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Signs of the Master's Parousia

"What will be the sign of Thy presence, and of the consummation of the Age?" - Matt. 24:3, Diaglott.

OF ALL THE gracious words which proceeded out of the mouth of Him who spake as never man spake, perhaps none have had a more powerful influence in the history of the Church than those uttered by the Master just as His earthly career was ending: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2, 3.) Nor can we think of any more calculated to inspire hope in His waiting followers today, or more calculated to renew their courage. How much this promise means to us can be best estimated by contrasting the poverty of soul which would be ours if it had never been vouchsafed to us, or if there were a question as to its fulfillment. How dark our gloom would then be, how forlorn our state, how void of all good cheer our prospects! Thank God for "that blessed hope and for the purifying effect it has had, and, please God, yet will have, in our lives. - Titus 2:13, 1 John 3:3.

Occupy till I come

Since the fruition of all our hopes, both for the Church and for the world, is intimately associated with the return of our Lord, it would be strange indeed, if we were not possessed of an eagerness to learn the time when this long looked for event might be expected. If the inquiry of the Apostles "What will be the sign of Thy presence?" was a proper one then, it would seem to be still more appropriate today when the evidences that we have reached "the consummation of the Age" are multiplied. Indeed, far from rebuking this spirit of inquiry our Lord, both by parable and direct exhortation, sought to encourage it. True, they were to be occupied, not idle, during His absence; but it was to be only "till He come." Till then they were to be diligently engaged in His business, each occupied with the special task to which he had been assigned. But while thus occupied, their whole attitude was to be one of joyful expectancy, of eager watchfulness for His return. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh." And it is not difficult to see that this attitude of joyful expectancy would indicate at once the method and the spirit of their service. They were not to be as drudges who have no pleasure in their labor, nor as hirelings who care only for their wages. On the contrary their labor was to be bright with hope, with the hope of a great happiness to come. They were to do all they did as in the sight of a Master who, though

absent from them for a time, was sure to return, and who, meanwhile, would be present with them in spirit, and much concerned in the success of their labors. - Luke 19:13; Mark 13:33-37.

The Glorious Hope Obscured

Those of our readers who are at all acquainted with the pages of history are aware that after the Apostles fell asleep the Adversary succeeded in obscuring this glorious hope. The effect on the life and health of the Church, as might have been expected, was most disastrous, and it was not until the doctrine of our Lord's Second Advent was restored to a foremost place in its preaching and teaching that the Church began to recover from the state *of* apostasy into which, except for a few devout souls, it fell. As we ponder the record of those times we may see that the Adversary did not accomplish this beclouding of the Church's brightest hope by means of a direct attack-an open denial of the fact that our Lord would return -- but rather by an indirect method, by an undermining of the doctrine. He allowed the doctrine to remain, but twisted its import and so corrupted its meaning *as* to rob it of its power. Under his leadership questions were raised as to the object of our Lord's return, and after a while the glorious hope was changed into a dreadful fear. Instead of a joyful, longing, expectancy for her beloved Bridegroom to return to claim her for His own, and thereafter to introduce "times of refreshing," those "times of restitution" spoken by the mouth of all God's holy Prophets since the world began, the Church was filled with grave forebodings.

Symbolic Scriptures were so wrested and misapplied; that the precious promise seemed to take on the character of a dire threat. Under the circumstances we do not wonder that instead of cherishing it in their hearts, men did their best to forget it. Thank God for the light now shining, which enables us to look for the return of the Lord with the same exultation of spirit that is manifest' in the prophetic utterance of David

"Let the heavens be glad,
And let the earth rejoice;
And let men say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth.
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
Let the fields rejoice, and all that are therein.
Then shall the trees of the wood sing aloud
At the presence of Jehovah,
Because He cometh to judge the earth.
O give thanks unto Jehovah, for He is good;
For His mercy endureth forever." - I Chron. 16:31-34.

If there is any lingering doubt in the mind of any of our readers as to the magnificent object of our Lord's return we suggest a re-reading of the sixth chapter of "The Divine Plan of the Ages." Indeed, we believe that all who have not read that chapter in recent months would be advantaged in doing so now, in connection with this article. There the evidence is conclusively shown that our Lord's return is "manifestly the hope of the Church and the world."

The Glorious Hope Restored

Once the truth concerning the object of our Lord's Second Advent was regained by the Church the old fervency of desire for its speedy accomplishment was restored. St. John's plea: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" well expressed the sentiment which again prevailed, and the old spirit of inquiry as to how and when was revived. Much searching of the Scriptures ensued, and light was granted on various matters. The whole story of those thrilling days cannot be told here. Those

who would learn it, or those who would refresh their memory concerning it are referred to Brother Russell's luminous expositions in the six volumes of Scripture Studies and the Watch Tower. Here we must content ourselves with noting three outstanding convictions resulting from those Bible studies.

One of these was the realization that our Lord is no longer a man; that while He had been put to death flesh (a flesh being) He had been raised spirit (a spirit being), and it was therefore not as a man but as a spirit being, a spirit being, moreover, of the highest order, the divine, that we should look for Him. (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17; 1-16b. 9:28; Phil. 2:9; 1 Tim. 6:16). A natural corollary to this thought was that He would be invisible to our physical eyes, since as human beings we could not look on a spirit being except by a miracle.

Another conviction reached was in regard to the sign which would acquaint the watchers of the Lord's presence. Whatever that sign should prove to be they became convinced that its signification would be twofold: it would indicate both that the Lord had returned and that the consummation of the Age had been reached. In other words they were not to look for one sign or series of signs to indicate the Lord's presence and another sign or series of signs to tell them that the end of the Age had been reached, but that the two events (or, as they later came to understand them, the two eras) would synchronize, and one sign or series of signs announce them both. If therefore, they should recognize' a sign or signs that the Lord was present, they might understand also that the end of the Age had been reached, and conversely, and most important to notice here, if they should become aware of signs pointing unmistakably to the fact that the end of the Age had been reached, they might know also that the Lord was present.

