

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XLVIII    May / June, 1965    No. 3

## The Unction From the Holy One

*"If by any means I may advance into 'the out-resurrection, that from among the dead.'" - Phil 2-11  
(Rotherham)*

WHITSUNTIDE, WHICH is the seventh Sunday after Easter, and the following Monday and Tuesday, has been observed for many centuries by many Christians as the memorial of the day of Pentecost, which occurred fifty days after the resurrection of our Lord.

On that day the Holy Spirit descended upon the early disciples in "tongues of fire," as a visible sign of their setting apart to the service of God, and of the beginning of a new life within them, wherein they should "walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Not since that day has the Spirit been visibly bestowed; yet every true child of God is aware that he has received the same begetting. "You have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye all know it." - 1 John 2:20, Emph. Diag., Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.

### Why Bestowed?

What is the purpose of this begetting? What is the meaning of the gift, and what is the intent of Him who bestows it? Is it that the recipient might "speak with tongues," or that he should thenceforth have an access to an excess of emotional religious fervor? Nay; it is of far greater significance and consequences.

Jesus, in His patient effort to make clear to the Jewish ruler Nicodemus some of the things of the spirit world, told him that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This statement seems basic and clear. It may be logically expanded to say: "That which is begotten of the flesh will be born [if not stillborn] a being of flesh; that which is begotten of the Spirit will be born [if it comes to birth] a spirit-being." The birth follows the begetting, and partakes of its nature.

### Spirit Powers

In the same conversation Jesus explained that those "born of the Spirit" have powers of action and of invisibility to human perception totally unknown to man. "The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with every one who has been born of the Spirit."

*"God is a spirit"; "heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool. The nature, laws, and conditions of the spirit world are vastly different from those of the earth. In the one particular of temperature the physicists and astronomers tell us that the universe has a range of tens of thousands of degrees Fahrenheit; our human life can endure a variation of 'barely' one hundred fifty degrees. We cannot conceive of life existing at four hundred degrees below zero, or at ten thousand degrees above; yet the spirit world has joyful existence under these and other inconceivable conditions,*

If we were planning to move our residence to, say, Africa or Australia, we should try to learn all we could about life there-in fact to *go there in our minds* and so prepare ourselves for our new environment. We would commence our new life there *in anticipation*; and that is exactly what the pentecostal begetting of the Spirit is-the mental seed-planting of a new spirit-life; a "lively hope," or new hope of life. To this embryonic spirit-life such various Scriptures refer as: "a new creature"; "the renewing [literally, up-newing] of your mind"; "walking in newness of life"; "set your affections on things above"; etc., etc.

### **The Metamorphosis, or Transformation**

"There is a physical body, and there is a spirit body." The change from one to the other, tremendous as it is, is a mere detail to the power with which the begotten one has to do. The actual operation is dismissed in the Scriptures in a few sentences. "He giveth it a body as it pleaseth Him." "He will change the body of our humiliation into the likeness of His own glorious body." Moreover, this change will be accomplished instantaneously, "in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye."

But the mental, moral, and emotional transformation from the human to the spirit nature is a far more complicated and lengthy process, and requires the candidate's full, continuous, and careful cooperation. Practically the whole of the New testament is devoted to describing, facilitating, and inspiring this process. It requires rigid self-abnegation, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice, that is, of the human self. "The flesh-desires oppose the spirit, and the spirit-desires oppose the flesh, for these are contrary to each other; that not whatsoever things ye may be *wishing*, these ye should be *doing*." Every sincere candidate for spirit-birth knows this to be true.

### **Are We Sincere?**

What does it mean to us? Are we carefully cherishing and cultivating that flame of life that we have received, or are we permitting "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" to "quench the Spirit"? Are we "putting to death the deeds of the body" that we may live; or are we "living after the flesh," which is mortal-"death-doomed"? Are we "giving ourselves wholly to these things, that our profit may be manifest to all," as the Apostle advised his "beloved son" Timothy? Are we cultivating and bringing forth in our lives the ripening "fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering," etc.; or are the "works of the flesh" still all too manifest in our relationships-family, church, business? Is our love like God's sunshine and rain, universal and impartial-"perfect," as Jesus admonished us it should be; or is it sectional (sectional) -- only for those who agree with us?

### **Self-examination**

These are practical questions, of supreme importance. They should be addressed, in all seriousness, to ourselves. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be, in the faith"-not a creed, but the confidence and

reliance in and upon the Lord, with reason on your part for Him to have faith in *you*. "Prove ye yourselves. Or do ye not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?"

For "if we examine ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are corrected, that we may not be condemned with the world."

"Quench not the Spirit."

- H. E. Hollister

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(Note: Scriptural quotations in the foregoing article follow the text of the three oldest Greek MSS., and the literal renderings of the Emphatic Diaglott, Rotherham, and Strong's Greek Dictionary.)

## Tolerance

*"Love suffereth long, and is kind." - 1 Cor. 13:4*

THERE IS no quality of the Christian character more important than that of tolerance. The lack of it has been back of most of the terrible persecutions and martyrdoms that have come to followers of Christ since the introduction of Christianity into the world. Foxe's Book of Martyrs, and the many histories recording the dreadful persecutions and manifold sufferings and tortures of Christ's true followers, would never have been written but for the absence of this most important trait of character-likeness to our divine Lord and Master. Intolerance has existed in all ages, and has been that which more than anything else has misrepresented true Christianity. And sad and strange to say, it has not only been manifested on the part of apostate Christians, but it is found to exist in the lives of true Christians; indeed, it will hardly be an exaggeration to say that nearly all Christians have at some time been guilty of giving expression to intolerance, and have to a greater or less extent at some time in their Christian experience, exhibited it, even in their dealings with their fellow-Christians. It appears that but few people have a true and proper appreciation of *what* tolerance really is. Some learned, devout Christians have even questioned the correctness of our dictionaries in defining it. One of the reasons for this is, doubtless, because of the failure to see that tolerance is *an inner* disposition or state. In fact, all the various traits or manifestations of Christian character are based upon, and grow out of, the inward condition of the heart. Murder is defined generally as the commission of the act or deed in taking life. It is defined in the Scriptures as the *disposition* of hatred that is expressed in a desire or wish to commit the deed which has hatred back of it.

