PRESENT TRUTH SHOULD SANCTIFY US**

These lessons are especially opportune at the present time. The Lord, by his grace, has removed many errors from our minds and given us clearer insight into his wonderful plan, and revealed to us his glorious character in connection with his plan, and there has perhaps been more or less danger that in such a study of theology the real object of all this knowledge might be lost sight of. It is not God's object merely to find an intellectual people, nor to instruct a people with reference to his plan, but to sanctify a people with the truth, and thus to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. 1:12). We are of the opinion that the tests imposed by the Lord are not merely doctrinal, but will be considerably along the lines of character and of the fruit of the spirit.

Thus, as soldiers of Christ we must put on not only the intellectual covering, the helmet of salvation, but also the heart covering, love of righteousness and truth and goodness and purity, with the shield of faith. The breastplate of righteousness will be found to be one of the most



important pieces of armor in the battle in which we are engaged, and respecting which we are told that thousands shall fall at our side (Ps. 91:7; Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:11).

Faith in the divine supervision of all our affairs not only gives peace and contentment but it saps the root of all selfish ambitions and vain gloryings and boastings, because of our faith in the Word: "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased" (Matt. 23:12).

Another feature to be remembered is that our Lord laid emphasis upon sincerity in prayer, meaning that the petition should be the genuine overflow of inward desire. Doubtless the Pharisees who prayed on street corners asked for worthy things, springing out of Scriptural ideas and couched in Scriptural language. The fault was that those prayers did not represent their inward and determining wishes. Their outward lives demonstrated that their ambitions did not agree with their outward prayers.

Our Lord, in Matthew 6:5, advises us to pray to our Father in private and the Father, who seeth in secret, will answer openly, as shown in the development of the fruit and graces of the spirit in our characters. Prayer is no hasty visit to the Throne of Grace at the close of day, no formal deference to custom, but is the coming of the heart to be at peace in our Father's presence that we might unburden ourselves and receive comfort.

### **PRAYER IS A BATTLEFIELD**

While prayer may be considered as the act of communion with God, yet we must recognize that prayer is a battlefield, and through prayer we are calling upon our Father for aid because we have a fight on our hands. In the language of St. Paul, "Without were fightings; within, fears" (2 Cor. 7:5). Again, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17), showing that in the development of character there is a hidden battlefield in each one's life. Thus in our dear Redeemer's experience, his ability to cope with the enmity of the Sanhedrin and the oppositions of Satan, stemmed from the many occasions in which he was closeted alone with his Father in prayer and fought out the controlling principles of his life. In similar fashion Gethsemane was the place where our Lord settled the issue of his consecration alone with God, and thereafter nothing could ruffle his calm or peace of mind (Heb. 5:7). His, indeed, was a heart singly set on pleasing his Father, no matter the cost.

We must do more than renounce sin in our minds; we are to give our hearts to the Lord. We are to fight the good fight of faith against the Adversary and the world's spirit of selfishness. The Lord requires some evidence from us of activity against the motions of sin in our flesh, and that we are alive to our responsibilities as soldiers of the Cross.

Cleansing our minds requires great strength of character, great power of the will, and all the overcomers will be found to be strong characters, principally because of conflicts with the flesh. Of course the flesh will not be made absolutely pure, but it can be cleansed of its filthiness, so that everything coarse, rude, slovenly, or unrefined would be reprehensible to us. The cleansing process begins at once, but continues until our latest breath. The power which begins this cleansing and which continues it acceptably in the Lord's sight is the new will, and this very fight against sin and uncleanness strengthens the will so that each victory makes it more ready and more capable for the next conflict.

God also works in us (Phil. 2:12, 13) by revealing to us more and more clearly the significance of the exceeding great and precious promises. Thus, through prayer and study of the Word we are to

see to it that the dominating idea of our life is the cleansing both of the mind and of the flesh (2 Cor. 6:15-18). We are to be, said Jesus, "perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). At the same time our Lord well knew that in the present life, and acting through our present mortal bodies, it would be an absolute impossibility for anyone of his followers to ever attain perfection in the sense that the Father is perfect. Yet he set the standard so that we might continually attempt to copy his perfection and to recognize no inferior standard. We must do our best to reach the standard of perfection in holiness to the Lord, a little nearer every day we live.