A third conviction, closely related to the other two above mentioned, was that there were already signs sufficient to satisfy them that these two long looked for events (eras) had arrived, -- the consummation of the Age had been reached, and they were living in the days of the second presence of the Son of Man. True to these convictions the Watch Tower carried as its sub-title:

Herald of Christ's Presence

As time went on and studies progressed, the thought did not seem unreasonable that the Scriptures might contain sufficient data to enable the watchers to determine when our invisible Lord would shine forth in such a way that **every** eye would see Him -- they also which pierced Him. They knew, too, that when that event should transpire their own pilgrimage here must of necessity be ended, for when Christ who is our life shall be thus manifested, then shall we also with Him be manifested in glory. (Col. 3:4.) Such a reflection could not but add to, rather than detract from the zest with which this line of study was pursued. All are aware that the 'conclusions reached' pointed to 1914 as the year in which the glorification of the Church might be reasonably expected. All are aware, too, that this expectation was not realized. To quote from Brother Russell: "Our thought was purely an inference, and now [Sept. 1916] we' see that it was an unjustified one" (Watch Tower Reprints Vol. 7, page R3950). Since that time various further attempts have been made to determine the date of the glorification of the Church, but all have thus far proved futile.

Cast not Away Your Confidence

Naturally this continual failure has been disappointing to many, and some, unable to understand why their expectations have failed to eventuate, have begun to question if they may not have erred also in their former conclusions as to the return of the Lord. In view of this it has more than once been suggested to *us* that if a candid review of the subject were presented in these pages, it

could not fail to be of interest and profit to our readers. Acting in accordance with this suggestion, we propose in subsequent issues to re-examine the evidences which have hitherto seemed to us to point to our Lord's presence and to the consummation of the Age. In this connection we shall hope also to consider some of the questions which have been raised recently as to their validity. We trust to make such review in the spirit of discipleship -- the spirit of a learner not that of a master-and while presenting our own conclusions, to do so in a spirit of loving consideration of the views of any who may differ with us, and whose fellowship *we* would cultivate rather than mar. Let us then unite our prayers to this end. Then surely it shall come to pass that, whether or not we shall see eye to eye at the conclusion of our study, none of us will be without the blessed realization that our study was characterized by the spirit of love, without which though we have all knowledge, on this as *on* any subject, we shall be *as* nothing.

Does Christ come Before or After Millennium?

The importance of a doctrine may be judged to some extent by the proportionate space and prominence given to it in the New Testament. Measured by this standard, the theme of Christ's coming is second only to the Atonement, in the claim which it makes upon our consideration. "A real pearl of Christian truth and knowledge" is the term used by one eminent expositor in reference to it. And since the merchantmen who seek this goodly pearl are too few, it becomes those who have proved it, both by spiritual experience and scriptural study, to be, indeed, a pearl of great price, to do their utmost to set forth its excellency.

Would that such a theme might be divested of all controversial aspects! But here, as everywhere, there are schools of interpretation between which one finds himself obliged, whether he will or not, to chose. Premillennial or Postmillennial advent-Christ's coming before the Millennium or after the Millennium-is the issue which divides two great parties of biblical students.

With only kindly thoughts for those who differ with us, we humbly, but nevertheless firmly, hold with the first school on this question. To our understanding the Scriptures present clear and convincing testimony that Christ comes not after but before the Millennium, that He comes to introduce that glorious Age.

Has Antichrist come or is He yet to Appear?

Premillenarians, again, are divided into two schools, the Futurist and the Historical; the former of whom holds that Antichrist is yet to appear and that the greater part of the prophecies in the Book of Revelation awaits fulfillment; the latter maintains, with the Reformers and the expositors of the early post-reformation era, as well as outstanding preachers of more recent times, including our own dear Brother Russell, that Antichrist has already come in the bloody and blasphemous system of the Papacy, and that the visions of the Apocalypse have been continuously meeting fulfillment from the time of our Lord's ascension to the present day.

Here, again, we hold in very high esteem many of those who take the Futurist viewpoint, and freely concede their right to hold and express their views. If we cannot share them, but on the contrary express our firm adherence to the Historical interpretation, it is only because we believe the latter is more scriptural and rests upon the more obvious and simple interpretation of the Word; and also because we find that it has such verifications in fulfilled history and chronology as to compel even some of its strongest opponents to admit that it is a true interpretation -- although they do not think it the complete and final one.

(Continued in next issue)

- *P. L. Read*

Prepared for Service

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Greater than these are the men who have faithfully given to the world the Gospel of Christ. There is a long, shining roll of honor; illustrious names that quicken the heart-names of men and women who, "through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report" earnestly preached

Christ, striving to give "no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed." (2 Cor. 6:3, 8.) These, by their faithful striving, have brought the light and inspiration of the Gospel into the lives of their struggling fellow-men. And it is still true that by practice, as well as by precept, the radiance of Christ is to be shed abroad in the deepening gloom of the world's travail.

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

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

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

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

THE TRAINING OF A VOICE

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

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

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

THE TRAINING OF A SAINT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He needed the gentle taming hand of the Master. Christ put him under the yoke with himself, as a young, spirited bullock is often placed under the yoke in the East with an older, quieter, animal to better learn the service of pulling the plough. As Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, he had a hard furrow to plough. At the end of his long service he said, "The time of my unyoking (*my release - Rotherham*) is at hand." (2 Tim: 4:6.) He had pulled the Gospel plough with his Master over some rough ground. He was tired at the end of a toilsome day and the time of release was near.

Christian history is rich with the life stories of its brave exponents trained and disciplined, but dearly loved withal, by the Great Master of life and men. Foremost among the lessons to be

learned from him are those of motive. *Why* do we wish to serve Christ? How and what do we propose to do?

James and John wished to call down fire from heaven on the inhospitable villagers. Saul of Tarsus sanctioned the death of Stephen and was on his way to drag more of God's saints to prison and probable death. They were set on destroying. They needed the Master's rebuke -- "I am not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." There can be no haggling about that. Christ teaches us the sanctity of human life. We may hate the sin, but the sinner never. Sectarian creeds, institutions, organizations, all of which hold mankind in bondage, will be destroyed, but personal life is precious to God. Christ came to salvage human life. God loved sinners when he gave his Son to be their ransom price. Our acceptance into Christ's school very much depends upon our possession of the same motive.

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

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

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

(Continued in next issue)

-F. A. Shuttleworth, Scot.

Israel Today

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; after that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwelt safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations; then shall they know that I am the Lord their God, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen: but I have gathered them unto their own land, and have left none of them any more there. Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God." - Ezekiel 39:25-29.

Paradise, California.
January 2, 1961

Are many American Jews settling in Israel? This question has been put to us many times. Over the years there has been a most interesting trend or development taking place in the thinking of Jewish leaders here that may soon spark quite a movement of American Jews to the Land of Promise. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, over 10,000 American Jews have made their homes in Israel. More than a thousand settled there during 1960.