That we may appreciate the wrong views- held as to the meaning of tolerance, we will examine what some others have said. A learned and godly writer has quoted some utterances of eminent men in regard to this matter. One of these has said: "The only foundation for tolerance is a degree of skepticism." \*

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\* Charles James Fox.

"John Harvard, in the university that bears his name, declared of the Puritans by whom that college was created: 'They were intolerant, as all men the world over in all time have always been and will always be when they are in solemn earnest for the truth,' " How utterly unscriptural, how unchristlike are these statements which imply that this disposition is a proper one to possess. This godly man who quotes the above writer, has given: us a true definition of tolerance as exhibited in Christ Himself, the true model and example for His followers, and it is with a pleasurable feeling that we listen to *his words*: "*Tolerance is the willing consent that other men should hold and express opinions with which we disagree, until they are convinced by reason that those opinions are untrue.*"

## **TOLERANCE IS FORBEARANCE**

As we have said, tolerance is a disposition, an inner quality of character; *a. willing*, not *a forced*, consent that others should hold and express 'opinions until they are convinced by reason and Scripture that they are wrong. Toleration is the behavior in which that disposition finds expression. It is possible to have the latter and not possess the former." "The consent is a *willing* one; it is not a mere yielding of compulsion." One has said:

"It might have all the power to put down the error by force which pope or parliament ever possessed, and *it would never for a moment dream of using it*. On the other hand, it is *simply* consent. *Tolerance is not called to champion the cause in which it disbelieves, nor to lend trumpetsthrong which what it believes to be error may be blown*; for it is the very essence of tolerance that there should be a disagreement. . . And the error, which is not to be yielded until it is convinced of its untruth' by reason, must be attacked ' by reason; and so the right and duty of earnest discussion is included as a part of tolerance. And the tolerance which is patient toward what it counts *honest* error, is utterly impatient towards dishonesty, toward hypocrisy, toward self-conceit, toward cant, whether it be [exhibited] on the side of what the-honest man thinks to be error, or of that which he thinks to be true."

Another writer has said that "it is the *natural* feeling of all of us that charity [we would say tolerance] is founded upon the uncertainty of truth." "I believe," says this same writer, "it is founded upon the certainty of truth." Two very strong evidences,, then, of the existence of true tolerance in a follower of Christ are, positive conviction, and sympathy with' other: men whose convictions differ with your own. It is only by the possession of these two qualities that. tolerance becomes "a clear, definable, respectable position for a man to stand in." Furthermore, true tolerance is exhibited toward our fellow-men just in "proportion to the earnestness with which we hold our well-proven truth." *Conviction* of truth is the first, and an absolutely necessary element to an exhibition of true tolerance. It is only when we are thoroughly convinced that what we hold is truth, that true tolerance has an opportunity to manifest itself. On the other hand, it is almost certain to be the case that when a Christian becomes the most thoroughly, convinced of truth and its importance, that then it is apt to become to him a terrible thing for another to differ with him. Before we see the truth and its importance, it is a matter of very little concern or consequence to us what another believes about the matter. It is just at the point when we become thoroughly convinced of truth that the exhibition of intolerant bigotry is manifested and the temptation to "lift the axe or kindle the fires of persecution" has to be resisted, and the cultivation of true tolerance inculcated. The professed Christian, however, who is indifferent in the matter, who has no real creed or belief of his own, and who has no strong conviction that his belief is correct, has no opportunity to manifest true tolerance. He may call himself tolerant toward his fellow-Christians because he is willing that they should believe what they please, but he lacks the first element of true tolerance, which is that of a strong conviction that what he holds is the truth:

## **IMITATIONS OF TOLERANCE**

Tolerance, being a disposition of, the heart, like other traits of character, has its imitations or counterfeits. We mention three. One of these may be properly termed the tolerance of indifference. If it is a matter of indifference to me whether a thing is truth or not, why should I not be perfectly willing to let my Christian brother believe what he chooses to believe. This is frequently defined as tolerance, but it is not Scriptural, Christlike tolerance. Then we have that which is akin to this, that may be denominated the tolerance of helplessness; for example, we allow another to hold error because we cannot help ourselves.

This is sometimes called the "tolerance of persecuted minorities." Neither is this true Christian tolerance, for the reason that the disposition of intolerance may be possessed, but because of a lack of authority or power to exercise that disposition,, it is suppressed. Then we have what 'might be called the tolerance of policy, which means simply that we allow another to hold what we believe is error because we think it might stir up strife and division if we attempted to stamp it out. These three kinds of what are sometimes called tolerance, are not real Christian tolerance. While there may be some -commendable qualities in them, they lack either a strong conviction of truth, as does the first, or the inner trait or disposition, as do the two last.

We will now endeavor to illustrate what calls for the exercise of tolerance; and this will help us to understand whether real, commendable tolerance is possessed First of all, we notice what may be termed the tolerance that is exhibited because of pure respect for a man because he is a man. We may entirely, disagree with a man's opinion or belief, and yet we may cordially acknowledge that if he is honest in his belief, he has as good a right, to his own opinion or convictions as we have to ours -- and this for the simple reason that he is a man and, as such, this is his right.

Next we have what is properly termed the tolerance that is exhibited as a result of Christian love and sympathy. We may feel sure that our Christian brother's opinions are wrong, but the fact that we know and recognize that he has the spirit of Christ and therefore is a true Christian, enables us, or should enable us, to willingly and cordially allow him to hold those opinions until either *by* our efforts or those of some one else, or by his own reasoning powers, he becomes convinced that he is wrong.

### **THE PURPOSE OF TRUTH**

Next we have the tolerance that is exhibited as the result of an enlarged view of truth. It should be much easier to exhibit true tolerance from this standpoint. Such an one, if he have learned the truth at the Master's feet, and if he have (as such always have) made, a proper use of the truth, will realize, possibly for the first time, that sacred truth is very much larger than' his own conception of it. Such Christians experience, or should experience, an enlargement of the heart as they come to realize how great, how wonderful, is God's love for His creatures; that all sacred truth comes from Him; and that He is the great Caretaker and Preserver of truth.. Such have come to know that the Bible, which contains His truth, is for man, and will eventually be known and understood by all. As God freely lets His truth be misunderstood, and waits in perfect patience for the time appointed by Him when it will be freed from misconceptions and shine out clear and bright, so *ought not we be patient*, knowing that this is His purpose?

