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Israel Today

*"I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." -
Zechariah 12:10.*

IN the midst of the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, talk goes on in the Holy City regarding the retrial of Christ. Recently, Asher Adar spoke in Jerusalem concerning the movement in Israel for the retrial of Christ. Israel is now engaged in a legal action that has the eyes of the world focused upon it. No trial in history has ever brought into the courtroom so many reporters and news media representatives as the current Eichmann trial. Some 560, from 35 nations, received credentials. This is more than double the number who covered the Nuremburg trials after World War II. How many news reporters would assemble in Jerusalem if Israel decided to retry Jesus? According to the prophecy of Zechariah we have quoted at the head of this article we know that the day will come when Jesus will be exonerated in the eyes of the children of Israel. Yes, the charges brought against Jesus nineteen centuries ago will be cleared by the enlightening power of God's spirit.

On April 12, right in the midst of the Eichmann trial, a recess was called to honor the memory of the Nazis' Jewish victims, with nationwide rites. It was a day of mourning for the 6,000,000 who perished. The day was set aside as "Martyrs' and Heroes' Memorial Day." As full of mourning as this day was in Israel in the setting of the trial of the one who engineered this slaughter of Jews in our time, yet it pales into insignificance when compared with the mourning that will take place in Israel when Jacob's posterity recognizes the great crime that was committed by them nineteen centuries ago against the Son of God, the Messiah, the blameless one.

WHAT EVERY STUDENT OF PROPHECY SHOULD KNOW

There is quite a conditioning work going on in Israel today for the great revelation to come. The latest report to come out of Israel reveals that factories and plants throughout Israel are now conducting weekly Bible study classes with the cooperation of employers and employees. Commenting on the lay Bible study movement in the country, Mr. Haim Gvaryahu, Chairman of the Israel Bible Research Society, said that the number of Bible study circles throughout the nation had grown to such an extent that he no longer knew how many there were. For instance, more recently the Jerusalem Journalists Association formed a Bible study group. Mr. Gvaryahu noted that women in Israel—he mentioned Hadassah, Pioneer Women, and WIZO (Women's International Zionist Organization) -- were increasingly studying the Bible, as were socialist veterans of the agricultural settlement movement, particularly in the Jezreel Valley. While Mr. Gvaryahu regretted the relatively smaller participation of the younger generation in these Bible study groups, yet it must be borne in mind that Bible Study takes up 20-30% of the school curriculum.

Regarding the youth of Israel it will be of special interest to make the following quotation from *The Jerusalem Post*, an English-language daily published in the Holy City. After Billy Graham's visit to Israel, where he addressed several fairly large audiences, *The Jerusalem Post* stated, "If Billy Graham had spoken fluent Hebrew instead of through an interpreter, there would have been thousands of conversions. Our Youth is spiritually hungry and our rabbis and leaders do not know how to satisfy this hunger. This is the significance of Billy Graham's visit. We have had a warning.

To further confirm the trends mentioned above we would like to quote here the observation made by Moshe Kol, Progressive Party M. K. (Member of Israel's Knesset-parliament). He said: "There was a time when the revolutionary element in Zionism considered it essential to be anti-religious, but this period has passed. The generations of today are not nihilistic and want some spiritual code. They are anxious to believe, but are not prepared to deny their own powers of reason. They cannot respect rabbis who are capable of shifts and stratagems."

JEWISH MISSIONARY REPORT

In the city of Jaffa (one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world) works a Bulgarian Jewish believer, Joseph Isakoff, whom we know personally. This Protestant Hebrew Christian tells a story that should be enlightening to the readers of this column. Joseph Isakoff relates:

"The small hall in which we conduct Bible classes is filled with people from every walk of life. Many of them are students, teachers, journalists, professional or business people.

"I asked myself what makes these people come here? I wanted to know how our friends who come here explain this interest in our Bible studies. To find the answer I decided to conduct a private Gallup poll.

"The first man, a regular visitor, a teacher whom I asked, gave me this answer:

"'We come here with mixed feelings. We love to hear the good words of the Gospel but we are repelled by the bad deeds of the Christians. Yet the message of Christ which you preach in this place is near to our Jewish hearts.'

"Another man, a journalist, states simply: 'I am not religious, but I like to come here. I find the hymns heartwarming and the sermons stimulating.'

"Another friend, a business man, answered: 'I like the atmosphere of this place. In my homeland I went to churches occasionally, but I was repelled by the many icons and crosses. Jesus was a stranger to me. The worship smacked of pagan practices. Here I feel closer to the Jesus of love. He is my Brother.'

"The next man I interviewed was a recent immigrant from Europe. His parents were killed in one of the concentration camps by the Nazis. He gave me a very frank answer:

"I come here out of sheer curiosity. I have been interested in religion for a long time and I like to compare the Christian way of worship with the Jewish.'

"And what are your impressions?

"Both good and bad.'

"Will you explain this? I inquired.

"I am annoyed by you Christians, who speak as if you were the sole possessors of the Truth. You also speak much about love, but in our Jewish experience this message of love has somehow been transformed into acts of hatred and persecution.'

"At this point he bared his arm on which was indelibly burned into his flesh a concentration camp number, the sign of a man condemned to death, merely because he was a Jew. I tried to disabuse his mind and to explain to him that the people who did these horrible things to him and to millions of others were not Christians at all, but demon-possessed pagans; I spoke to him of our loving Saviour, the only one in this world of darkness who is able to arrest the forces of darkness and destruction.

"Were my words able to dispel his terrible memories of suffering and persecution in a so-called Christian civilization? I do not know. But this I do know. There is no other hope for this sin-ridden world except Christ and the cross upon which He died out of love for fallen man.

"We rejoice to see that, in spite of all these tragic circumstances, many Jews gladly come to our services, and some of them have found here peace and a balm for their wounded souls.

"A number of them come here for the first time, their minds inclined to suspicion. You can almost hear them thinking, 'What business has a missionary in our Jewish land? What does he know about the Jews, about their hopes and their aspirations?' It is not always easy to overcome these suspicions. But gradually the Spirit of our Lord takes over and speaks to the heart of these people.

"Here in Israel we are confronted with a new Jew, so vastly different from the Jew of yesterday, (the denizen of the Ghetto, a man without a home, without a land, unwanted and unwelcome, the eternal refugee.). Here the Jew is at home and proud of it. This state of mind has to be recognized when we approach the Israeli Jew with the Gospel of Jesus.

"Our efforts are concentrated mainly on personal witness and service. This is partly the secret of our well attended services. As we gain the friendship and confidence of our Jewish friends, they become more willing to hear what we have to say."