It is Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion who has been the constant agitator for larger Jewish immigration from Western countries. During the past few years he has incessantly urged the Zionist leaders to do something about sending Jewish youth from the Western countries to Israel to help in the work of rebuilding. On this subject he has time and again spoken with prophetic fervor. He has chided his American Zionist compatriots by telling them that a true Zionist is one that settles in Israel. At the opening of the 25th World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem (which is still in session at this writing) he again strongly brought to the fore the matter of the great need of Jewish immigrants from the West. He said the kind of immigration needed was that of "young, pioneering, cultured and productive elements."

Mr. Ben-Gurion continued: "Those who are pushed into immigration only by suffering do not have the material and spiritual qualities to 'develop in Israel a people that will be a blessing and an example to the whole of Jewry.

This leader of Israel called on the Jewish communities of the United States, Britain, Latin America, South Africa and Western Europe to send their young people to Israel for at least a year of study. He said, "It is clear that thousands of these young people, after seeing for themselves what the Jewish State had done, and what it still has to do, would willingly and enthusiastically join the builders and creative workers."

"One or two hundred thousand young people coming every year to study from all the prosperous countries would change the face of Israel and world Jewry," Mr. Ben-Gurion emphasized. Then he added, "There exists within the younger generations of Jews in all countries latent pioneering drives and spiritual needs deeper than the interest in a salary, an automobile, a job and a well appointed home."

The New York Times reports Mr. Ben-Gurion as telling the delegates to the 25th World Zionist Congress that "every religious Jew remaining outside Israel has daily violated the precepts of Judaism." This remark was directed at the Orthodox Jews who have been praying for centuries: "Next year in Jerusalem." In effect, he says to these religious Jews: "The nation of Israel has been

restored; what are you waiting for?" This is not the kind of talk one customarily hears from the lips of a politician these days, but Ben-Gurion is more than a politician. The thunderous ovation he received at the Zionist Congress was a tribute to his courage, determination and vision.

Has Ben-Gurion's constant pleading for Western Jewish immigration caught on? It obviously has. Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Zionist Organization and an American Jew, told

the Congress that "the most effective way to tie the Jewish family to Israel is to see that one member of the family settles in Israel." Dr. Goldmann added, "The Zionist solution to the Jewish problem means a much larger concentration of Jews in Israel than is the case today."

A specific program designed to step up the influx of American Jews to Israel. was outlined by Louis Segal, Chairman of the Aliyah (immigration) Committee of the Jewish Agency for Israel, in a report to the National Assembly of American Zionists. Highlights of Mr. Segal's recommendations were the creation of a mortgage fund for the purchase of homes in Israel; the establishment of a model "American township" in Israel; organization of "pre-Aliyah" tours for Americans seriously contemplating emigration to Israel and inducing American Jewish youth to join "Ulpanim" (Hebrew language schools) and workshops in Israel.

For some time we have said that Israel is becoming an attraction to American Jews. The more Jews from this country that visit Israel, the better. A fair percentage of Jewish tourists who visit the Land of Promise decided to settle there. It is interesting to note that well over 100,000 people from foreign countries toured Israel during 1960. It is the first year that as many as 100,000 tourists visited Israel since the state was created in 1948. Within a matter of a few years it is expected that a quarter of a million people will visit Israel annually. While a goodly number of tourists going to Israel are Gentiles yet the majority have been Jews.

The wheels have been set in motion now to, get more American Jewish youth to spend at least a year or two in Israel. Heretofore the big stumbling blocks have been the mothers and fathers of American Jewish youth. Due to the exceptionally strong ties which obtain in Jewish families, it has been most difficult to get the parents of any Jewish children of teen age here to permit them to go to Israel. The recurring trouble in the Middle East has been a big fear factor or deterrent. Even life-long Zionists have been unwilling, "to let their children go to Israel because of the seeming dangers of life there.

Over three years ago we presented a lecture on Israel for a Jewish youth group in a temple in Miami, Florida. Of the eighty who were present, three or, four came up to us and told us of their serious plans to move to Israel. We have often wondered if these idealistic few ever were able to pull away with the blessing of their parents?

One of the best things you can do for your Jewish neighbors and friends is to urge them to at least visit Israel.

WORLD BIBLE CONTEST

The Second International Bible Competition is scheduled to take place in Jerusalem on October 3, 1961, and preparations for it are now being made.

It is understood that in the forthcoming competition the questions will not cover the whole of the Bible, but will be confined to the Pentateuch and the Early Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel and

Kings). The motto chosen for the competition is "Oh, how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day." - Psalm 119:97.

Since the holding of the First International Bible Competition in 1958, the idea of Bible quizzes has spread throughout the world. Competitions are sometimes held with the participation of both Jews and non-Jews, as in Brazil and Algeria, for example, and sometimes among Jews only. In the United States the Second Bible Competition for Jewish Children and Youth has been in preparation. In Israel, Bible quizzes are fast becoming a national hobby.

Mr. Haim Gvaryahu, Chairman of the Israel Society for Biblical Research, which is sponsoring the competition in conjunction with the Prime Minister's Office and Kol Israel (the Israel Radio), expressed the view that the Bible competition is in the nature of a fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy: "The Lord will be magnified beyond the border of Israel."-1: 5.

As BEN-GURION VIEWS JESUS

In an interview with Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, David Ben-Gurion, Premier of Israel, spoke of his admiration for Jesus. Dr. Peale reported, however, that Ben-Gurion doubts "that the Master considered himself as God. Dr. Peale said, "Of course, I took issue with him on this."

The Restitution Herald has this commentary to make on the above matter: "Premier Ben-Gurion, who is a student of the Hebrew Scriptures, and also a student of the New Testament, is correct in his conclusion that Jesus himself never claimed to be God. He claimed to be the Son of God, and over and over again expressed the fact that God was his Father and greater than himself.

"Even the Jews who crucified him, and who sought out every excuse for putting him to death, never charged Jesus with claiming to be God. They could say only, 'By our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.'" - John 19:7.

"Jewish students, like Ben-Gurion, are repelled by the heathen trinity theory, because their Scriptures are so plain that 'the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). God is undivided, and Jesus, the very Son of God, never claimed to be God."