While it is without question that truth is the most important of all the trusts committed to the servant of God, it should ever and always be kept before the mind that truth is not an end in itself, but is rather a means to accomplish an end. Therefore, truth is not committed to the servant of God as a sacred trust, to be guarded and defended as a miser does his treasures, but rather as an instrument to be used for the great and all-important work of character development. While it is commendable that we dread a stain of error on the truth, *we should dread vastly more the losing sight of what the truth was given for*. We will not be called to account,' when we stand before our divine Lord and Master to render up our stewardship, as to how faithfully we have fenced in, or contended for, or safeguarded, or defended the truth; *it will rather be concerning what use we have made of the truth in allowing it to change, to transform our characters* into the likeness of our Lord and Master.. The larger our knowledge or view of truth becomes, the larger the measure of that character-likeness of our Lord and Master will be required on our part.

It is possible, indeed it is with sorrow that we say it, that the real purpose or object of the enlarged view of truth now so graciously given, is thwarted in the lives of many who have received it by *a kind of pride that we know so much*, as well as a spirit of intolerance manifested among us. One of the very purposes of the truth is to make us meek and humble, as well as charitable toward one another, and patient- and kind toward those who are blinded by the god of this world; and in the proportion that it fails to work this change in our own lives, in that proportion will we fail in recommending it to others and, in drawing them to become meek and humble followers of the divine Master.

### **OPPOSITION TO BIBLE STUDY**

Again, this feeling of pride exhibits itself in causing some of us to think that we possess all the truth; that we are no longer to be Bible students, truth seekers, in the true and proper sense of those terms. The moment we cease to search the Scriptures, that moment we cease to be either "Truth people" or "Bible students." Satan's efforts have ever been to hinder the progress of the Truth, for the success of his-empire of darkness depends upon holding the people in darkness and ignorance. Consequently, varied have been his tactics by which he has sought to hold in check or throttle those, who would press on in the path of light and truth. One of his most successful methods has been to arrest the attention of the truth seeker upon some visible instrumentality that the Lord has used in a special way to blaze and prepare the way for the onward march of others. How often in the past, *multitudes have made the very grave mistake* of supposing and concluding that their leader had received all the truth, had been made the complete custodian over all the volume of divine revelation, and that there was nothing more to be learned, and accordingly have set about to make a little fence around their leader and the measure of truth they possessed, thus narrowing down their opportunities and preventing any further progress. It is amongst such as make this serious error that we so frequently discern the most radical intolerance and the largest measure of bigotry. Nor is the Christian leader to whom many may have been led to look, always to blame for the error his followers thus make. In fact, history clearly reveals that the real reformers, the true and worthy leaders, have never claimed to have mastered all the truth; have never taught their, followers to believe that there was nothing more to be learned by those who came after them. To the contrary, we find that all true reformers and teachers of divine truth have humbly acknowledged the fact that what they have succeeded in bringing forth was only *a part of* the Truth -- their quota, or such as it seemed good to divine Providence to impart to each in his day -- and that there was more to follow. Such leaders have encouraged those who received their messages to continue to be truth seekers and to continue to progress in the path of light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The Bible, of all books, stands for liberty and progress, and bids the humble believer throw off all human fetters and bondages, and to walk in the light as Christ is in the light.

Surely God's people in these days have much for which to be thankful along the line of the unfolding of truth, but we do well to remember that neither ourselves *nor* those who have gone before us have mastered all the truth of divine revelation; *that there is much in the Bible not yet revealed*, and therefore we should continue to search our Bibles for more truth, keeping in mind always the great end to be accomplished in the obtainment of truth. The character is the end to be accomplished; *the truth is simply the means to accomplish that end*.

The Scripture truths that are required to constitute one a Christian, while of paramount importance, are very few; and these, when experienced in the life, are all that are required to admit one into fellowship with other Christians, in other words, to make one a member of the true Church, which is the Body of Christ. More truth, to be sure, is required for the Christian's growth and development, but it should ever be remembered that while the various churches of human organization have insisted upon more than these to make one *a* member of their church, we do not

find any others than these stipulated or taught by Christ and the inspired Apostles to become a member of the true Church which He founded.

The true standards of fellowship and membership "ought not to be one whit more, as well as not one whit less than the standard by which a man would have a right to count himself, and to think that Christ would count him, a true servant of the Lord of Christians." If a company of the Lord's followers dare not make this their standard, they ought to "rejoice that there are forms of worship and groups of believers, in which those Christians for whom she has no place, may find fellowship with one another and feed their souls on truth."

- *Condensed from the writings of R. E. Streeter*

## **"The Way, the Truth, the Life"**

Christ said, "I am the true and living way."  
And mortal man, from Paradise debarred,  
(Where once was open intercourse with God),  
When strongly stirred by yearnings deep within  
To throw off tyranny of deep-rooted sin  
And win his way back to his lost estate,  
Finds Cherubim still posted at the gate  
Upholding God's just claims of righteousness --  
Demanding purity, not taking less.  
Turned back, beat down, undone, in measure short,  
Still yearning to true righteousness comport,  
Learns God, Himself, has filled his every need.  
So loved the world He gave His Son to bleed  
In sacrifice that man might now make bold  
Into the holiest of all. For Jesus told  
"I am the Way."

"I am the Truth"; and most exact is truth.  
And man, bewildered by conflicting claims  
Of various schools of thought which but defame  
The God of Truth -- with this bewildered mind  
Turns to God's Word, if haply he may find"  
"Thy Word is truth," as Jesus said of it.  
Finds to know truth, himself he must submit  
To being freed from all false estimate  
Of wealth, of world; and self must dedicate  
To do the will of Him, whose doctrines may  
Be known to only those who will obey.  
For, searching truth in deep sincerity,  
He finds it more than mere philosophy.  
A revelation comes by which he's led  
To take up cross and follow Him who said,  
"I am the Truth."

"I am the Life." And what a boon is life!  
Yet man, subject to vanity, can know  
But death; corroding sin has made him rue  
The day of birth so oft as he is brought  
To grief by sin's mad tyranny. Though fought  
Against with tears and agonizing cry,  
In faintness hears the stern "Who sins must die!"  
What hope is there? Must death forever be  
The wage of sin through all eternity?  
Yes. But praise God! eternity is ours,  
Who, laying hold in faith on promised powers,  
Receive from the ascended Lord the gift  
Of spirit new-a power that can rift  
The gates of death, and quicken us to be  
Alive in Him, who showed at Bethany  
"That He is Life.

Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life.  
And we, no longer barred from Eden's bowers,  
In Him have heritage so high it towers  
E'en higher yet than mind can now conceive.  
What wonder, then, but that small flock receives  
An entrance into Kingdom so divine.  
Self dead, and seeking daily to define  
Our faith in outward conduct, we become,  
By grace, joint-heirs with Him who is the sum  
Of all God's fulness -- kings and priests to be  
Unto our God for all humanity.  
Redeemed from every tongue and every race,  
Though raised so high by wondrous sovereign grace,  
We'll join with all creation to acclaim  
All honor to the One 'who once became  
"The Way, the Truth, the Life."

- Frederick A. Essler



## Love's True Basis and Purpose

*"We know that we have passed from death unto life." - 1 John 3:14.*

THROUGHOUT our Lord's teachings he made it clear that an understanding of God's purposes is reserved for those who are in harmony of heart with the Father. The Apostle Paul explained this in several ways, and particularly in his second letter to Timothy where he links "rightly divide the word of truth" with "give diligence to present thyself approved unto God." - 2 Tim. 2:15, R. V.

When the Jews marveled at Jesus' teaching, saying, "How knoweth this man learning, having never learned?" Jesus replied, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, . . ." (John 7:16, 17.) From these and many other passages it is clear that the development of Scriptural understanding is dependent on our making ourselves acceptable unto God.

At the outset he requires that we shall demonstrate a sincere faith, for without faith there is no basis for the Lord's "mighty works." (Matt. 13:58.) To understand the deep things of God, however, we need the guidance of the holy spirit, which God grants only to those who have made an acceptable consecration of their lives and wills. Thus we learn of God's purposes not by our own intellectual efforts, but by submitting ourselves to God so that his holy spirit may reveal him and his purposes to us.

This brings us to the crux of all our searching after truth, for the holy spirit is the spirit of divine love, and if we are to retain its sanctifying and enlightening influence, we must allow its loving spirit to permeate our lives.

In the famous 13th chapter of the first letter to the Church at Corinth the Apostle Paul left us in no doubt regarding the pre-eminence of love. "If I have . . . all knowledge," he wrote, "and all faith . . . but have not love, I am nothing." "Follow after love," he added, and then, as a supplementary consideration, "desire spiritual gifts."

Throughout our Lord's earthly ministry he emphasized above all things the overwhelming importance of love. In his first' recorded address he exhorted his disciples to love even their enemies, adding that in this way they might become "perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." - Matt. 5:48.

Love, Jesus explained, governs our entire relationship with our Lord and with the Father. "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." (John 14:23.) "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." (John 15:9.) In these closing days of the old dispensation, when real and imagined differences have divided the brethren, are we not in danger of losing sight of the fact that no matter how profound we believe our understanding of God's Word to be, it is "as nothing if we have not love.

It may seem that love for the brethren is easy compared with love for our enemies, but that does not seem to be the thought which our Lord gave to the disciples. We might say with equal truth that it is easier for a mother to love her own child than the child of a stranger, but the strength of mother love is nevertheless known to be much greater. So it is with that higher love for the brethren. If we have the holy spirit within us, we shall find no difficulty in recognizing it in others. Thus shall we know that the divine spirit of love is within us.

The Psalmist wrote, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psa. 133:1.) In the 55th Psalm he shows how real is this love between brethren by describing the pain which is caused when it is withheld. "For it is not an enemy that reproached me, he wrote, "then would I have borne it, but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." - Psa. 55:12-14.

The Master knew that the evidence of the holy spirit of love within us would be shown in love for the brethren, and so during the last Supper with his disciples he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another *as I have loved you*." (John 13:34.) Later, he added, as if to emphasize the seriousness of this new charge, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.) By this test of love for the brethren, Jesus explained, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples."

The Apostle John, who conveyed to us so wonderfully the Christian doctrine of love, stated that by this test we shall know that we are acceptable to God. "We know that we have passed from death unto life," he wrote, "because we love the brethren." (1 John 3:14.) "There will be difficulties, of course, as Brother Russell showed so clearly in his comments on this passage of Scripture:

"It would indeed be easy to love the brethren and to lay down our lives for them if they were all like our dear Master and Exemplar; (but they are not. The inspired Apostle tells us that among the brethren are not many noble, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not marry rich. Now then, we may see why the Lord enjoined upon us that we should love one another, and rather implied that it would be a difficult matter to do *so* at all times, to make allowances for the weaknesses of the flesh *and* the imperfections of judgment in one another. *And* this is exactly what the Apostle John declares, *saying*, 'We know that we have passed from death unto life; because we love the brethren.'"

The cultivation of that higher standard of love which is understood in Christ's word's, "love as I have loved you," is vital if the child of God is to make his calling and election sure. Too often it is regarded only as a very desirable quality exercised primarily for the benefit of others, but *this* standard of *conduct* is sometimes reached by those who are not even professing Christians. The Lord requires much more from us: namely, that our love for others *shall* not be an end in itself, but evidence of the development of a loving character. "Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart." (1 Tim. 1:5.) That is to say, explained Brother Russell, that the object of all instruction and discipline on God's part is to bring us to this character-likeness of himself. Learning to love the brethren is part of our development, and its expression is, therefore, a symptom, not of some merit of our *own*, but of the holy spirit of love within us.

The Scriptures clearly distinguish between the duty love (*Greek-Phileo*), which we are to show to all, and the higher love (Greek-Agape), which Jesus showed to the Father and which he enjoins us to cultivate. The Apostle Peter shows that brotherly kindness *or Phileo* love is a necessary step in our spiritual development, but he put its acquisition at an earlier stage than the higher love which is to crown all our spiritual endeavor. (2 Peter 1:7.) This is the love of which the Apostle Paul said, "suffereth long and is kind . . . envieth not . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with truth; covereth all things [with a mantle of sympathy], believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. (1 Cor. 13:18, R. V.) Finally, he

concludes that love is the thing that "never faileth." Its acquisition indicates that the new creature has reached a high standard of character development.