### **WATCHING UNTO PRAYER**

It is in view of the urgent necessity of sober watchfulness and attention to the will of God regarding us that we are exhorted to put away the worldly spirit and awake to the importance of being filled with the spirit of God.

Let us heed the Master's words "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).

Besides the treasures of friendship which will never die, there will be treasures of love that will never grow old, treasures of esteem for the sake of our work and personal sacrificing that will never be forgotten, treasures of experience that will serve us eternally, treasures of wisdom that will enrich us forever, treasures of divine approval that will wreath a halo of glory around us which shall never pale, and treasures of glory, honor, and immortality beyond our present powers to fully appreciate.

*-A. L. Muir*

## The Question Box

*"The Gospel ... whereof I Paul am made a minister; who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his Body's sake, which is the Church." - Col. 1:23, 24.*

### Question No. 1

Is it correct to take these words as having reference to any one but St. Paul?

#### Answer:

There can be no question but that this passage is used by the Apostle as having reference to himself, and to no one else. The afflictions to which he refers are, he says, "in my [that is, in his own] flesh." However, I see no reason for doubting that in these experiences which he mentions he is but giving us an example which every true follower of Jesus does well to follow. It is of himself and of no one else that he speaks in Phil. 3:8-10, when he tells us that he counts all things but loss that he might know Christ, and the fellowship of his sufferings; but in Phil. 3:17 he urges us to follow his example. Again, I do not think there is any room for question but that in 2 Cor. 1:5, when he speaks of the sufferings of Christ abounding in "us," he includes in that word "us" his associate in the ministry, namely, "Timothy our brother." (See Col. 1:1.) Moreover, in 2 Timothy 1:8, he exhorts Timothy to be a "partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel."

It is, indeed, a great privilege to enter into such a partnership with Christ as permits of sharing not only in his joys but also in his sufferings; and the Apostle eagerly embraced the privilege. But it would surely be a mistaken thought to suppose that he was selfish in the matter. In Hebrews 10:32 the writer is glad to remember "the great fight of afflictions" which others besides himself had endured. Peter also counseled the "strangers" to whom he wrote, to rejoice, inasmuch as they were made "partakers of Christ's sufferings." - 1 Pet 4:13.

To summarize: Paul is the only one to whom the words in Col. 1:23, 24 refer. However, the general principle applies to all the "little flock" of footstep followers of the Master.

### Question No. 2:

The "afflictions of Christ" here mentioned are stated to be "for his Body's sake, which is the Church." However, in *Tabernacle Shadows*, page 66, these afflictions are represented as corresponding to the typical experiences of "the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people." (Lev. 16:15.) Since, throughout the New Testament, the "Church" is distinguished from the remainder of mankind or the "people," how are these apparently conflicting statements to be harmonized?

#### Answer:

The conflict between these two statements is more apparent than real. If you will turn to *Scripture Studies Vol. VI*, page F468, I think you will find the matter satisfactorily clarified. There you will note the statement that the actual sufferings which are endured by us are "in the main for the brethren-in their service; the service for the world belongs chiefly to the Age to come, the Millennium." On this same page the author points out that "we are not now speaking of how the Lord may be pleased to apply the sacrifice of the Church," which he understood (properly, I think) to be "represented in the Lord's goat as a part of the Atonement Day sacrifices."

Since it is our privilege to walk "in his steps" (1 Pet. 2:21), let us see how our Lord did, in fact, lay down his life. Was it not mainly in behalf of those who had an "ear to hear"? It surely was. Very little of his strength was expended otherwise. So it has been and is to be with us. True, we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, and opportunities to do good *thus* should be sought and seized; but we find, as a matter of practical experience, that most of our opportunities do occur in connection with the household of faith. He would hold the wrong notion, therefore, who today was seeking to lay down his life, moment by moment, inch by inch, on behalf of the world, basing such efforts on his belief that the Lord intended to ultimately apply the result of the Church's sacrifice to the blessing of the people.