THE ISRAEL A-BOMB FEAR

Quite a worldwide stir was recently created by the discovery that Israel is building a nuclear reactor in the Negev. Some months ago Dr. E. D. Bergmann, Chairman of Israel's Atomic Energy Commission stated: "Using the uranium, phosphates and heavy water now at our disposal, we can set up an atomic power station which could be independent of foreign fuel sources." So Israel does have all the necessary material, plus technical know-how, to go ahead with any atomic development they may wish to carry out. The idea that a small nation like Israel might develop an atom bomb has struck terror in the minds and hearts of many thinking people everywhere. We have been most interested in reading the editorials of various newspapers on the matter. One of special interest appeared in "The Denver Post." It was entitled "Israel Might Ease Bomb Fear." It stated in part:

"The Government of Israel has an important opportunity to demonstrate the advantages of international inspection as a method of allaying suspicion and strengthening world peace....

"Israel has available a simple and constructive method of quieting world suspicion and proving that its intentions are peaceful. This is by calling on the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect the plant....

"It could establish a precedent that other nations *in* similar circumstances would later be called on to follow. And the argument for inspection as a key to a disarmament agreement between the Soviet Union and the West would be strengthened by Israel's example....

"We recognize that we are asking Israel to do something that the United States itself might prove unwilling to do under similar circumstances.

"But such a move by Israel now might help to pave the way for the United States and other great powers to use the voluntary inspection method later on.

"Though small nations lack power, they may possess the courage and the moral strength to pioneer in areas where the great powers are still afraid to venture.

"The people of Israel, whose ancestors taught the world monotheism and a superb code of ethics more than 3,000 years ago, may yet have new lessons to teach in an age when new lessons are needed."

AN INTELLECTUAL SPEAKS UP

While much of modernist thinking amounts to an incoherent pattern, yet from time to time we are amazed by the succinct conclusions of some presentday philosophers. Here is a brief extract from the pen of Alfred North Whitehead:

"Our civilization owes more to the Hebrew prophets than we can express....

"They constitute one of the few groups of men who decisively altered history in any intimate sense. Most spectacular upheavals merely replace one set of individuals by another analogous set; so that history is mostly a barren change of names. But the Hebrew prophets really produced a decisive qualitative change and, what is still more rare, a change for the better."

- *Casimir Lanowick.*

Immortality of the Soul or Resurrections of the Dead?

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead" Acts 26.8

THE caption of this article is the title of a book by Oscar Cullmann, published in 1958 by *The Epworth Press*. According to the author, it "is the translation of a study already published in Switzerland, of which a summary has appeared in various French periodicals.

In his preface, the author goes on to say, "No other publication of mine has provoked such enthusiasm or such violent hostility. . . . My critics belong to the most varied camps."

This criticism, he indicates, is due to "the contrast, which, out of concern for the truth, I have found it necessary to draw between the courageous and joyful primitive Christian hope of the resurrection of the dead and the serene philosophic expectation of the survival of the immortal soul." This contrast, however, he insists, is to be seen between the teaching of the New Testament and that of Plato. There is, he says, "no reason for denying a radical difference between the Christian expectation of the resurrection of the dead and the Greek belief in the immortality of the soul.... The fact that later Christianity effected a link between the two beliefs, and that today the ordinary Christian simply confuses them, has not persuaded me to be silent about what I, in common with most exegetes, regard as true; and all the more so, since the link established between the expectation of the 'resurrection of the dead' and the belief in 'the immortality of the soul,' is not in fact a link at all, but renunciation of one in favor of the other."

We congratulate Brother Cullmann on his decision not to be silent on a matter of such importance, and trust that the Lord will supply him with the necessary grace to continue witnessing faithfully to this fundamental tenet of the Christian faith. Would that others might follow his example.

Regular readers of this journal are informed as to our own views. However, in view of the fact that in recent months, our Subscription List has been substantially increased, we take pleasure in submitting below a number of paragraphs on this and related subjects, condensed from an article written by Charles T. Russell, in 1895 -- sixty-five years ago.

WHAT IS THE SOUL?

According to the inspired record of man's creation, found in Genesis 2:7, we learn that the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed [Heb. *blew*] into his nostrils the breath [Heb. *wind*] of life [Heb. "lives," plural, i.e., such as was common to all living animals]; and man became a living soul [i.e., a sentient being]."

The body was formed first, but it was not a man. It had eyes, but saw nothing; ears, but heard nothing; a mouth, but spoke nothing; a tongue, 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 a corpse, an inanimate body.

The second step in making man 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 life." When a healthy person has been drowned and animation is wholly suspended, resuscitation has, it is said, been effected by working the arms and thus the lungs as a bellows, and gradually

establishing the breath in the nostrils. In Adam's case it of course required no labored effort on the part of the Creator to cause the perfect organism which he had made to breathe the life-giving oxygen of the atmosphere.

As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, whose valves in turn propelled it 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 thought, perception, 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 the text had been reached. In other words, the term "living soul" means neither more nor less than the term "sentient being" or "being capable of sensation, perception." Moreover, even though Adam was perfect in his organism, it was necessary for him to *sustain* life by partaking of the fruits of the trees of life. And when he sinned, God drove him from the garden, "*lest* he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree [plural, *trees* or *grove*] of life, and eat, and *live forever* [*i.e.* by eating continuously]." - Gen. 3:22.

Our Redeemer "poured out his soul [being] unto death," "he made his soul [being] an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:12, 10) and it was the *souls* of Adam and his posterity that he thus bought with his precious blood-by making his soul (being) an offering for sin. Consequently it is the souls that are to be awakened, resurrected-not the bodies, which are buried and which go to dust.

Here is another common error-many suppose that the bodies buried are to be restored atom for atom, but, on the contrary, the Apostle declares, "Thou sowest [in death] not that body which shall be." In the resurrection God will give to each person (to each soul or sentient being) such a body as he pleases. - 1 Cor. 15:37, 38.

As the bringing together of an organism and the breath of life produced a sentient being or soul, so the dissolution of these, from any cause, puts an end to sentient being -- stopping thoughts and feelings of every kind. The soul or sentient being ceases; the body returns to dust as it was; while the spirit or breath of life returns to God, who imparted it to Adam, and to his race through him. (Eccl. 12:7.) It returns to God in the sense that it is no longer amenable to human control, as in procreation, and can never be recovered except by divine power. Recognizing this fact, the Lord's instructed ones commit their hope of future life by resurrection to the Father and to Christ, his now exalted representative. (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59.) So, then, if God had made no provision for man's ransom and for a resurrection, death would be the end of all hope for humanity. - 1 Cor. 15: 14-18.