"The fruit of the spirit is love," wrote the Apostle Paul, and using another metaphor, Christ referred to the fruit of the spirit as a "light" -- "Ye are the light of the world." It is the holy spirit within us that provides that light and causes us to shine both in love to the brethren and in doctrinal truth. Our Master knew, nevertheless, that many unconsecrated brethren would obtain a knowledge of true doctrine from those who are living under the influence of the holy spirit, although those who are not growing in Christ may not appreciate the depth of the truths they are taught. Only those who have the Lord's holy spirit, however, can have that rare and precious quality of love by which "all men shall know that ye are my disciples." - John 13:35.

Let us therefore put first things first by continued diligence in our consecration, maintain God's loving holy spirit as ruler of our lives and wills, and let us give evidence of this by the love' we have one to another. On that basis and on that alone will the Lord help us to resolve our differences and maintain the unity of faith. "Beloved, let *us* love one another; for love is of God.; and every one that loveth, is born [R.V. "begotten"] of God and knoweth God. ... If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." - 1 John 4:7, 8, 12.

-L. H. Bunker, Eng.

## Death -- What Is It?

"All go unto one place." - Ecclesiastes 3:20.

THE FIRST perfect man Adam by disobedience to the Divine command forfeited his right to life and entailed upon himself and his race the penalty of death, for by reason of inherited weaknesses "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) The truth of this Scripture statement is demonstrated by the inability of anyone to fully obey the Decalogue of Mt. Sinai-the Divine Law which measures a perfect man's ability and right to eternal life. Says the Apostle: "We know that all that the Law says is addressed to those who are living subject to the Law, in order that every mouth may be silenced, and that the whole world may await sentence from God. For no man living will be declared righteous before him on the ground of obedience to Law. Law simply brings a knowledge of sin." Hence "There is not one intelligent, not one seeker after God. All have turned aside; they have alike become worthless; there is no one who does good -no, not one. " - Rom. 3:19, 20, 10-12, *Weymouth*.

This universal judgment should not cause us to resentfully conclude that God is unrighteous in bringing the human race into existence only to remand them to death. Life, even under present circumstances, is a precious gift from the Creator, who has, further, given Scripture assurance that humanity's experiences are objectively disciplinary and destined for eventual and eternal blessing. A study in the philosophy of the ransom sacrifice will disclose marvelous wisdom in the Divine inclusion of all mankind in Adam's sentence. For the present, let us note this whisper of hope: "The creation was made subject to frailty (not voluntarily, but by him who placed it under); in hope that even the creation itself will be emancipated from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. " - Rom. 8:20, 21, *Diaglott*.

In these words we glimpse God's Love in a promise for the future, though as yet "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18) in the "covering cast over all people." (Isa. 25:7.) For human beings are dying, and dying at the appalling rate of 100,000 every day, with billions already entered into the tomb!

"All that tread  
The globe are but a handful to the tribes  
That slumber in its bosom."

How unutterably tragic is death with its legacy of tears and broken hearts! Friends, relatives, loved ones-where are they now? Through the ages this ever-present question has occupied the minds of the world's greatest thinkers. Let us note their conclusions before considering the answer of the Scriptures.

### VIEWS ON THE DEATH-STATE

Atheism answers: "There is no God. The Universe is a fortuitous agglomeration of atoms, and mankind but a strange 'disease' in one corner of it. Death is merciful extinction; oblivion, the ultimate destiny of all."

Agnosticism answers: "We do not know. By his very nature man is incapable of forming trustworthy conclusions concerning ultimate reality. Knowledge of reality is therefore a huge

undemonstrable assumption. There may be a God and there may be none: there may be a hereafter and there may be none."

Science answers: "Our knowledge is based on the accurate experimental evaluation of physical phenomena. We find the human body to be composed of the chemical elements found in the earth, built up into innumerable and highly complex living cells. Substantially the same type of organism is possessed by the lesser creatures; man differing in his larger and finer-structured brain and greater reasoning capacity. We know nothing of the life-principle which animates him. There is no evidence of any inner non-physical entity that might survive death - the dissolution of the body elements."

Philosophy in general answers "The brief and disordered limitations of the present life are incompatible with the inherent capabilities of a being such as man with his fine sensibilities, great intellectual powers, and remarkable moral sense. Reason concludes that such a superior being must have a greater destiny in some future state. But where this future state will be, and whether it is attained at the moment of death or after an interval, we do not know."

Catholicism (Greek and Roman) answers: "All men possess immortal souls. All who die outside the pale of our church are doomed to an eternity of conscious and horrible torment. Members of our church who die endure a purgatorial experience for an allotted time; after which they enter the realms of eternal joy."

Protestantism answers: " Consciousness does not end with death. He who believes in Jesus Christ will at death go immediately to heavenly bliss. All unbelievers go to a hell of eternal torment."

It were a wearisome task to list the answers of Spiritism, Theosophy, Swedenborgianism, Christian Science, Rosicrusianism, Mohammedanism, Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and other religions and religious philosophies. All, however, have this in common-a belief that in one state or another there is *survival and consciousness after death*.

As we turn to seek from the Scriptures an answer to our question, we do well to heed Professor Young's admonitory words in the Commentary to his Literal Translation of the Bible: "The Bible is not a difficult book; the subjects it treats of are, in some respects, 'hard to be understood,' but the language in which they are expressed is generally - it might be said uniformly - simple. The danger lies in attaching to the simple words of Scripture meanings which they *might, could, would, or should* have, and of straining the meaning to the utmost extent of which the words are capable. Starting with preconceived notions, formed it may be insensibly, the words are tortured to support them. ... The plain grammatical and historical interpretation is the only clue out of this labyrinth. It is the only certain plan, as it is the easiest. The question is not-What *may* this teach? but -- What *does* it teach?"

These are sound words from a famous Bible scholar. Let us therefore divest ourselves of human preconceptions, and rigidly excluding personal bias, analytically examine the Bible's teaching concerning the present state of the dead, commencing with a re-examination of man's nature.

## THE NATURE OF MAN

What is Man, this strange creature that God has called into being? In contemplative awe the Psalmist speaks thus:

"I praise thee for the awful wonder of my birth; thy work is wonderful.  
For thou didst form my being, didst weave me in my mother's womb.  
Thou knewest all about my soul; my body was no mystery to thee, as I was being molded secretly and put together in the world below;  
All the days of my life were foreseen by thee, set down within thy book;  
Ere ever they took shape, they were assigned me, ere ever one of them was mine.  
O God, what mysteries I find in thee!  
How vast the number of thy purposes !  
I try to count them? -- they are more than the sand; I wake from my reverie, and I am still lost in thee."