Let me not be misunderstood here. I have much sympathy with many of the activities designed for the general welfare, and occasionally find opportunity to engage in some of them. Certainly I am most sympathetic with any activity in which sincere efforts are put forth to proclaim the message which has so gladdened my own heart; and I have not hesitated, nor shall I fail to continue, to cooperate to the best of my ability, in such witnessing activities. However, it remains true, in my judgment, that those who today perform their labors in the Gospel ministry in the belief that they are commissioned to accomplish a great work on behalf of the general public, and do so to the neglect of their own and their brethren's spiritual needs, are ill-advised. We must leave the application of the Church's sacrifice to the Lord, for him to apply to the good of the "people" in his own time and way; finding that here and now, as a matter of actual fact, our sacrifice (Does he really honor our feeble efforts by so noble a word?) will be mainly spent in the service of our brethren. As St. John expresses the matter: "*He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,*" - 1 John 3:16, *RSV*.

- P. L. Read.

## **Notice of Postponement of Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, due to be held this year on Saturday, June 4, has been postponed to Saturday, October 15.

It will be recalled that two or three times in the past it has been found in the best interests of the Institute to postpone the Annual Meeting to a later date. This year three of our Directors would not be able to attend if the meeting were held in June. (Brother F. A. Essler expects to be engaged in an extensive trip throughout the British Isles, May-October; Brother A. L. Muir will not have returned from his present West Coast and Canadian trip; Brother P. L. Read's summer schedule is unusually full this year.) All three of these brethren expect to be able to attend the meeting (D.V.) if it be postponed as indicated.

We are making this early announcement so that Institute members who might wish to participate in conventions now being planned by Associated Bible Students in various parts of the country to be held during the summer months, will know that they need not reserve the June date for the Institute's Annual Meeting.

Further particulars as to the hour and place of meeting will be announced later.

## Not Beating the Air

*"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?  
So run, that ye may obtain. " - 1 Cor. 9:24.*

EVERY spirit-begotten individual must surely desire to win "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The difficulty lies in determining the necessary procedure. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" -- but how best may we do this? "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" -- but in what manner is this accomplished? "So run I, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air" -- but just how did Paul go about it?

It was said that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." (Luke 16:8.) Certainly they often labor far more diligently than some Christians, and this for a much inferior prize! The politician seeks at most but a limited term of office, but consider his weary hours of travel and interminable speeches, the personal criticisms and difficult issues faced, the heavy expense, and all to possibly end in defeat! Or the business man with his fierce competition, driving himself day and night at the expense of mental and physical health, perhaps to eventuate in bankruptcy! These men exercise that rigid discipline of which the Apostle has taken note: "Every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things" -eats the proper food, gets regular sleep, exercises diligently, and avoids everything that would jeopardize his success. All this for a temporal and corruptible laurel wreath; a victory the world soon forgets.

What manner of diligence then is required of us? To assist in answering this question let us consider some principles of efficiency which have been developed in modern industry and which should be of help to every Christian. If we have found our progress unsatisfactory, perhaps a check of the six principles we have selected, with supporting Scripture texts, may help in determining wherein we have been lax.

### OBJECTIVE

Firstly, we must have an *objective*. There can be only one *major* objective. A straight line is the shortest distance between any two points. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." "No man can serve two masters-ye cannot serve God and Mammon." "Friends of this world are enemies of God." "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "This one thin I do." It is here that many find difficulty, as it is necessary to fully make up our minds and count the cost before consecration, as "he that puts his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven."

But though we have a long-range objective -- a lifetime of effort -- we need certain *minor* goals as we progress, all of which must be compatible with our major purpose. Some of these might be listed as discharge of obligations, physical health, *spirituality*, and activity in the Lord's service. As to obligations, "He that provideth not for his own hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever", provide things honest" -- "owe no man anything save love." As to physical health, we are to use it wisely to God's glory, subject to the rule that we be "instant in season, out of season." "Whatsoever ye eat or drink or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." As to our *spirituality*, we need to consider study, testimony, prayer, and fellowship. As to activity in service, we should be alert to do good unto all, especially to the household of faith.