But God has thus made provision for our re-living; and ever since he made known his gracious plan, those who speak and write intelligently upon the subject (for instance, the inspired Scripture writers) as if by common consent, speak of the unconscious interim between death and the resurrection morning as a "*sleep*." Indeed, the illustration is an excellent one; for the dead will be totally unconscious of the lapse of time, and the moment of awakening will seem to them like the next moment after the moment of their dissolution. For instance, we read that speaking of Lazarus' death our Lord said, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth*, I go that I may *awake him out of sleep*." Afterward, because the disciples were slow to comprehend, he said, "Lazarus is dead." (John 11:11.) Were the theory of consciousness in death correct, is it not remarkable that Lazarus gave no account of his experience during those four days? None will claim that he was in a "hell" of torment, for our Lord calls him his "friend;" and for the same reason if he had been in heavenly bliss our Lord would not have called him from it, for that would be an unfriendly act. But as our Lord expressed it, Lazarus *slept*, and he awakened him to life, to consciousness, to sentient being, and that as a favor greatly appreciated by Lazarus and his friends.

The thought pervades the Scriptures, that we are now in the Night as compared with the Morning of the resurrection. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." -Psa. 30:5.

The Apostles also frequently used this appropriate, hopeful and peaceful figure of speech. For instance, Luke says of Stephen, the first martyr, "*he fell asleep*;" and in recording Paul's speech at Antioch he used the same expression, "David *fell on sleep*." (Acts 7:60; 13:36.) Peter uses the same expression, saying (2 Pet. 3:4), "the fathers *fell asleep*." And Paul used it time and again, as the following quotations show:

"If her husband be dead [Greek, *fall asleep*]" - 1 Cor. 7:39.

"The greater part remain unto this present, but some are *fallen asleep*." - 1 Cor. 15:6.

"If there be no resurrection.... then they also which are *fallen asleep* in Christ are perished." - 1 Cor. 15:13-18.

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

"Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all *sleep*." - 1 Cor. 15:51.

"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that *are asleep*." - 1 Thess. 4:13.

"Them that *sleep* in Jesus, will God bring [from the dead] with [by] him." - 1 Thess. 4:14.

When the Kingdom, the resurrection time, comes, "we who are alive and remain unto the *presence* of the Lord shall not *precede* them that *are asleep*." - 1 Thess. 4:15.

They "fell asleep" in peace, to await the Lord's day-the Day of Christ, the Millennial Day-fully persuaded that he [Christ] is able to keep that which they committed unto him against that day. (2 Tim. 1:12.) This same thought runs through the Old Testament as well from the time that God first preached to Abraham the Gospel of a resurrection. The expression, "He slept with his fathers," is very common in the Old Testament. But Job puts the matter in very forcible language, saying, "Oh that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be [over] past!" The present dying time is the time of God's wrath -the curse of death being upon all, because of the original transgression. However, in due time the curse will be lifted and a blessing will come through the Redeemer to all the families of the earth; and so Job continues: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change come; [then] thou shalt call (John 5:25) and I will answer thee; thou shalt have a desire unto the work of thine hands." (Job. 14:14, 15.) And we of the New Testament times read our Lord's response, "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God [calling them to awake and come to a full knowledge of God and to a full opportunity of everlasting life)." - John 5:25, 28.

BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT

That the terms body, soul, and spirit are not identical and interchangeable as many assume is shown in the use of all three terms by the Apostle (1 Thess. 5:23), when he writes, "I pray God [that] your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." This prayer must be understood to apply to the Church as a whole -- the elect Church whose names are written in heaven. The true *spirit* has been preserved in the little flock. Its *body* is discernible today also, notwithstanding the multitudes of tares that would hide as well

as choke it. And its *soul*, its activity, its intelligence, its sentient being,' is in evidence everywhere, lifting up the standard for the people -- the cross, the ransom.

In no other way could we apply the Apostle's words; for, however much people may differ respecting the preservation of the individual spirits and souls of God's people, all will agree that their bodies have *not been preserved*, but have returned to dust, like those of others.

"ALL LIVE UNTO HIM." -Luke 20:37, 38

Our Lord in contradicting the Sadducees (who denied that there would be a resurrection or any future life) said that the *resurrection* (and hence a future life) was proved by the fact that God, in speaking to Moses, declared himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Our Lord suggests that this of itself is a proof "that the dead are [to be] raised," because God would surely not refer thus to beings totally blotted out of existence. Our Lord then shows that God's plan for a resurrection is fixed, and that those whom men call "dead" "all live unto Him." God's word, therefore, speaks of them, as "asleep" and not as destroyed. In saying, "I am the God of Abraham," etc., he speaks not only of things past as still present, but also of things to come as if already come to pass. - Rom. 4:17.

Be Strong and of a Good Courage

Joshua 1:6.

THE dictionary rendering of *courage* is bravery, boldness; and of the word *strong*, powerful.

"Be thou powerful and very brave" -- is that what the Lord meant?

As the world estimates courage and strength people go to great lengths to prove their skill and stamina in feats of strength and endurance -- climbing great heights, crossing oceans alone and in a variety of difficult ways, -- but that is not what the Lord wants of his people.

Strength of mind and moral courage are the qualities to be acquired. True, his ancient people did have to endure hardship of a physical kind, and as we read the life of Joshua we recall the unpleasant task he had of smiting and subduing the surrounding nations before he could possess the land for the children of Israel, but it was a far deeper and more significant thing that was required of him. As recorded in the last few verses of chapter one, the children of Israel were willing to accept him if he would keep faith with God and give them good leadership.

In keeping with this line of thought let us examine the record of some of the people mentioned in Holy Writ who demonstrated these virtues in their little span of life; -- records that come down to us as examples of how *we* should live today.

JOB

We recall the very severe trial that Job had to endure. Wracked with pain, and passing through a time of mental anguish, he was forced to listen to the arguments of worldly-wise men. His resistance to the admonition, "curse God and die," and his confidence in God in saying, "If he slay me yet will I trust him," prove that although he was unable to combat their arguments, his faith was still strong.

The whole book of job is eloquent with the fortitude of this man of God, showing a picture of the suffering of the whole world of mankind and their final deliverance and inheritance.

GIDEON

Now let us look at Gideon. Recall his strength of endurance and courage, and his implicit trust and faith in God when the numbers were whittled down to three hundred. In judges, chapter 7, we have a wonderful picture of the way in which God ordained which should be the ones that would assist Gideon in the remarkable victory that was his. The seemingly simple test of how they drank the waters had in it the act of being prepared for any emergency. It makes stirring reading even in these days when we take so much for granted, to refresh our minds as to the way God dealt with his servant. We read of the culmination of their victory, how they took up strategic places (one hundred on each of three sides of the Midianites), how they had lamps in their pitchers, and trumpets in their hands; at a command from Gideon they "brake the pitchers and holding the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: they cried, . The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled." Judges 7:20, 21.