NINTH BIBLE CONFERENCE

The Ninth Bible Conference of the Israel Bible Research Society opened in Jerusalem on March 26 and was devoted mainly to the "Wisdom Books" of the Bible-Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes. Another theme discussed by professional and lay scholars during the three days of lectures and debates was "King Cyrus in the Prophetic Vision and History of the Return to Zion." The latter theme was chosen to mark 2,500 years since King Cyrus' proclamation.

With this conference the Society completed its cycle of the Bible.

The first address proper was delivered by Mr. David Ben-Gurion, the Prime Minister, on "The Personality of King Cyrus." Mr. Abba Eban, the Minister of Education and Culture, spoke later on "The Significance of the Cyrus Proclamation." Some thirty papers in all were read during the conference by distinguished scholars, laymen, members of kibbutzim (collective agricultural colonies) and many newcomers.

COINCIDING WITH THE EICHMANN TRIAL

Prof. Martin Buber, renowned Professor Emeritus of Social Philosophy at the Hebrew University, has recently completed a translation of the Bible into German. Prof. Buber, who is now 83, began the project 35 years ago together with the late Franz Rosenzweig, and has been working on it ever since. It may seem strange that a Jewish professor in Israel has carried out such a tedious translation job for the benefit of the people who caused so much suffering for his people. Stranger yet is the fact that Prof. Buber's translation work ended with the commencement of the Eichmann trial. "Truth is stranger than fiction."

A MILLION DOLLAR ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL MUSEUM

Announcement of one of the largest gifts ever-made in the history of Israel -\$1,000,000 for the construction of the Samuel Bronfman Archaeological and Biblical Museum in Jerusalem was made by President Ben-Zvi.

The gift was presented by Mr. Bronfman's children on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

They have also pledged to make annual grants not only towards the upkeep of the Museum, but to finance archaeological research and the publication of new findings in Israel in the field of antiquities.

Mr. Ben-Zvi said that the gift "will help Israel achieve her aspirations of becoming a world cultural center. New light on the Bible and the ancient Middle East-which bears the spiritual and material roots of the earliest phases of human civilizations-is constantly being revealed by Israeli archaeological expeditions. As one of the ancient centers of world civilization and culture, it is fitting that Jerusalem should take its place with Rome and Athens as a major repository for scholarship and works of art."

The Bronfman Museum, with 70,000 square feet of floor space, will be located on a hilltop adjacent to the Hebrew University campus and flanked by the new buildings of the Knesset (parliament). Nearby will be the buildings of the projected Bezalel Museum, with close to 90,000 square feet of floorspace. Another building in the same area will be called the "Shrine of the Book" and will house the Dead Sea Scrolls.

A sculpture collection (one of the world's finest privately owned) donated by Billy Rose will adorn the grounds of the museum area.

FOLKLORE CONGRESS DEVOTED TO ELIJAH

A two-day World Congress of Jewish Folklore was held in Haifa. The Congress was devoted to the influence of the Prophet Elijah on the traditions and customs of the Jewish and other peoples.

One purpose of the Congress was to prepare records, a catalogue, and archives on everything published in any language on the Prophet Elijah. Another aim was to record material directly from members of various Jewish communities gathered in Israel possessing folkloristic cultural treasures not yet published and which are liable to be forgotten and disappear in the course of time.

The Congress was welcomed by Mr. Abba Khoushy, Mayor of Haifa, who referred to Elijah as "the most likable of the prophets."

Dr. Yomtov Levinsky, Chairman of the World Union of Jewish Folklorists, dwelt on the prophet's place in the life of the individual, and of the nation. He described Elijah as a man of courage, zealous for the truth, and living to this day in the imagination of the people.

Many legends about Elijah the Prophet are common among the Moslems, Druzes and Christians, the speaker said, and in the traditions of these communities he symbolizes the revival of the desert.

Dr. S. Z. Cahana, Director-General of the Ministry of Religious, referred to the apt choice of Haifa and the Carmel as the venue for a congress on Elijah. (Elijah had his contest with the priests of Baal on Mt. Carmel.)

The speaker noted that notwithstanding the traditional efforts of Israel to avoid the adoration of any personality, Elijah seems to have been something of an exception in this respect.

From being in his lifetime a stormy and stern prophet, Elijah has in the tradition of the Jewish people become the typical man of kindness, tolerance and mercy.

About forty lectures were given on various topics dealing with the Prophet in religions, folktales, song and proverbs, music, and the theater, and Elijah's Cave on the Carmel.

- *Casimir Lanowick.*

Signs of the End of the Age

"What shall be the sign of thy presence (mistranslated "coming") and of the end of the Age (mistranslated "world")?" - Matt. 24:3.

The signs of the full end of the Age are to be looked for in three special directions or sources. These are:

1. Signs amongst the Jews.
2. Signs amongst the Gentiles.
3. Signs in the Christian Church, both the true and false.

In all these directions the signs of the complete end are described. The Apostle Paul gives what is probably the most significant sign . . . as indicating the change of the Kingdom class. He says: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11:25.) When it becomes apparent that the truly orthodox of the Jewish people get their eyes open to see that Jesus Christ is their Messiah, and come to an understanding of what is referred to in the Scriptures as the "hidden mystery," that of gathering out the joint-heirs of the heavenly Kingdom *from* amongst the Gentiles, which is clearly stated to be the special purpose of God for this Age, during the period of Jewish blindness -- then, and not until then, will the Age reach its full end. Those who will live to witness that may know that the Kingdom in all its power and glory will be ushered in immediately. We believe that some Christians may possibly witness some of the events and developments leading up to and in close proximity to that time.

*- R. E. Streeter.
Rev. Exp. Vol. II, pp. 627, 628.*

THE LONG JOURNEY LIES BEHIND

We are in the position of travelers, approaching a large and to them unknown city, at the end of a long railway journey. They are aware of the distance to be traversed, of the stations to be passed on the way, and of the time required for the transit. The milestones have long shown them that they are rapidly nearing their goal; the time the journey was to occupy has elapsed, and they have observed that the station just passed was the last but one. Yet the

terminus in the strange city may have several distinct platforms, separated from each other by short distances; the train may draw up at one or two before it comes to a final stand at the last: they are ignorant of the exact localities in the great metropolis, and hardly know at which, station they will be met by their expectant friends. Still they have no hesitation in making their preparations for leaving the carriage, and in congratulating each other with a glad "Here we are at last!" They would smile at the man who should dispute their convictions, though they may be unable to decide whether it will be five minutes or ten, or only two or three, before they actually reach their destination. It is a mere question of minutes and miles; if one platform is not the right one, the next may be; at any rate, the long journey lies behind, the desired goal is all but reached.

*- H. Grattan Guinness.
Approaching End of the Age,
pp. 480, 482*

History, Organization, and Doctrine of Associated Bible Students

For the benefit of new readers we publish below an article which appeared in "The Herald" for February, 1930. Taken largely from Brother Russell's writings, it was prepared at the request of the Census Bureau of the U. S. Dept. of Commerce for the "history, doctrine, organization, and work" of Associated Bible Students.