## COMPETENT COUNSEL

Secondly, we need *competent counsel*. He who has a law-suit, retains an able attorney. There is a saying that "the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a lawyer." Let us not make the same mistake. It is so easy to "lean to our own understanding" instead of "in all our ways acknowledging him that he may direct our paths."

Our chief guide is the Bible. "Sanctify them through thy truth-thy word is truth." "Search the Scriptures." "Study to show thyself approved unto God ... rightly dividing the word of truth." "All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable ... that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work." "We have a more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed, as unto a lamp that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn."

Other guides are God's *spirit* and his providences. We should watch for his leadings. He has also given to us "apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists," and the brethren with whom we come in contact, to help us on our way.

Other guides are God's *spirit* and his providences. We should watch for his leadings. He has also given to us "apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists," and the brethren with whom we come in contact, to help us on our way.

One of our greatest blessings is the privilege of prayer. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Prayer has been said to be the breath of the new creature. In the words of the hymn:

"Oh what peace we often forfeit!  
Oh what needless pain we bear!  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer."

Some pain and tribulation are necessary for the Christian. But here reference is to *needless* pain caused by neglect of the precious privilege of communion with God!

## PLANS AND SCHEDULES

Thirdly, we must have *plans and schedules*. We must plan the details of our daily lives, for if we do not, the Adversary is ever willing to do so. "Redeem the time for the days are evil." "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." We need to set apart definite times for study, assembly locally and at Conventions, prayer, and service. The world has become so complex that it is difficult to "live on twenty-four hours per day." We can overdo the making of a living, the keeping of our house, and the many items of trivia that beset us. It was the "cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" that *kept* some of the seed in good ground from bringing forth fruit unto perfection. It is the "little foxes" that spoil the vines. A few minutes here and a few minutes there, and the day is gone and little has been done. But we can always "gird up the loins of our minds" and try again. Each day is a challenge as to whether we will "keep our hearts with all diligence."

## DISPATCHING

Fourthly, there is the matter of *dispatching*. With plans all made, the will must act. "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." Jesus said that those who hear and do not are like the man who built his house on the sand with disastrous results. A house of hope is built on sand if one fails to heed the Master's words as to "taking his yoke upon them 'and' taking up their cross and following him." One remembers the two brothers to whom their father had give a command. One said "I go" but went not. The other said "I will not go" but later went. God works in us "both to *will* and to *do* his good pleasure." And delay can be dangerous, even fatal. To Paul it was said "And now, why tarriest thou?" Elijah said "How long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be God, follow him, but if Baal, follow him." We are to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." He wishes us either cold or hot, and will spue out the lukewarm. "If we do these things, we shall never fail." Let us always say, "Here am I, Lord, send me!"

## DISCIPLINE

Fifthly, there is the matter of *discipline*. There are three kinds of discipline. First, that which Nature's laws enforce and which is very severe. They sum up in "The wages of sin is death" and "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Physical laws cannot be violated. It matters not that you did not know "that the gun was loaded," that the wire was "live," that you were near the edge of the roof when you stepped back! So also in the moral realm. Hate, envy, greed, fear, anger, worry, jealousy, covetousness, and the like will inevitably redound to the practicer's sorrow and suffering.

Then there is the second t pe of discipline. It is that impose by a parent on a child, a teacher on a pupil, an employer on an employee, to save from the penalties of a wrong course. Earthly parents discipline in order that their child be kept from a wrong course in life and a possible tragic end. So likewise "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." A wise parent also subjects his children to certain experiences to develop the judgment and character needed at maturity. Jesus had no faults, yet "It please God, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." We, too, need to be "made perfect," strengthened, established, and only divine wisdom and love can accomplish this! And how wonderful his watchful care over us! Industry has what are called "unavoidable accidents," but there are none such among God's anointed ones. "He that began a good work in you is able to finish it." "There will be no temptation befall you above what ye are able to bear" -- yet how merciful is he when we fail. He arranges our daily lives into a situation where a self-denying decision becomes necessary, and if, in stubbornness of will we elude it, he patiently repeats the experience until the decision is unavoidable. And thus we grow. If "a branch bear fruit, he purgeth it that it may bear more fruit." Too wise to err, too good to be unkind -- how priceless the knowledge of his fatherly watchfulness!