There is a very similar Scripture in 2 Chronicles 20:17, which reads, "Ye shall not need to fight in *this* battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you." Surely these passages have a very special message for us at this present time.

DAVID

Coming to David we will take only one example from a life full of incident. The one that stands out most vividly is the slaying of the Philistine giant, Goliath.

Here was a strapping young lad obviously in the prime of youth, but even so no match for such an antagonist. We can well understand why the Philistine hero should have derided him, and poured scorn on those who sent him. In 1 Samuel 17 we read how King Saul clothed David in his own armor and put a helmet of brass on his head, and armed him with a coat of mail. Lastly he got him to gird his own sword on his armor.

Needless to say, David felt most uncomfortable in all this paraphernalia, and of course cast it all off. He then took five smooth stones from the brook and put them in a bag. And he took the sling that he had used so many times before when he had protected his father's sheep from the lions and the bears. You will also remember the confident words of David when he was face to face with his adversary. Verse 45 reads: "Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."

What a marvelous example this is for the Lord's people today -- this is the only safe way to meet *our* Adversary.

ELIJAH

Elijah is another example of tremendous courage and dependency on the Lord. We recall the times he had to go before Ahab and Jezebel to prophesy before them; and also how he had to flee on more than one occasion, as she sought his life. Just picture his steadfast courage as he stood on Mount Carmel and defied the priests of Baal. In 1 Kings 17, we are told of the famine that had been in the land; of how there had been neither dew nor rain for many years; how he was succored by the ravens and the widow of Zarephath. And then in the 18th chapter we come to the wonderful climax, and to the passage where his strong faith was vindicated.

We readily call to mind the assembling of the great multitude of people, "all the children of Israel" and more than eight hundred prophets of Baal and of the groves. How Elijah prepared an altar and had the sacrifice slain. And after it had been laid on the altar he commanded that they fill four barrels with water and that it should be poured over the sacrifice so that it ran over the wood even down to the trench that had been dug around the altar. This he had repeated so that the whole thing was thoroughly saturated -- and this at a time when there had been no rain for years. Then crying on the Lord: "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." - 1 Kings 18:37, 38.

Later Elijah called upon the Lord: "It is enough; O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." But the Lord showed him that he still had work for Elijah to do, that even at that time there were many thousands that had not bowed the knee to Baal.

JEREMIAH

Jeremiah had a very unpleasant mission to perform, nevertheless he carried on, steadfastly determined to follow the leadings of the Lord. He was called at a very early age to the prophetic office and continued to prophesy for forty-two years. One commentator has said of him: "We find him sensitive to a most painful degree, timid, shy, hopeless, desponding, constantly complaining and dissatisfied with the course of events, but never flinching from duty Timid in resolve, he was unflinching in execution; as fearless when he had to face the world as he was dispirited and prone to murmuring when alone with God. Judged by his own estimate of himself he was feeble, and his mission a failure; really, in the hour of action and when duty called him, he was in very truth a defenced city,' an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land. He was a noble example of the triumph of the moral over the physical nature."

It is worthwhile noting how he was called, as recorded in the first chapter of Jeremiah, verses 4-9 (Jer 1:4-9):

"The word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

"Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

"But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

"Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

"Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth."

DANIEL

Passing on we come to Daniel and try to conjure up the scene as he was thrown into the den of lions -- an innocent man wrongfully condemned by jealous men-his feelings of complete trust and confidence in the Lord and the courage he showed when actually confronted with the ferocious beasts. His exultant reply when the king went to visit him early the next morning: "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt."

THE THREE HEBREW CHILDREN

We also call to mind the three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego-how they were bound and cast into the fiery furnace. Remember their courageous words: "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

What a transcendent note of confidence is here manifest and how much it behooves us to try to emulate such a courageous stand. The temptation with us would be to make all sorts of excuses about the weakness of our flesh; whereas really we should be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

How do these reflections affect us? Are we being strong and very courageous in our present, everyday experiences? Do we trust sufficiently, are we bold to come to the throne of heavenly grace to get the necessary strength to assist us in our trials and difficulties?

Again, let us think for a moment how we react in times of national and international stress. These upheavals sometimes make us fearful, and as human beings we shrink from them, but should we not rather look on them as additional opportunities to prove ourselves? We are instructed to be more than 'overcomers; if this is to be true of us we shall need to be equipped with the whole armor of God. We shall need to make sure that it is securely buckled on, that it is kept bright and shining, and that there are no cracks anywhere, and particularly, we should keep our eyes ever on the goal set before us, to the end that we shall be overcomers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What an ennobling thought, that the great God of the universe has called us to be joint-heirs with his son. That just as he dealt with the heroes of faith, whose lives we have briefly touched on foregoing; dealt with them by fighting their battles, preparing the way for them, cheering, encouraging and fortifying them when they lost hope; so does he deal with us if we are willing and obedient.

If we are truly his, and his spirit witnesseth with our spirit that we are the sons of God, then each of us can claim the promise: "In quietness and in confidence shall be our strength," while with joy we are able by the eye of faith to look forward to that wonderful day -- not far distant -- when God shall make wars to cease even unto the ends of the earth. Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted in the earth. - Psalms 46:9, 10.

- *John Enroll, Eng.*

The Program of Redemption

"After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." - Acts 15:14-17.

IT IS remarkable to observe that the first council of the Christian Church ever convened should have outlined the whole scheme of redemption from Pentecost to the consummation of the ages. And whatever we may hold as to the binding authority of later councils, we must accept the deliverances of this at Jerusalem as final, since from the testimony of inspired Scripture we know that the Spirit so truly presided and guided in the assembly that in publishing its decisions it was written, *"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us."* (Acts 15:28.) Jesus Christ is the Architect of the ages. Not only "all things were made by him" -- all worlds and systems of the material universe -- but all the dispensations were planned and predestined by him: "By whom also he made the ages." (Heb. 1:2.) His Church was not set upon her course until a complete program of her mission had been placed in her hands, the working-plan by which all her operations were to be directed. *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world"* (Acts 15:18) is the significant declaration which accompanies the publication of this program. And, instead of being day-laborers working in ignorance, God would have us, as laborers together with him, to understand the entire divine scheme by which our efforts are to be directed, that we may be saved from presumption and despair.