History

THE history of Associated Bible Students Classes begins in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, during the period 1870 to 1875, when a little company of truth seekers began to discover in their study of the Divine Word more of the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths', of the love of God; that God's oath bound covenant to Abraham that in his seed *all* the families of the earth shall be blessed must surely be fulfilled, although millions have gone into their graves without receiving that blessing. They observed the Apostle Paul's teaching (Gal. 3:8, 16, 27, 29) that primarily that Seed of blessing is Christ, but that those also who have been baptized into Christ in the spirit and become truly Christ's have become heirs of that promise, that they might become associated with Christ as kings and priests in ruling and blessing all the families of the earth (2 Tim. 2:12); and they saw further that in order to receive that blessing *all must come forth* from their graves and be brought to a clear knowledge of the truth and to a full opportunity to gain everlasting life. (John 5:28, 29, R. V.; 1 Tim. 2:3, 6.) This they saw to be the restitution work foretold in Acts 3:21. Although seeing that the Church was called to joint-heirship with the Lord in the Millennial Kingdom, prior to that time they had failed to see clearly the great distinction between the reward of the Church *now* on trial, and the reward of the faithful of the world after *their* trial at the close of the Millennial Age -- that the reward of the former is to be the glory- of the spiritual, divine nature, while that of the latter is to the glory of restitution -- restoration to the perfection of human nature once enjoyed in Eden by their progenitor Adam. The years which followed were years of continued growth in grace and knowledge respecting the various features of the divine plan of salvation.

Charles Taze Russell, a young business man of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, became the outstanding leader in this movement, as some of the other early leaders began to deny, the doctrine that the death of Christ was the ransom price for Adam and all his race, a doctrine which Mr. Russell always maintained as the only sure, rock foundation for Christian faith. His first published pamphlet was "The Object and Manner of Our Lord's Return" (50,000 copies), written to show that the object of our Lord's return is not to destroy, but to bless, all the families of the earth, and that His coming would be thief-like, not in the flesh but as a spirit being, invisible to man (John 14:19), and that the gathering of His Church and the separation of the "wheat" from the "tares" would progress in the end of this Age without the world being aware of it. In 1876 Mr. Russell closed out his Philadelphia business and thereafter devoted his time and his small fortune to traveling, preaching, and writing. In July 1879, appeared the first issue of his magazine, "Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence," which he continued to publish, monthly until December 1891, semi-monthly thereafter, until his death. In 1881 he published "Food for Thinking Christians" and "Tabernacle Teachings" (1,400,000 copies). These were followed by six volumes originally issued under the title "Millennial Dawn," later renamed, as a series, "Studies in the Scriptures," as follows: Vol. I, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," 1886 (nearly 5 million copies issued, in 20 languages, during the author's lifetime); Vol. II, "The Time is at Hand," 1889 (more than one and a half million copies); Vol. III, "Thy Kingdom Come," 1890 (more than one and a half million copies); Vol. IV, "The Battle of Armageddon," 1897 (over 460,000 copies); Vol V, "The At-One-Ment between 'God and Man," 1899 (over 440,000 copies); Vol. VI, "The

New Creation," 1903 (over 420,000 copies); also the booklets "Tabernacle Shadows," (one million copies), and "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" (three million copies), and numerous tracts. The movement grew until at the time of his death in October, 1916, he was pastor, of more than 1,200 congregations in various parts of the world. His writings were translated into more than 35 different languages, and his weekly sermons, handled by a newspaper syndicate, were published at one time in more than 2,000 newspapers, with a- combined circulation of 15 million copies. He organized and conducted a lecture bureau which employed many traveling lecturers on Bible subjects. This brief statement of the activities' of Pastor C. T. Russell is a necessary background to a proper tracing of the history of Associated Bible Students Classes of today.

Mr. Russell used, in his public work, the corporate name *International Bible Students Association*, which name was often applied to the Classes of Bible students. Earlier the name *Associated Bible Students* was also used by such Classes. After the death of Mr. Russell, the corporate organization continued for several years to use the name *International Bible Students Association*, while those Classes which have drawn away from the corporate organization have quite generally assumed the name *Associated Bible Students*, and in some instances, *Berean Bible Students*. The corporate organization has departed in many respects from the understanding of doctrines as presented in "Studies in the Scriptures," and has ceased to distribute Mr. Russell's writings, which has led to the loss of many of its former supporters, while Associated Bible Students Classes as a whole still adhere quite closely to the views presented in his writings.

Organization

The organization of Associated Bible Students is congregational in character, that is, they adhere to that form of church government in which each congregation acts as independent, self-governing body, while maintaining fellowship with other like congregations. It was the infringement of this principle after Mr. Russell's death which first led to the withdrawal of support of the corporate organization by these congregations. Their ministers are termed elders, but assume no ecclesiastical titles. They maintain no membership rolls, but recognize as brethren in Christ all who profess converse on through faith in Christ's ransom sacrifice, and full consecration to God in response to His invitation as in Romans 12:1, 2, and who (give evidence thereof by their course in life.

Doctrine

The Apostle Paul declares that "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17, R. V.) The Divine Word being sufficient to perfect the man of god, the true spirit of Associated Bible Students' teaching is not to build up another sect by adding tests outside the full and complete acceptance of the Word itself and conformance of the life to its teachings, that thus they may be one with all who are truly the Lord's. They have therefore formulated no creed to be accepted as a condition of fellowship, their position being that expressed in "Studies in the Scriptures," Vol. VI, page 241:

"The real need of the Church of Christ is *still more liberty* -- until each individual member shall stand free and independent of all human bonds, creeds, confessions, etc. With each individual Christian standing fast in the liberty wherewith he was made free by the Lord (Gal. 5:1; John 8:32), and each individual Christian united in loyalty to the Lord and to His Word, very quickly the original unity which the Scriptures inculcated would be discerned, and all true children of God, all members of the New Creation, would find themselves drawn to each other member similarly free, and bound each to the other by the cords of love far more strongly than are men

bound in earthly systems and societies. 'The love of Christ constraineth us' (holds us together -- Young's Concordance) - 2 Cor. 5:14."

One other passage from the pen of Mr. Russell on this:

". . . the wisdom that cometh from above. . . entreats and exhorts for unity only in the Lord and along the line of questions positively settled by the Lord in the Scriptures -- which generously leaves with each full liberty to act and to judge on all questions not positively settled by the Scriptures. We urge that all of the Lord's dear flock copy the wisdom of the Apostle in this matter." - *Watch Tower*.