From Moffatt's beautiful translation of these verses from Psalm 139 we turn to a much earlier Scripture. In Genesis 2:7, we read:

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

This is the record of Inspiration. To it all subsequent Scripture, and all human reasonings, must conform. We note the simple facts:

a - Dust plus breath equals a *living soul*.

b - Man *has* a body; man *has a* breath of life; man *becomes* (not *has*) a living soul.

Analyzing and expanding this Scripture, we have

1 - "The Lord God formed [cut out, carved, fashioned] man of the dust [elements] of the ground,"

The account describes the body as formed first. The wonderful organism was as yet unanimated. 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.

2 - "and breathed [Heb. *naphach* - inflated; blew] into his nostrils the breath [Heb. *neshamah* -- *wind*] of life [Heb. *caiyah* - *lives*, plural, i.e., such as was common to all living animals],"

The second step in the creative process to give vitality to the properly 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 been effected by working the arms and thus the lungs as a bellows, and so 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 to breathe the life-giving oxygen of the atmosphere.

3 - "and man *became* a living soul [Heb. *nephesh* - a breathing creature; i.e., a sentient being]."

As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, which 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"; i.e., a being capable of sensation, perception, thought.

It is not generally known that the Scriptures speak of "souls" in connection with the lower animals. They, as well as man, are sentient beings or creatures of intelligence, only of lower orders. They, as well as man, can see, hear, feel, taste and smell; and each can reason, up to the standard of his organism, though none as abstrusely nor on as high a plane as man. In the first, second, and ninth chapters of Genesis the term, "living soul" (*nephesh*) is applied in the Hebrew language to the lower animals nine times, but the translators of our English Bible (as though careful to protect the common belief in an immortal, soul) have used other expressions, so that the reader is kept in ignorance of this fact. We cite some examples:

"God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving [creeping] creature *that hath life* [Heb., *nephesh* - *soul*]." (Gen. 1:20.) This was on the fifth creative day, or period, long before man's creation.

"God created great sea-monsters, and every living creature [Heb., *nephesh* - living *soul*] that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly. " (Gen. 1:21.) This also was in the fifth "day"-before man's creation. These were *fish* souls.

"God said, Let the earth bring forth the living *creature* [Heb. *nephesh* - living *soul*] after his kind -cattle and creeping thing and beast." (Gen. 1:24.) These were dry land souls, higher than the fishes; but man, human soul or being, had not yet been created.

"And God said . . . To every beast of the earth and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is *life* [living soul - *nephesh*] I have given every green herb for meat." - Gen. 1:30.

"Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; . . . and whatever Adam called every living *creature* [Heb., living soul - *nephesh*], that was the name thereof." - Gen. 2:19.

## **MORTALITY AND IMMORTALITY**

Having Scripturally determined that man does not *possess* a soul, but is a soul (sentient being) in common with the lower creatures, let us examine some associated terms upon which much misconception exists. Two of these are *mortality* and *immortality*. The general definition of mortal is *dying*; and of immortal, *everlasting*, but both are incorrect from a Scriptural standpoint as is obvious when they are applied to answer the simple question-Was Adam created mortal or immortal?

If the answer be that he was created *mortal* (*dying*, according to the erroneous common definition) we inquire, How could God sentence him to death if he were already a *dying* creature and never had been otherwise? And if created *dying*, *how* could the Apostle (Rom. 5:12) declare that Adam's death came by his sin?

If the answer be that he was created *immortal* (*everlasting*, according to the erroneous common definition), we inquire, How then was he threatened with, and afterward sentenced to death; and how could he die if he were death-proof? and why the necessity of depriving him of access to the trees of life, lest he *eat and live forever?* - Gen. 3:22.

It should be obvious that these two terms are incorrectly defined; and we submit the following as the true definitions:

*Immortal* (literally, *not mortal*) -- the state or condition in which *death is impossible* -- a death-proof, incorruptible, indestructible, imperishable condition. Any being whose existence is dependent upon a source of life from without himself, is not immortal. Consequently immortality is not a quality possessed by men, angels, archangels, or even the Son of God before and during the time he "was made flesh and dwelt among us." This quality inheres in God alone, as it is written: "The Father hath life in *himself*" (John 5:26); i.e., his existence is not derived, nor a sustained one. He is "the King eternal, *immortal*, invisible." (1 Tim. 1:17.) "He *only* hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16) as an innate or original quality of being. (This last Scripture may be held to apply to our Lord Jesus Christ in his present "highly exalted" condition, the express image of the Father's person," with the Father excepted in all comparisons according to the rule of interpretation laid down by the same writer in 1 Corinthians 15:27.)

Mortal -- signifies *die-able*, a state or condition in which death is possible if the elements sustaining life are withdrawn. One possessing mortality possesses life dependent upon God for its continuance. Men are *mortal*, for in God (in his providence) they live and move and have their being. Likewise the angelic host, who, though *mortal*, are enjoying life everlasting. Satan, also an angel, is *mortal*, and it is distinctly declared that in due time he will be destroyed. (Heb. 2:14.) Adam was created *mortal* - in a condition in which death was a possibility, or everlasting life a possibility; according as he pleased or displeased the Creator. Had he remained obedient he would have continued living until now and forever -- and yet all the time he would have been *mortal*, liable to death if disobedient.

The theological doctrine of an "immortal," "never-dying," or "ever-living soul" (expressions found nowhere in the Hebrew, Greek, or English Scriptures), is a unique example of an opinion destitute of any foundation in the Bible, and in fact contradicting it, yet held firmly by large numbers of educated and intelligent Christians on the mistaken supposition that it is taught therein. This error, so prolific of many others, is directly traceable to Grecian philosophy, particularly Plato's "sublimest hallucination" -- the immortality of the soul -which as part of the good man's lofty moral teaching, when the early Christian Church became enamored of this world, passed easily and imperceptibly into Christian Theology, molding its phraseology and thought about the future punishment of sin. This unconscious engrafting on the teachings of the Bible has been a source of endless confusion, which persists even to our own day in the consideration of Death, and Hell, the place of the dead.