"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14.) Here is the first act of the great program. Because of the citation from the Old Testament which immediately follows--"And to this agree the words of the Prophets, as it is written After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down" -- it has been inferred that this Gentile outgathering and the tabernacle upbuilding mean the same thing; in other words, that the rearing of the tabernacle of David is a figurative expression for the building of the Church of Christ. By this superficial, though not altogether unnatural explanation of the passage, the whole program has been reduced to a single act, and the inference drawn that the preaching of the Gospel in this dispensation is to issue in the conversion of "all the Gentiles."

A CLEAR PREDICTION OF ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

But it is only necessary to observe three things in order to correct this misapprehension: First, that the citation here made from the closing chapter of the Book of Amos is clearly a prediction of the literal restoration of literal Israel, and their reinhabitation of their land; for the words quoted are part of a passage which ends with this decisive language "And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos 9:15.) Observe again that in making this citation the Holy Spirit inserts the words, not found in the original text, "After this I will return," and will build again, thus making the restoration of the Davidic tabernacle subsequent to the gathering out of the Church from the Gentiles, and connecting it directly with the personal return of the Lord. And, lastly, we are to notice that in announcing this election from among the Gentiles, it is not added, "in this are fulfilled the words of the Prophets," but "with this harmonize [Greek, symphonize] the words of the Prophets." It is but saying that the parts of the great oratorio of redemption perfectly accord, though centuries lie between its different measures; and then, to show us how they accord, the Holy Spirit sounds all the octaves thereof with a single sweep, and lets us listen to their grand

unison. This, then, is the program of redemption by which we are to work in evangelizing the world:

"First, God did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the Prophets, as it is written:

"After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof and I will set it up:

"In order that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord who doeth all these things."

The three great stages of redemption are thus outlined in their order.

ACT I

The gathering of the Church is the first act, and this, having begun at Pentecost, is still going on. All the descriptions of it contained in Scripture mark it as elective. From the word of Christ to his first disciples, "I have outchosen you out of the world," to the triumph-song of the saved heard by the seer in Patmos, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation," the Bride of Christ is always the Ecclesia, the called out. Nowhere is universal redemption predicted as the result of preaching the Gospel in this dispensation. If in the minds of those who are accustomed to speak of the world's conversion there is a violent revulsion from this saying, we remind them that we are simply affirming the truth of the doctrine of election, and its application to this entire Age. After eighteen centuries of Christian conquest the vast proportion of the world still "lieth in the Wicked One," and Christ's true Church is but a "little flock" in comparison. Only with pathetic sympathy for our fallen race in its ruin and helplessness can we contemplate this fact. And yet we must be reminded that all attempts to violate this decree by making the Church a multitudinous collection, instead of a gracious election, have only issued in apostasy. Sacramentarianism would take the world into the Church by instituting a baptized paganism instead of taking the Church out of the world by preaching spiritual regeneration; and behold the result in a half-heathenized Christendom. Latitudinarianism, would make the Church co-extensive with the world by preaching the gospel of universal salvation - all men by nature the sons of God and thus, by crowding the Lord's house with "the children of the Wicked One," turn it into "the synagogue of Satan." Though it be in mystery, and sorrow and tears, we had best work on, therefore, by the divine schedule, preaching the Gospel among all nations for a witness that we may gather out for Christ a chosen and sanctified people, calmly answering those who say that God's ways are partial, with his own words: "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

And yet, lest we should take too narrow a view of this theme, other considerations should not be overlooked. Christ is called "The Light of the World." The beams of sunlight both elect and irradiate; taking out here and there from muddy pool or acrid dead sea a pure, crystalline drop and lifting it heavenward; but also lighting and warming all the atmosphere by their radiance. So Christ, preached among the Gentiles, elects from them a holy flock, a regenerate Church; but besides this, he changes the moral climate of the world so that such noxious growths as cannibalism, slavery, polygamy, and infanticide disappear. These two results inevitably attend the proclamation of the Gospel; regeneration saving some out of the world, and civilization putting something of Christianity into the world but by neither process as now going on is the Millennium destined to be ushered in.

Moreover, let us reflect that an election is never an end in itself; it is rather a means and preparation for some vastly larger accomplishment. The body of the elect is really Christ's army, gathered by a divine conscription from every kindred and people, that they may attend him as he goes forth to his final conquest of the world. "And they that are with him are called and elect and faithful. " (Rev. 17:14.) Of this, however, we shall speak later.

ACT II

The second act of the divine program now comes into view. "*After this I will return and build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down.*" By Christ's personal coming in glory, the conversion and restoration of Israel are to be accomplished. The reader has only to compare this order with the redemption schedule drawn out in the eleventh of Romans to see how perfectly they agree. St. Paul, indeed, begins with the Jewish election, as St. James does with the Gentile election. And we must remember that the choosing out that is going on in this dispensation touches both: "not out of the Jews only, but also out of the Gentiles. " (Rom. 9:24.) But each Apostle takes up the same succession of events; first the Gentile outgathering, and then the Hebrew regathering. The hardening of the Jews which we now behold is declared by Paul to continue "until *the fulness of the Gentiles* be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. 11:25, 26.) By the "fulness of the Gentiles" we understand the predestined number, the elect company gathered through the entire period of this dispensation to form the Bride of Christ. When this number shall have been accomplished, then the conversion of Israel will occur and their national restoration to God's favor.' The two parts of the aged Simeon's prophecy are strictly consecutive: "*A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.*" (Luke 2:31, 32.) He will be the supreme glory of his people Israel, when he shall at last be owned as their Messiah and reign in the midst of them as King.

ACT III

These two stages of redemption—the Gentile election and the Hebrew restoration—are to be accomplished "in order" to a third, namely, "that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called."