Perhaps the best concise summary of what Associated Bible Students understand the Holy Scriptures to teach is that which from 1895 was published in every issue of the Watch Tower and is now printed in every issue of the two larger magazines published by Associated Bible Students, under the heading

To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach

"That the Church is 'the Temple of the Living God' -- peculiarly 'His workmanship'; that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age -- ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the Chief Corner Stone of His Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessing shall come 'to all people,' and they find access to Him. - 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

"That meantime the chiseling, shaping, and polishing of consecrated believers in Christ's Atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these 'living stones,' 'Elect and precious,' shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with His glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium. -- Rev. 15:5-8.

"That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that 'Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for *every man*,' 'a Ransom for all,' and will be 'the true Light which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world*,' 'in due time.' -- Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

"That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, 'see Him as He is,' be 'partaker of the Divine nature,' and share His glory as His joint-heir. -- 1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

"That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next Age. -- Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

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

Those desiring to obtain a more full understanding of the beliefs of Associated Bible Students are referred to the six volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures," and particularly to Vol. I, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," now published by Pastoral Bible Institute, 177 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N. Y., and Dawn Publishers, Inc., 136 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. Foreign connections are Bible Students' Committee, 24 Darwin Road, Welling,

The True Church

One Sabbath morn I roamed astray,
And asked a Pilgrim for the way:
"O, tell me, whither shall I search,
That I may find the one *true Church?*"
He answered,
"Search the world around;

The one true Church is never found.
Yon ivy on the abbey wall
Makes fair the falsest Church of all."
But, fearing he had told me wrong,
I cried, "Behold the entering throng!"
He answered, "*If a Church be true,
It hath not many, but a few!*"
Around a font the people pressed,
And crossed themselves
on brow and breast.
"A cross so light to bear," he cried,
"Is not of Christ the Crucified!
Each forehead, frowning, sheds it off:
Christ's cross abides
through scowl and scoff!"
We entered at the open door,
And saw men kneeling on the floor;
Faint candle, by the daylight dimmed,
As if by foolish virgins trimmed;
Fair statues of the saints, as white
As now their robes are, in God's sight;
Stained windows, casting down a beam,
Like Jacob's ladder in the dream.
The Pilgrim gazed from nave to roof,
And, frowning, uttered this reproof:
"Alas! who is it understands
God's Temple is not made with hands?"

We walked in ferns so wet with dew
They plashed our garments trailing through,
And came upon a church whose dome
Upheld a cross, but not for Rome,
We brushed a cobweb from a pane,
And watched the service in the fane.
"*Do prayers,*" he asked,
*"the more avail,
If offered at an altar rail?
Does dater sprinkled from a bowl,
Wash any sin from any soul?
Do tongues that taste
Speak truer after such a sign?"*

Just then, upon a maple spray,
Two orioles perched, and piped a lay,
Until the gold beneath their throats
Shook molten in their mellow notes.
Resounding from the church, a psalm
Rolled, quivering,

 through the outer calm.

"Both choirs," said I, "are in accord,
For both give praises to the Lord."

"The birds," he answered,

 "chant a song

Without a note of sin or wrong:

The church's anthem is a strain
Of human guilt and mortal pain."

The orioles and the organ ceased,
And in the pulpit rose the priest.

The Pilgrim whispered in my ear,
"It profits not to tarry here."

"He speaks no error," answered I,

"He teaches that the living die;

The dead arise; and both are true;

Both wholesome doctrines;

 neither new."

The Pilgrim said, "He strikes a blow

At wrongs that perished long ago;

But covers with a shielding phrase

The living sins of present days."

We turned away among the tombs --

A tangled place of briars and blooms.

I spelled the legends on the stones:

Beneath reposed the martyrs' bones,

The bodies which the rack once brake

In witness for the dear Lord's sake,

The ashes gathered from the pyres

Of saints whose zeal our soul inspires.

The Pilgrim murmured as we passed,

"So gained they all the crown at last.

Men lost it now

 through looking back,

To find it at the stake, the rack;

The rack and stake

 are old with grime;

God's touchstone is the living time!"

We passed where poplars,

 gaunt and tall,

Let twice their length of shadow fall.

Then rose a meeting-house in view,

Of bleached and weather-beaten hue.

Men, plain of garb and pure of heart,

Divided Church and world apart.

Nor did they vex the silent air
With any sound of hymn or prayer.
God's finger to their lips they pressed,
Till each man kissed it
 and was blessed.
I asked, "Is this the true Church, then?"
He answered, "Nay, a sect of men:
And sects that shut their doors
 in pride
Shut God and half His saints outside.
The gates of Heaven,
 the Scriptures say,
Stand open wide, by night and day.
So, then, to enter, is there need
To carry key of church or creed?"
Still following where the highway led,
Till elms made arches overhead,
We saw a spire and weathercock,
And snow-white church upon a rock --
A rock, where centuries before,
Came sea-tossed pilgrims to the shore.
My sandals straightway I unbound,
Because the place was holy ground.
I cried, "One church at last I find,
That fetters not the human mind.
"This church," said he, "is like the rest;
For all are good, but none is best."

Then far from every church
 we strayed --
Save Nature's pillared aisles of shade.
The squirrels ran to see us pass,
And God's sweet breath
 was on the grass.
I challenged all the creeds, and sought
What truth, or lie, or both, they taught.
I asked, "Had *Augustine* a fault?"
The Pilgrim gazed
 at heaven's high vault,
And answered, "*Can a mortal eye
Contain the sphere of all the sky?*"
I said, "The circle is too wide."
"*God's truth is wider!*" he replied.
"Though *Augustine* was on his knee,
He saw how little he could see;
Though *Luther* sought
 with burning heart,
He caught the glory but in part;
Though *Calvin* opened wide his soul,
He comprehended not the whole..
Not *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Augustine*,

Saw visions such as I have seen."
While yet he spake, a rapture stole
Through all my still inquiring soul.
I looked upon His holy brow,
Entreating, "Tell me, who art THOU?"
But such a splendor filled the place,
I knew it was the Lord's own face!
I was a sinner, and afraid!
I knelt in dust, and thus
I prayed: "O Christ, the Lord!
 end Thou my search,
And lead me to
 the one true Church."
He spake as never man may speak
"The one true Church
 thou shalt not seek,
Seek thou, forevermore, instead,
To find the *one true Christ, its Head!*"
The Lord then vanished
 from my sight,
And left me standing in the light.

- *Poems of Dawn.*

The Return to Our Father

A story for children young and old.

"I will arise and go to my Father." - Luke 15:18.