## **DEATH AND HELL**

Adam was the first to incur death. To him it was plainly stated: "In the day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die. . . . thou shalt return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 2:17; 3:19.) Adam disobeyed, he was deprived of the life-sustaining fruits, the dying process commenced, and after 930 years he died, "in the day" of his disobedience, within the 1000-year "day" of the Lord. (See 2 Pet. 3:8.) The animating breath of life being withdrawn, the body organism disintegrated into "dust," and Adam,



as a sentient being or soul ceased to exist. There is not the slightest suggestion in the sacred record that he continued to exist in some other state, much less that he was subjected to horrible torments. St. Paul plainly declares, "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23.) Death according to the Bible is purely and simply "cessation of life." Life is existence -death is non-existence. Reasoning otherwise perpetuates the original Satanic lie: "Ye shall not surely die."

The doctrine of eternal torment, which crept into the Church with the falling away from Apostolic teaching, gained much force from the time when men tortured others for what they called heresies. The word "hell" became associated with this terrible theory as the place of torment, where fire-proof demons were supposed to torture for ever and ever those who were consigned thither by God. This is by no means, however, the original meaning of the word "hell." Originally it meant a "hidden" or "covered" place and was, therefore, a proper translation of the Hebrew *sheol* and the Greek *hades*; equivalent terms which in the Bible denote all the graves in the world viewed as one, i.e., Gravedom, the dominion of death. In other words, the hidden death-state, in which all the dead, good and bad, are at rest, termed "sleep." It is very important that we should realize that there is no thought of eternal torment in the Bible use of the words "sheol" and "hades."

In this connection, it is interesting to read Archbishop Whateley's words:

"It must be allowed to be strange that the word 'sleep' should so often be applied to the condition of the departed if they are in a state of as lively consciousness and sensibility as before death, and in actual perception of more unmixed pleasure or pain."

Also those of Dr. Weymouth (translator of the New Testament in Modern Speech):

"My mind fails to conceive a grosser misrepresentation of language than when the five or six strongest words which the Greek tongue possesses, signifying 'destroy' or 'destruction,' are explained to mean maintaining an everlasting but wretched existence."

We cite some scriptures dealing directly with the question, "Where are the Dead?"

"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." - Eccles. 3:20.

"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." - Psa. 146:4.

"There [in Sheol] the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together. They hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there." - Job 3:17-19.

"That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; as the one dieth, so dieth the other." - Eccles. 3:19.

"The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything." - Eccles. 9:5.

"There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." - Eccles. 9:10.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." - Eccles. 12:7.

To emphasize these Bible truths we contrast them with the traditions of men:

(1) The Bible says -- In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. - Gen. 2:17.

Tradition says There is no death. - No Scripture.

(2) The Bible says -- The wages of sin is death - Rom. 6:23.

Tradition says -- The wages of sin is eternal torment. - No Scripture.

(3) The Bible says -- The soul that sinneth, it shall die. - Ezek. 18:4.

Tradition says -- The soul is immortal and cannot die. - No Scripture.

(4) The Bible says -- The King only hath immortality. - 1 Tim. 6: 16.

Tradition says -- All humans are immortal. - No Scripture.

(5) The Bible says -- Death is extinction of life. - Psa. 146:4.

Tradition says -- Death is the entrance to a fuller life. - No Scripture.

(6) The Bible says -- The dead all go to *one* place; the grave. - Eccles. 3:20.

Tradition says -- The dead go to Heaven, Purgatory, Hell, etc. - No Scripture.

(7) The Bible says -- The dead are asleep. - 1 Thess. 4:13.

Tradition says -- The dead are awake. - No Scripture.

(8) The Bible says -- The dead know not anything. - Eccles. 9:5.

Tradition says -- The dead know more than the living. - No Scripture.

We therefore conclude with the conviction that the teaching of the Scriptures is that *the dead are DEAD*; are in a state of complete non-existence, of cessation of being. And such would be their eternal state except as we shall find hope in the Scriptures of a resurrection from the dead. And this is exactly the wonderful hope the Bible holds forth for all mankind, for it is centered in Him who gave Himself a ransom for all, and who has promised: "*Marvel not at this; for an hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear my voice, AND SHALL COME FORTH.*"

- W. J. Siekman.

## The Question Box

### Question:

In Isaiah 28:10 and again in Isa. 28:13 these words appear: "Precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little." The words are generally understood to teach that our Lord fits his instruction to his true followers gradually, as they are able to receive it; starting with the milk of the Word 'in their spiritual infancy and holding back solid food until they start to grow. 'My question is: How can this Scripture be thus understood in relation to its context, and especially in view of the words with which Isa. 28:13 closes: "that they might go, and fall backward, and the broken, and snared, and taken."

### Answer:

The context, of course, must always be taken into consideration in Bible study; any understanding which does not harmonize a text with its context is likely to prove erroneous or, at best, partial. Let us consider the passage in its setting.

It was in the early years of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, that the 28th chapter of Isaiah was written. For some years the people had been under the yoke of Assyria; that yoke had become intolerable; they were determined to liberate themselves from it.

Isaiah, of course, was just as much a lover of freedom as the rest of the nation; there was no truer patriot than he. But he knew that the people, could not count on the help of God while they continued godless and corrupt; their yoke, he knew, was but the manifestation of the divine displeasure. Accordingly, he counseled them to wait to strengthen themselves in piety, in an unselfish devotion to the public welfare, and in the practice of private virtue until, God being once more on their side, they would be able to break the power of Assyria and assert their independence.

The counsel was unwelcome. They had no mind for private or public reformation; nor were they disposed to wait. They, preferred, instead, to try their hand at international diplomacy and statecraft. What if they were to call Egypt to their help against Assyria, to set the one military tyranny, of the time against the other? Might they not thus work out their salvation?

"No!" said Isaiah. "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help ... but look not unto the Holy One of Israel." (Isa. 31:1; 30:1-4.) Against this proposed Egyptian alliance he set his face as a flint. But there were not wanting other counselors who opposed him. There were plenty of priests in Jerusalem, plenty of prophets, even who, sharing as they did in the popular vices, were willing to pander to the spirit of the times.