The third form of discipline is that which we enforce upon ourselves. "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged of the Lord." We can "Make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." We may not know all the ways in which we are "lame" but we certainly know those which are obvious. We can discipline ourselves by inflicting our own penalties for breaches of conduct or thought. Paul "browbeat his body and brought it into subjection," which indicates he took certain strong measures himself. This he did "lest, after having preached unto others" he, himself, might become a castaway. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the *spirit* do *mortify* the flesh, ye shall live." There is a proper use of "fear." Here is an example: "Let us fear, lest a promise having been left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Religious systems have

tried to use fear as an engine is used to drive a car, but the eternal torment doctrine has had little effect. Fear is not your "engine" -- it is your "brake"! So, if you get to going too fast or down a steep grade, or some other equivalent spiritual danger, use your "brake"! The early church used fasting and other means. We also need to take steps to check harmful tendencies. Let us fear to displease our Father, to whom we owe so much. May we be guided by his eye, rather than his rod.

### **HOPE OF REWARD**

Sixthly, there is the *hope of reward*. It may be thought that while rewards are a proper incentive to the world they are inappropriate for the Christian. But if the reward is unselfish, it is quite proper and helpful. "Abraham looked for a city with foundations" and it was a great help to him to see that even "afar off." Moses "looked unto the recompense of reward." All of the worthies mentioned in Hebrews 11 underwent many trials and scourgings "that they might obtain a better resurrection." Jesus, "for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." And to the Church are given "exceeding great and precious promises, *that by these* we might be partakers of the divine nature."

What would we do without hope? "We glory in tribulation, because tribulation worketh perseverance, and perseverance hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." Think of the promise -- "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"! Astounding incentive! And that glorious kingdom -- it is "our meat and drink." If we never "looked away to the unseen things," we would never "be changed into that image"; for it is only as we do so that we are transformed.

Of course, if one wants only to sit upon a throne and be served by others, that hope would be quite selfish. But if one looks forward to share in helping up the highway of holiness to life Twenty billion back-sliding children of Adam-to see each stony heart remade into one of flesh, so that they "come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"-such a hope of reward becomes a tremendous incentive.

Love is the energizing power that keeps us in this blessed Way. What expectations we have of the joys at the final "Convention," the seeing again of those we have loved and been parted from; yes, and the seeing of many others whom we have not known here in the flesh, but all possessors of the same sweet spirit! Will not this great gathering be most wonderful? "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." Halleluia!

- M. J. Adams



## Wise Counsel from a Faithful Pastor

*"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." - Gal. 5:1.*

PERHAPS the first great blessing enjoyed by one who becomes a follower of the Master is that of Christian liberty. Liberty from the bondage of sin is first experienced -- liberty from both its guilt and power. (Rom. 3:23; 5:1; 6:12-14.) Almost simultaneously comes liberty of conscience, which demands freedom to examine all sides of any matter pertaining to Christian faith and practice. (This phase of Christian liberty, indeed, is seen to be a duty, as far as ability and circumstances may permit, for "he that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."- Prov. 18:13.) Ere long Christian liberty is found to include also freedom from sectarianism.

At this stage in his development a young Christian is likely to be given experiences designed by his heavenly Father to teach him how to distinguish the "not many fathers" from the "ten thousand instructors" (or would-be instructors) which crowd him on every side. - 1 Cor. 4:15.

Sectarianism has been variously described. The dictionaries I have consulted associate with it the thought of exclusiveness, narrowness, or bigotry. The word "sect" itself comes from the Latin *secare, sectum*, and means a section or part cut off. Sectarianism is that disposition which seeks to divide and separate the Lord's people by the construction of creedal fences; by the application of tests of fellowship or church membership -- often of *church eldership* -- tests not authorized by the Word of God. Again and again, throughout the Gospel Age, God's faithful people, who are at heart, lovers of liberty, have been forced apart by certain cliques or groups of sectarians, who have ingeniously applied unscriptural tests, the effect of which is to rob the Lord's people of their liberty in Christ. Thus sectarianism is a separation from the true Church, where alone Christian liberty is to be found.