IN a gallery of fine arts, two men stood before a painting that made a very strong appeal to one of them. The scene it depicted was that of an ivy-mantled cottage, festooned with great trees, and in the background, cattle and sheep grazing on a hillside pasture. At the gate there stood a woman whose gaze was fixed upon a lad that was looking up at her with the light of love and joy shining in his eyes. It was a delightful, wholesome scene, one calculated to bring back sweet memories to many a man who might pause to view it. At length, one of the two who had been gazing at it very intently, turned to his companion and said: "Will, when you look upon that picture, you behold something of my own early home life. My mother was just such a woman as that, and I myself somewhat like the boy you see there. I had a good mother and a wonderful childhood at the old home place. But I left it while still in my teens and have never gone back since. I don't know if my folks are living or dead. But somehow that picture tells me to go back home and look them up." And back he went.

The power of suggestion contained in the painting broke through the sinhardened encrustment of that man's mind and heart, and caused him to think of those who had loved and nurtured him, keenly enough to send him back to do the right thing, and to bring relief to hearts that had never ceased to mourn his loss. It was indeed a good picture that could work so effectively upon his memory. Would God there were more pictures like that in the world, and more artists who painted them, said his friend.

Well, thanks be to God, we do have pictures, even more heart-searching than this. They are not painted on canvas with a brush, but are depicted with words-words. which, like living things, leap out from the printed pages of our Bibles, and lay hold upon the hearts and minds of all who, gifted with the power of faith in God, forsake the beggarly elements of this world and return to their Father in heaven.

THE PRODIGAL SON

Jesus was the unexcelled artist in the painting of word pictures; and in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 15, verses 12 to 32 (Luke 15:12-32), we find one of these pictures that has been the means of influencing many a wanderer, out in the world of sin, to return home.

The story begins with the usual round of life in an old home of a father who has two sons. As we look at the picture, we are given the impression that all is harmonious and serene. It is a well ordered home, and all things seem to run smoothly. The father is thoughtful and kind, and there is an abundance of everything necessary to their comfort and well-being. Doubtless, as in nearly all such places, the birds and the flowers enhanced the joys of their surroundings. But, for no apparent reason, there comes a time when the younger son becomes restless; he is not happy and content with his lot. From out the great world, of which he knows little, a voice seems to be calling him. This voice is the lure of the unknown quantity, and of freedom from the home restraints. And the more he thinks of it, the greater becomes his desire to explore this great unknown.

So, under this urge, he musters up courage to go to his father and ask for the portion of goods that would eventually be his, in order that he might have the means to journey hither and yon, and pay his way without having to work for his sustenance. We can imagine the father's feelings, for he had lived long enough to know something of the dangers and temptations a young man would encounter away from the home environment. He could have easily refused fused to comply with his son's request, but, being a wise father, he realized that the boy would not be content at home, and that he evidently needed to have the experience that such a journey would bring to him; so he gives him money to the value of his goods so that he can conveniently carry it on his person, and he lets him go, but, if we know good fathers, not without many admonitions.

REDUCED TO FEEDING SWINE

The school of experience soon begins the instruction of this young man. He learns that while it is easy to go downhill, it is hard to go uphill; easy to drift with the current, but difficult to progress against it. Being swept out into the tide of human life, he wastes his substance in riotous living, and his money is soon dissipated. Having youth and money to spend, he is of course popular, and is bon comrade to others who go in for what the world calls a good time in the swirl of life. But how different everything is when this way of life has taken its toll. The physical powers begin to go down along with the moral qualities that were all but swept away *in* licentious living. The complete process of decline sets in, and he goes down, down, down to depths of degradation he never dreamed were possible.

And then a famine comes upon the land. His money is all gone, and he is now in dire need. What shall he do? The decision he makes shows that there is still some good in him, for he determines to go to work. But what can he do? The famine in the land has made it difficult to find work, so he is reduced to hiring himself out to a citizen of the country to feed swine. He is fully aware of the disgrace he has brought upon, himself and his people, for such an occupation was an abomination in their eyes. But he must feed the swine or starve, so he. does it. He feels that he is at the bottom of the scale of degradation; and being threadbare and hungry, he is glad to eat even a portion of the swine's husks. What a terrible experience the far country has been to him! How indeed will it all end?

One day as he stands feeding the swine, no one near, no sound even save that which the swine make as they devour their husks, a thought comes to him. It is the evening hour, and the sun, like a great ball of fire, is sinking in the west. One shaft of that yellow, golden light falls near the pigsty, and it arouses a longing in the young man's heart. The light is so beautiful and pure, and reminds him so poignantly of his old home and kindred. Oh, what a wonderful home! Was there ever a home like it? Did any one ever have such a good father? Why, even the servants had plenty and to spare, and here was he, a son, dying with hunger. As he thinks on these things, there comes the resolve into his mind to go home.

THE RETURN HOME

But how can one who has been so utterly foolish as to descend to the utmost depths of degradation, expect to be received back into a godly home? Nevertheless, he is resolved to go, and to cast himself upon the mercy of a father whose righteousness and love could not be questioned. So to himself he said: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

It was a great resolve he had made, and now he would lose no time about carrying it into effect. Some one else could feed these swine; he would start on his homeward journey. He had wandered far, but he knew the way back. The trail lay just over yonder under the brow of that hill where the scrub juniper grew; then over the mountain side and down into the valley beyond. He had no way of getting there but to walk, and the trail was rough and stony, but he knew it would lead him back home.

He trudged on and on, until finally he began to recognize certain landmarks. Once he had come this way with his father, who had brought some goats to the town he had just passed. Yes, there was that old olive tree under which they had stopped to eat and refresh themselves. And this intermittently running stream-he knew it well. He was in his home land, but would have to spend another night, perhaps two, in this wilderness country. Another day's journey brought him to the summit of a hill where he could see, on a far distant rise, an outlying shelter for his father's sheep. It was still too far to reach home before his father's retiring time, so he decided to wait until morning, a much more favorable time for his arrival. The question is, how will he be received?

THE HOME IN EDEN

The next morning he is not far from the old homestead, when he sees an old man coming toward him along the road. It does not take long for these two to come together, for the father recognizes his son's walk and hastens to meet his long-lost boy and embrace him and bring him home. What a wonderful reunion it was to that boy, and how grateful he felt of his father's love, a love that his own unworthiness had not diminished.

This beautiful story was told by the Master to show how precious in the sight of God is the sinner's return unto him. And who is the sinner?

The question carries us back to Eden land, where the old home of the human family was located. That this home was perfect, cannot be doubted, for it was prepared by God. It was an environment that wanted no good thing. The tree of life was there to sustain its inhabitants. Birds and flowers made the place beautiful, and sparkling waters flashed by in the sunshine. All went well for a time.

Then there came the call of the far country, the lure of the unknown quantity. The very thing they were told not to touch, was the one thing that would make them wise. The woman was captivated by the thought. To be sure, God could have prevented their wrongdoing: he could have hidden the forbidden tree in the background, or have placed an angel there to guard it; but in his great wisdom, he permitted the infraction of his law. They could not longer remain in that perfect home, but wandered forth into the far country of sin, where, with all their children, they have lived in degradation and want.