Without enlarging upon the thought, what a profound hint of this does Paul give in Rom. 11:12, 15 where, speaking concerning his rejected people, he says: "Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, *how much more their fulness.*" "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, *what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?*"

"It is clear," says Lange, "that the Apostle awaits a boundless effect of blessing on the world from the future conversion of Israel." Then shall the word of Joel concerning the effusion of the spirit have a complete fulfilment, as it had a partial and prefigurative accomplishment on the day of Pentecost. For if we turn to the Prophet, we find it said "And ye shall know that *I am in the midst of Israel*, and that I am the Lord your God and none else. *And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.*" (Joel 2:27, 28.) And with this agree the words of Isaiah where he predicts the desolation of Zion as continuing "*till the spirit be poured upon us from on high.*" (Isa. 32: 15.) When the Lord shall shed forth the holy spirit abundantly upon his covenant people, through them will come unspeakable blessings to the Gentiles. The modern post-millennial interpretation completely deranges the program of prophecy at this point by making redemption terminate with its first scene. "The end of the Age," brought in by the second coming of Christ, misleadingly translated "the end of the world" in our common version, is supposed by many to close the probation of the race, winding up the present

earthly scene, and bringing in the final judgment and the eternal state, instead of opening into the triumphs of the age to come. Is it possible that the first Christians could have had this idea? If so, how could they have so ardently desired, and earnestly looked for, the speedy return of the Lord, since his coming would end the work of Gentile ingathering, while as yet only a handful had been saved? On the contrary, take the words of Peter to the Jewish rejecters of Christ, and observe how clearly they teach the very opposite "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus; whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things." (Acts 3:19-21, R.V.) Here we have, as constantly throughout the Scripture, the repentance of Israel directly connected with the return of Christ from heaven, and their conversion and the Lord's appearing resulting, not in their cutting off from the presence of the Lord, but in times of "*refreshing from the presence of the Lord*"; not in the winding up of all things, but in the "*restoration of all things*." Three acts of the divine program appear again in this declaration of Peter -- the coming of Christ, the conversion of Israel, and world wide redemption -- corresponding exactly with those revealed in the texts from James and Paul already considered.

CONCLUSION

It is thus seen that the redemption of the world comes at last, following (1) the glorification of the Church at our Lord's return, and (2) the conversion and restoration of Israel. If it be said that this is a Jewish conception, borrowed from the Old Testament, we will answer: "Yes, and reiterated and more explicitly unfolded in the New Testament." For nowhere is the order of events so distinctly revealed as in the Acts and Epistles.

"Election, partial and opposed to world-wide redemption," has been the verdict of thousands who have replied against God, knowing little of the range of his eternal plan. "Election, gracious, and preparatory to world-wide redemption," is the discovery which a deep pondering of Holy Scripture reveals. The elect Church transfigured with her risen Savior, and the chosen nation, Israel, restored and made glorious on earth--these are his appointed agents, trained by long discipline and trial for bringing all peoples and tribes into obedience to God. As to the Gentile election, so to the Hebrew restoration, objectors may be reconciled when it appears that this, too, is instrumental and preparatory to world-wide salvation. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, " is the summons which the long captive daughter of Zion shall hear, and then the blessed result:

"And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. " - Isa. 60:3.

- Condensed from *Ecce Venit (Behold He Cometh)* -- A. J. Gordon, Boston, Mass., 1889.

The Question Box

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." - Rev. 1:1.

Question:

The first verse of the Book of Revelation states that its purpose is to show unto his (Christ's) servants, things that were shortly to come to pass. Who are Christ's servants?

Answer:

Who were the servants of Christ at the time St. John saw the vision? There can be but one answer, namely, those who were serving him at the time; those among both Jews and Gentiles, who had become Christ's followers; that, is to say, Christians.

Some have endeavored to avoid this most natural interpretation of the words by saying that if they were addressed to Christians the passage would have read: "to show unto his [God's] sons"; in other words, because the Jews of the previous Age were called servants and not sons, therefore Jews are meant.

This reasoning we find unconvincing. In the first place, the Jews had been rejected, cast off, from favor, at the time St. John saw the vision. They were no longer *God's* servants. Not only so, but they had never been the servants of *Christ*. They could become the servants of Christ only by receiving him as their Messiah, and by yielding themselves entirely unto him. They would then become sons (of God) who would find their chief delight in the service of Christ.

In the second place, the Only-begotten Son was the Servant in whom, above all others, the Father delighted, and true Christians, following in the Master's footsteps, have always sought to prove their sonship by joyous, devoted, service. "Slave" of Christ Jesus is the term which St. Paul commonly uses to describe his own relationship to the Master. "Well done, good and faithful servant," is the joyous word which all dutiful *sons* hope will yet crown their imperfect labors.

Another very significant matter, as proving that Christians and only Christians are addressed in this prophecy, is that the ascription of praise recorded in Rev. 1:5 is none other than Christian praise, as the words, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," very plainly teach. The very next statement of the Apostle shows who are referred to in this passage. It is those who are to be made kings and priests. Are the kings and priests unto Christ's God and father to be Jews taken out from either this Gospel Age or any Age prior to, or to follow this? Surely not.

It has been well said "that Jews . . . have no more to do with this prophecy than they have to do with the Epistle to the Ephesians. They may possibly be alluded to in the one, as in the other, but it is not for them; it is not mainly concerned with them; it is for us; Christians alone were Christ's servants, in the days of Domitian, when John saw and heard these things; to Christians alone was it sent; the seven churches represent the whole Church; and they take the children's bread, to give to outsiders, who would rob the Church of this, her Lord's last gift.... Nor is it likely that the Lord Jesus in his last prophetic communication to his cherished Church, from whom, for eighteen hundred years he was to be hidden, would have nothing more pressing, nothing more personal and important to reveal to her, than the destiny of a future Jewish remnant, with which she has nothing in common.

The conclusion to which we are led, that the Revelation is a prophecy which relates to Christian rather than to Jewish experiences, is strongly confirmed by the description of its witnessing and suffering saints, who "overcame by the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:11), who kept "the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:11, 17), who "keep the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12), and are the "martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17:6) slain "for the witness of Jesus" (Rev. 20:4). Who can those be who have the testimony of Jesus, who keep the faith of Jesus, and are the martyrs of Jesus, but Christians? On every ground the conclusion is inevitable that the Revelation is a Christian, not a Jewish, prophecy; in other words, it relates to the experiences of the Christian Church, in both its militant and its triumphant stages.

- P. L. Read

Recently Deceased

Sr. S. Andrews, Santa Monica, Calif. (Dec.)
Sr. M. Barrett, Leicester, Eng. (Oct.)
Bro. Robert Cormack, Glasgow, Scot. (Dec.)
Sr. Jeanie Dick, Rutherglen, Scot. (Jan.)
Bro. Charles C. Evans, Blaine, Wash. (Dec.)
Bro. Lorne Fraser, Lancaster, Pa. (Oct.)
Sr. Sophia Kelly, Providence, R. I. (Dec.)
Sr. R. Melting, Manchester, Eng. (Oct.)
Sr. Alice C. Ripper, Monterey Park, Cal. (Jan.)
Bro. Clarence Smith, Medford, Mass. (Jan.)
Bro. Joan Waytina, North Brookfield, Mass. (Dec.)