Today, when changes, events, and circumstances are causing many of the Lord's faithful people to re-examine and search the Scriptures more diligently than ever, if possible, to discover what the foundation principles of Christian liberty, fellowship, unity, *and eldership* are, it is instructive to review the considered counsel of one who, for about the space of forty years, proved his right to be heard with respectful attention. The following paragraphs are from his pen:

The first danger against which the Apostle warned the Church was sectarianism; and he was evidently heeded at the time at least, for no great sects of Paulites or Apollosites developed. But, as usual, the great enemy, thwarted in one direction, moved to the opposite extreme, and attempted to insist upon a oneness very different from what our Lord or the Apostles ever taught. This attempt was to have every recognized member of the church think exactly alike, on every minutia of Christian doctrine. This attempt finally developed into Papacy, where every matter of doctrine was decided by the popes and councils; and every man who desired to be considered a church member was obliged to accept such decisions fully, and to profess that such decisions were *his* belief, *his* faith; whereas they were not his in any sense but that of adoption. They were generally either blindly received or hypocritically professed with mental reservations.

This was not at all the oneness urged by Paul. He urged a oneness of heart and mind, and not a thoughtless, heartless, or hypocritical profession. He urged a oneness such as naturally results from the proper exercise of the liberty which we have in Christ-to search and believe the

Scriptures, and to grow in grace and in knowledge, every man being thus fully persuaded in his own mind, and firmly rooted and grounded i to he one faith as set forth in the Scriptures. -R1571.

The value of true liberty amongst the Lord's people cannot be over-estimated. It becomes a part of their very life. It was because, under a wrong conception of union, this spirit of true liberty was crushed out of the Church shortly after the Apostles fell asleep in death that the "dark ages" resulted -- with all their ignorance, superstition, blindness, persecution, etc. The Reformation movement of the sixteenth century was but a reawakening of the spirit of liberty; . . . liberty to think inside the foundation lines of the doctrines of Christ; liberty to believe as much or as little more, harmony with this, as the mental conditions and circumstances will permit, without being branded as a heretic or persecuted by brethren, either in word or deed. . . . Let all who are the Lord's people, and who have tasted of the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, see to it that they stand fast in that liberty, and as soon as an attempt is made to restrain it, if not sooner, let them get out completely from all the bondages of human systems, that they may stand firmly and loyally with the Lord, our Redeemer, our Instructor, our *King*. - R3020.

Every one who comes to realize the liberty of the sons of God and full freedom from Babylon's bondage, should expect to meet other attempts of the great Adversary to bring him into other bondages, or to stumble him. The Lord permits these severe testings, that the class now sought may be manifested, and prepared for his service in the Kingdom of glory. - S.S. Vol. III, p. C188.

We should remember our Lord's teachings,... that those who are not against us are on our part, and that we should neither reprove as wolves nor disown as brethren those whose hearts, whose characters, give evidence that they belong to the Lord, even though they follow not with us in respect to his service, the promulgation of his message, etc. In other words, we are to love all and wish God-speed to all loving the Lord and manifesting his spirit, whether they associate with us or not. - R3747.

The true teacher's place, and the true Bible student's place, is outside of all human bondage, free to examine and feed upon all portions of the good Word of God, and untrammled to follow the Lamb whithersoever he *leads*. - S.S. Vol. III, p. C145.

- *P. L. Read*.

## Recently Deceased

Sr. J. Ashley, Dallas, Tex.-(Feb.)  
Sr. J. M. Easterling, Ashland, Ore.-(July)  
Sr. Rosa Ford, Eng.-(Jan.)  
Sr. F. Frooms, Bristol, Eng.-(Jan.)  
Sr. Mary Greiner, Kingston, N. Y.-(Mar.)  
Sr. Ida M. Parks, Brooklyn, N. Y.-(Mar.)  
Bro. W. C. Roberts, Dallas, Tex.-(Feb.)  
Sr. Edna Space Fekel, Vineland, N. J.-(Feb.)  
Sr. Fay Swank, Northumberland, Pa.-(Feb.)