WASTING ITS SUBSTANCE

Like the prodigal son, the world has wasted its substance with riotous living. It has wasted its eye-substance, *by gazing* on things not good for the eye to see. Likewise, its ear-substance, its heart-substance, its brain-substance, and all the priceless wealth that God gave man at the beginning. The halls of pleasure and reckless living have engulfed many millions. The world has been going down the long incline for 6,000 years. There has been a great famine in the land. "Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." - Amos. 8:11.

Therefore, we find the world feeding the swine, the unclean things of darkness; for surely the things that people do today, nourish the unclean things of the flesh and spirit. We cannot pick up a newspaper without having these things flaunted in our faces. Murders, robberies, domestic broils, strikes, killings, turmoils, wars, governmental sins, community sins, individual sins, political corruption, bribery, and a host of other violations of the moral code of God. It is a time when, as prophesied, men are "covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." - 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

Yet men are not wholly bad. There is still some spark of goodness left. And in "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," the world will come to itself. Men will come to see that they have failed in all they have attempted to do; and that the reason therefore is, they have eliminated God from the problems of human life. He is not in all their thoughts; his laws have been utterly repudiated and cast wide. His authority has been supplanted by the great usurper, the mighty prince of darkness who took control of men's minds a long time ago. The world has sown to the wind, and now must reap the whirlwind, and "Except those days [of trouble] be shortened," said Jesus, "no flesh would be saved."

When the world comes to itself, men will want to go home again. They will desire to return to pristine conditions. This crowding into great cities is not natural; people need to get back to the soil, and enjoy the beauty and freedom of God's earth, its fields, meadows, and hills. There is nothing degenerative or cramping in God's great out-of-doors. So in due time, the world will start on its journey back home to God.

THE RECEPTION

The striking beauty in the story of the Prodigal Son, however, is in the father's reception of his erring child. To the father, this tatterdemalion was still his son, and was dear to his heart. In the story of the lost sheep, that sheep still belonged to the shepherd. Others might say: "Lord, here are thy ninety and nine, are they not enough for thee?" but the shepherd makes answer: "This of MINE has wandered away from me." Ah, yes, the fact of ownership makes all the difference. "And although the road be rough and steep, I go to the desert to find my sheep."

So, we will kill the fatted calf, if you please. And then we'll put a fine robe on this boy, and we'll put a ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet, and a staff in his hand; "For this my son was dead, and is alive again. He was lost and is found." There was rejoicing in the old home; but there will be a much greater time of rejoicing when the world comes home. But will there be the killing of the fatted calf? Yes, God through the Prophet says: "In this mountain [home] shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, well refined." "He will swallow up death in victory. And the people will say: 'Lo, this is *our* God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." - Isa. 25:6-9.

What a grand family reunion there will be when "all that are in their graves hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth." The great tree of life will then be here with its leaves for the healing of the nations. The law of love will supplant selfishness and competition. The finer qualities of the human heart and mind will take precedence; and people will say: "Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." - Isa. 2:3.

SPIRITUAL SONSHIP

In the meantime, some, having beheld a still more marvelous picture in the invitational promises of God's Word, and having realized their sin-degraded state, have turned their steps toward home in this Age, the one in which the Father is pleased to accept sacrifice and offering, acts which are prerequisite to a heavenly inheritance. They realize, of course, the utter poverty of their condition, but in their case, the Elder Brother is possessed of a very different character from the one in the parable. Their Elder Brother, sharing his Father's love and sympathy, joins with him in covering their rags and filthiness with a pure linen garment of righteousness, that *they* may be acceptable as a sacrifice, and enter the school where they will be fitted for the position of spiritual sons.

The realization of sonship is a most precious thing to the heart of the Christian. "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6:17, 18.) The Apostle reaffirms this when he says: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a faithless and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the world of life."-Phil. 2:15, 16.

As the Prodigal Son was given new shoes on his feet, so the Christian is given the sandals of peace, to enable him to walk in newness of life, and to endeavor to follow in the footsteps of his Lord. Also he is provided with the robe of righteousness, to cover the unsightly qualities of his fallen flesh. Consequently, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." (Rom. 8:1.) "Being justified by faith, these have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.) Indeed, "old things have passed away, all things have become new."

The ring placed on the finger, is the symbol of a covenant or promise. These have entered into a covenant of sacrifice with the Lord; they are embraced in the great, everlasting covenant, for through them as the seed of Abraham, God will bless all the families of the earth. They can hold up this ring and look at it whenever *they* choose, and see there a brilliant gem-the wondrous star of divine hope and promise for the world.

Then the Christian has a staff to lean on. "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me," wrote David. And what can this be but the Word of God? We remember that at the time of the Passover, the Israelites were to have their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand. In olden times, the staff was used as a means of protection. Joseph, Jacob, Moses, and other servants of God all used this staff of defense. The Christian is also dependent upon it. When Jesus worsted the great Adversary, he did it by three sharp blows from the Word of God, saying, "It is written." The Apostle Paul compares the Word to a sword, saying, "Take the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God." Thus the Christian warrior is in all points well equipped.

As a Christian stands in the light of God's great sanctuary of peace and praise, into which he was led by the hand divine; and as he thinks of his former wanderings, he is very thankful to the God of all mercies for his inestimable gifts. He is glad that he was enabled by the grace of God to come to himself; to realize his condition of poverty in his pitiful failures of the past, and that now, in the joy of the Lord which is his strength, he can press onward toward the attainment of all that he desires in the Kingdom above. There the little rivers of our present lives will merge into the boundless ocean of eternal light and joy.

- *W. Sargeant.*

Christian Soldiership

"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." - 2 Timothy 2:3

WE ARE pleased to credit the following article to a secular journal -- the *Atlanta Constitution*.

The service of Christ resembles no other so much as that of a soldier. There are few life-callings among men that demand such absolute self-surrender from the recruit as that of the soldier.

In the decision to be a soldier one subordinates all other considerations -- those of self-will, family supremacy and the varied opportunities of the free-man. It is to go under a vow of complete, unquestioning obedience to the orders of superiors. It is to abandon home for the camp, to forego the right of first serving the interests of father and mother, wife and children, business or friends. It means the entire suppression of every selfish interest for the advancement of the supreme cause one has contracted voluntarily to serve, to follow and for which, if need be, to die.

It seems hard to some minds to compare the service of Christ with that of a good soldier. Nine-tenths of those who call themselves Christians refuse to give their service that significance, and mutiny outright when called upon to act upon that principle. The weakness of the church universal as the leader of morals and life culture in the world is due to the fact that most Christian men and women serve Christ as independent camp followers. They are unattached, or uncommanded, or disobedient to the duty of discipline, and do as they please rather than as they are obligated by the commands and principles of Christ.

Goethe said that "earnestness is eternity" and the spirit of God is the spirit of earnestness. He who is informed and inflamed by that spirit will be filled to overflowing with zeal, courage, daring, fortitude and the faith of conquest. In the fervor and forcefulness of these feelings he will serve his Master, as the soldiers of Alexander followed unquestioning where he led; as the soldiers of Leonidas, who died rather than retreat; as the soldiers of Napoleon, who believed him invincible always; and as the soldiers of Lee, who felt that he could not lead them wrongly or to defeat.

If Christ possessed in this world today an army of men and women one-hundredth part the figures of official Christendom, who would follow him -- who would labor, fight and endure as do the soldiers of our American armies-he could not long be kept from his worldwide conquest.

But he has few real soldiers in his service. Most of his followers are pensioners, pleading always that he will do something for them -- ease their pains, disperse their enemies, smooth their paths, increase their fortunes and bed them in places of plenty and comfort. They are a hungry and a helpless host.

One would expect naturally to find in the pulpits stalwart captains of the army of our Lord. And yet how few are they who do not look more closely to their hire than to their opportunities to for hardness? They are eager for rich and easy pastorates, they dwell in luxuries and preach as those who make pleasant music *on* a lute. Transfer them to posts of poverty, scant rations, hard service among the poor and the sick, and they become broken-hearted over their lot as soldiers!

The true soldier does not debate his cause. He is rightly supposed to have settled upon its justice and righteousness before he enlisted to serve it. Thereafter he avouches it and defies contradiction of it. He is ready to spend all and be all spent in its defense. He does not fight for the rations that

are doled to him, but for the great principles and great purposes of the cause to which he is committed

No man should deceive himself in a matter so plain and serious as the service of Christ. If he doesn't mean to abandon himself to the commands and demands of his Master, he ought to be honest enough not to offer a hypocritical profession and a treacherous or abortive promise of service. The causes of Christ on earth need men who are strong in will, courageous of heart and hardened to self-sacrifice, sufferings and the perils of conflict and death. None other can do the work that is needed to pull down the strongholds of sin, rout the enemies of righteousness and set forward in hostile territories the standards of the kingdom of Christ.

It is glorious to serve Christ *in* honesty and in fulness of fidelity. There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side, in knowing that one's service is toward victory and that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the harness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds or death!

- *Reprints R3162, R3163*

"We're going forth with a acre' trust
And a truth divine and deep;
With a message clear, a glorious work,
And a charge, a charge to keep.

"Brethren, let it be your greatest joy
That the Lord can count on you.
If all besides should falter and fail;
To your trust be always true."

Creeds - Are They Proper for Christians?

The question is sometimes asked: Is it proper for a Christian to have a creed? To this we reply: It is not only proper for Christian to have a creed, it would not be possible to be a Christians without one. We content ourselves here in quoting from Brother Russell, who wrote very helpfully on the subject years ago.

"The word 'creed' comes from *credo*, and means *I believe*. It is entirely proper that every Christian have for himself a creed, a belief. And, if a number of Christians come to a unity of faith upon the lines of the Word of God, their assembling together for fellowship and communion is both proper and helpful, as the Bible declares. The general difficulty is that, when groups of Christians meet as brethren, they either make a written or an understood creed, which goes beyond the Word of God and includes, human tradition; or else they ignore all faith, and make morality -- good works -- the only basis of fellowship. But, as the name indicates, Christians are *believers* in Christ, and not merely moralists. While, therefore, a creed is necessary, and he who has none has no belief, and would therefore be an unbeliever, and while' in Christian fellowship harmony of faith is necessary to communion, all should see that the fellowship and faith of the early Church, under divine direction, were built upon the *first principles* of the doctrine of Christ; and nothing more nor less should be the basis of Christian fellowship here and now.... And since the *credo* or belief of each Christian professes to be built upon God's Word, it follows that each should be not only willing but ready at all times to change his belief for one more Scriptural, if such can be pointed out to *him*." - *Reprints, p. R1578*.

In another illuminating discussion Brother Russell himself raised the question: "Why not abandon all human systems and confessions, now used for tying men's tongues and consciences, and let each other stand free to study God's Word untrammelled, and to build, *each for himself*, such a creed as he shall find authorized in God's Word; adding to his creed or subtracting therefrom continually, as he continues to grow in grace and in knowledge and in love of God. This is the attitude which God designed; this is the liberty wherewith Christ made us all free. Why surrender our liberties and enslave our consciences and tongues to a sect, or the decisions of majorities in sects? If all of God's children were really free, thus, it would not be long before they would be at perfect oneness of heart and nearly at one in faith and work -- the only true union." - *Reprints, p. R1168*.

Again, in that same year (1889) he wrote: "We exhort all God's true Church -- the one Church, which includes *all consecrated believers* -- to awake . . . to a recognition of the *right of individual judgment* upon religious questions. Demand Scriptural proofs for all you are asked to believe. . . . And be sure that you believe and confess nothing that you do not *understand* fully and clearly. To subscribe to, or confess, what 'you do not understand, and therefore cannot truly believe, is *solemn lying* in the presence of God . . . Require of all who shall attempt to teach in the name of the Lord, the *exact words* of the Lord or the Apostle which they claim support their teaching. Get the chapter and verse and look the matter up for yourselves, critically, examining the text and context. Weigh and test every item of teaching which you receive as your faith, regardless of how much you esteem the person who presents it. We know that no fellow-mortal is infallible, and that His Word is the only standard by which God wishes us to square and measure and build up our *faith*." - *Reprints, p. R1136*.

- P. L. Read

The Music of the Rest

*"If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him,
and will sup with him, and he with me." - Revelation 3:20.*

"In the grand oratorios of life
God writes us unexpected rests!
These break the rush, the strain,
the storm, the strife,
And are our surely needful tests!"

- Poems of Dawn, page 192.

SPEED seems to be the keynote of the 20th century world. It is possible to crowd as much into one day as our grandparents did in a week. Swift travel and labor-saving equipment have brought this about. It is so easy to be caught up in the modern whirl, packing so much into one day of even Christian activity, as leaves no room for Christ. The reminder to pause, to rest, to listen, to take stock, is sometimes as necessary to us in the busy round as a halt sign at a busy road crossing. That STOP! WAIT! LOOK! signal, which in the business world safeguards life, has its equivalent protection in the life of the spirit.

"BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK"

Jesus often knocks for admission. The knock may not always be heard above the busy clamor of thought and activity. There is so much to think about, so much to do, the attention becomes so involved that we may be out of hearing range, or the friendly rap registers no response. In a busy household on a busy day, visitors are rarely welcome. A knock at the door is more likely to prove an irritable interruption. Not many go to the door in a state of joyous expectancy, hoping it will be some treasured friend, in whose society they can relax, listen, and be refreshed, who is always heartily welcome and for whose presence every chore is gladly abandoned.

Yet Jesus is such a visitor. "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." - Rev. 3:20.

He gave us to understand that the necessary thing is food for the spirit more than a busy round of activity that leaves no time to rest, to sit, awhile with him and listen to what he has to say. The busy Marthas, rushing around on their various errands, filling up a program crammed with busyness, feeling the strain of their activities, are admirable people. The world would be lost without them. The quiet, contemplative, dreaming Marys give to it its beauty, its other-world visions, but it needs the bustling Marthas to organize and translate them into action and reality.

Since nature has mixed the elements so well in most of us, it becomes increasingly needful to listen for that knock upon the door of the heart that we may be better informed when to be up and doing, what to be doing and when to keep quiet, to rest and take in new strength. For that is the purpose of the rest, the reason for the Master's knock on the door.

On those crowded days when work piles up so that we seem to be outfaced with it, when we are behind schedule before we have started, when any delay or hindrance or accident is likely to find

us underneath the load, fretted, frustrated, and limp, that is the time when Jesus knocks. You protest you are too busy, you haven't time to stop; you have so much to do. Your works are of the most unselfish order, but the Master says: "I have spread the meal, cease your labors. Come and sup with me and I with you."

A ready response to that gracious call brings its own reward. The door that shuts out the crowded day, that calls a halt to the busy program, shuts in "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." - Phil. 4:7.

How refreshing is that short rest! That brief pause for quiet thought, a reassessment of our situation, a reappraisal of our liabilities and assets, the reassurance of the promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." - 2 Cor. 12:9.

It may be only a few minutes, but spent in the presence of the Lord it changes the tenor and tone of the day. From frenzied haste to calm leisured action, from snapping strain to sunny ease, the day rolls out unwrinkled, successful, and satisfying. We have supped with him and he with us, and how immensely invigorating and sustaining has been the brief visit, the heavenly intercourse with the Unseen Guest.

"The way is sometimes weary
To yonder nearing clime,
But a little talk with Jesus
Hath helped me many a time.
The more I come to know Him,
And all His grace explore,
It sets me ever longing
To know Him more and more."

- *Poems of Dawn*, page 99.

In the Gospel by John, chapter 21, verses 1 to 13 (John 21:1-13), there is an incident recorded in the post-resurrection ministry of our Lord that is full of instruction for us in these latter days. The appearances of the risen Lord had become fewer. Weary of waiting the active Peter announced, "I go a fishing." Ready to follow his lead, the other disciples went along with him. They fished all night but caught nothing. It was a vain labor. When morning dawned, a stranger stood on the shore and called out to them: "Children, have ye any meat?"

It was a common custom in that land for some hungry wayfarer to hail a fishing boat in the hope of getting some fish from the catch to make himself a meal. The form of the stranger could scarcely be discerned in the early light of day, and his salutation was one in common usage. Unaware of his identity, they sent back one word across the gray waters, "No!"

They did not trouble to explain or apologize for their lack of food, or try to hide or check their disappointment, the frayed patience of cold, wet, tired, hungry men who had toiled all night and caught nothing. It was a blunt, disgruntled, and unfriendly "No" which reached the stranger. But an answer came back that probably made Peter and John look at each other-an unspoken thought between them. "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."

Past experience had taught them the lesson of obedience. They cast the net as instructed and found it so full they could scarcely pull it to the shore.

What a scene was that in the early morning with the sun shedding his first beams on the quiet coast! Peter stopping only to put on his fisherman's coat and girdle, springs into the sea, forgetful of all but haste to reach the feet of his Lord. Slowly, the others pull for the beach with the heavily laden net. There, to greet the eyes of tired, hungry men, a fire burned, fish cooking upon it and bread beside it. The Master had made for them a meal, but that it shall not be a one-sided affair he bids them bring their share to it of the fish they have caught.

Peter, who now has the impetuous strength to haul up the full net single handed, landed the catch. They counted them, marveling that the net had not broken with the weight of them.

The Master waits to warm and feed them, to converse with them. There is no reprimand, no question, only the invitation: "Come and dine." Without a word they gather round him, each busy with his thoughts. He took fish and bread and gave to each of them. What would *we* give to have been there, to have shared in that meal, prepared and served by the risen Savior in a continuation of his ministry to men?

The privilege is ours still. He still calls across the tumult of our hours, when tired, frustrated, and empty, we occupy the time with a busy getting and doing which adds little or nothing to the spiritual treasure we bear in these earthen vessels. "Tis not thy work the Master wants, but thee."

"WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING"

With Christ in the boat the storm became a calm. With Christ on the shore, his counsel filled the net. With his spirit within the inner chamber of the heart each day becomes a triumph.

Courage crowds out care, and glorified common sense directs the duties, trims the tasks, and slows down the hurried pace. Love that empties itself in service dominates all human contacts. Courtesy, kindness, compassion, and sympathy; calm strength which lifts life's load with ease, which takes in its stride its numerous changes -- these are some of the outer evidences of the inner rest with him who said: "Take my yoke upon you... my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." - Matthew 11:29, 30.

"How much we need that pause, that rest,
That converse with the Unseen Guest."

- F. A. Shuttleworsh, Scot.

The Cross

God laid on my back a grievous load,
A heavy cross to bear along the road.
I staggered on and lo! one weary day,
An angry lion sprang across my way.
I prayed to God, and swift at His command
The cross became a weapon in my hand.
It slew my raging enemy, and then
Became a cross upon my back again.

I faltered many a league, until at length,
Groaning I fell, and had no further strength,
"O God," I cried, "I am so weak and lame!"
Then straight my cross a winged staff became.
It swept me on till I regained the loss,
Then leaped upon my back, again a cross.

I reached a desert, o'er the burning track
I persevered, the cross upon my back.
No shade was there, and in the cruel sun
I sank at last and thought my days were done.
But lo! the Lord works many a blest surprise --
The cross became a tree before my eyes!
I slept; I woke, to feel the strength of ten.
I found the cross upon my back again.

And thus through all my days from that to this,
The cross, my burden, has become my bliss;
Nor ever shall I lay the burden down,
For God some day will make the cross a crown."

- *Amos R. Wells.*

Recently Deceased

Sr. Ida Bosley, Riverside, Calif. - (Apr.)
Sr. Hilda L. Boulter, Plainfield, N. J. - (Mar.)
Bro. James Desmond, Tampa, Fla. - (Mar.)
Bro. A. Ledwinka, Ontario, Cal. - (Mar.)
Sr. Violet I. Post, Kingsville, Ont. - (Apr.)