These false counselors, it is evident from Isa. 28:7, had lost their way through strong drink.; It may have been that at one time they had had clear vision and could reach sound judgment, but certainly this was not now the case. Matters in Israel though they were, it was necessary for Isaiah, if he were to have any hope of penetrating their dull powers of comprehension, to speak with great simplicity -- to speak to them not as to masters, but babes. And this, of course, they would and did resent. In their drunken carousals, erring in vision, stumbling in judgment, with their tables full of vomit (Isa. 28:7, 8) they would sneeringly ask:

"Whom would he, Isaiah, teach knowledge? And to whom would he make a message intelligible? To them weaned from the milk, just taken from the breasts? With him it is always precept upon

precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little. " - Isa. 28:9, 10.

In a footnote to Isa. 28:10 Rotherham gives the actual Hebrew words and then cites Davies' Hebrew Lexicon as follows: "The repetition and assonance of the short words are intended to set forth mimetically the drunken babble of the scoffers." Others have pointed out that the words may be translated in many ways; for, in the original, they are more like the babble of drunken men than sober, intelligent speech. At the same time, although *the words manifestly imply the condition of those who uttered them*, they were evidently designed as a burlesque imitation of the great simplicity of speech which Isaiah used. The Isa. 28: is so constructed as to imitate their hickened and difficult pronunciation. Monosyllable is heaped upon monosyllable; and, no doubt, the speakers tipsily adopted the tones of fond mothers addressing their babes and little tots. Using the Hebrew words of the verse, one of these shameless roysterers would say: "*Tsav la-tsav, tsav la-tsav; kav lakav, kav la-kav; zeeir sham, zeeir sham; that is* how that simpleton Isaiah speaks." And then, doubtless, a drunken laugh would go round the table, and half a dozen of them would be repeating: "*Tsav la-tsav, tsav la-tsav.*"

What really angered these men was that Isaiah treated them as though they were children only just weaned. They were weary of hearing him repeat the first rudiments of morality, and apply them to the sins and needs of the time. How dared *he* tutor *them*, who were themselves teachers! How dared he treat them as babes who were grown men, distinguished men, the foremost men and statesmen of the nation!

It is easy to imagine how these proud, prosperous men would lisp or stammer out their drunken sneers over their wine, at the solitary, unsuccessful Prophet, and think it a remarkably good joke to make him, and his message, and the very manner in which he uttered it, a theme of mockery and contempt. Nor is it difficult to imagine the righteous indignation with which he would turn on these blind guides, who were only too surely leading their blind followers into the ditch, and forewarn them that the retribution they had provoked by their sins would speedily overtake them. In effect he said to them: You mock at the simple words which, under divine inspiration, I have been moved to speak, and you lisp out your base and drunken imitations of them-you, who should be the first to welcome and act upon the Word of God. Know then, that God will punish your sin *by a people of stammering [Rotherham translates: jabbering] lips and an alien tongue.* (Isa. 28:11.) God has taught you, by the very words which you deride, where you might find rest and freedom, how you might. give, peace to the people who are weary of war and its calamities; but.. you would not listen. (Isa. 28:12.) To you the Word of the Lord has become mere baby-talk, at which you jest. (Isa. 28:13.) Know, then, that that Word, which might have been a light to your path, shall blaze up into a consuming fire. You jeer at it as an endless series of petty injunctions; instead it shall inflict on you an endless series of intolerable calamities. In the very teeth of that Word you are about to strike a blow for freedom; seeking it in your own way, not in God's way; but as a reward and consequence of your disobedience, the Word, that might have given you freedom and *a* stable security and peace, shall become a stone on which you shall fall and be broken, a net in which you shall be taken and bound, a trap in which you shall be caught and imprisoned. (Last words of Isa. 28:13.)

The prediction was fulfilled. The fierce Assyrians, when they heard that the Hebrews had allied themselves with Egypt, once more swept through the land. The very men who had jabbered their scornful. imitations of Isaiah's words, who had affected to think that he used the broken and imperfect dialect which mothers employ to their babes, were destroyed or taken captive by the Assyrian troops, whose language, according to the scholars, while it closely resembled that of the

Hebrews, had just those differences which made it sound to them like an imperfect and barbarous dialect. So terrible, and so exact, was the retribution that fell on their sin.

That St. Paul understood Isaiah's words in the manner outlined foregoing is evident from the use he makes of them in his first letter to the Corinthians. At Corinth there was a great deal of speaking in unknown tongues, often without profit to either speakers or hearers. In chapter 14 of his first letter to that Church, the Apostle deals with the matter in some detail. After showing that the gift of tongues was inferior to that of prophecy, that without the gift of interpretation it was entirely useless, and that thus exercised it was manifestly misused, he illustrates his point by a reference to this very passage. (Isa. 28:11, 12.) "In the law it is written: 'With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.' " (1 Cor. 14:21.) The Prophet's contemporaries scoffingly rejected his instruction, which seemed to them childish; and he warned them that the next divine message would come to them from Assyrian lips -- the conquerors with their foreign speech would be upon them, though even so terrible an experience would not bring the frivolous Israelites to listen to their God. And so, (*this is the inference which, in his discussion of the gift of tongues, St. Paul draws from the Isaiah passage*) tongues are for a sign not to those who believe, but to the unbelievers; and not a sign, apparently, which would induce them to repent and be saved, but one which would confirm them still more in their obstinacy or indifference; for will they not say that you are mad (1 Cor. 14:23) just as Israel would not hearken? (Isa. 28:12.) St. Paul's citation, of course, has only the value of illustration; there was, in Isaiah, *no prediction* of the Corinthian situation.

In the light of the foregoing discussion may we not summarize our answer to the question thus:

1. That our Lord graciously suits the instruction of his true followers according to their several stages of development is a truth none will question. It is abundantly attested in the Scriptures. - 1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12, 13; 1 Cor. 3:2.

2. That this is not the sense in which the words were originally used in Isaiah, chapter 28, is also clear. On the contrary, instead of being a description of the abundance and variety of the means of grace which God has granted to the Church; the words in Isa. 28:10 really constitute a drunken sneer at the simplicity of Isaiah's message to the people of his time. His use of the same words, in Isa. 28:13, was (as Rotherham, in a footnote to that Isa. 28:suggests) a "giving back to the scoffers their own words-now as a stern threatening" of the coming Assyrian conquest. The sincere (unadulterated) milk of the Word which Isaiah gave them did not produce the happy results it might have done but, because not mixed with faith in them that heard it, proved to be a forewarning of impending disaster.

- P. L. Read.

## Unity Versus Confederacy

*"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell, together in unity." - Psa. 133:1.*

GOD our Father has formed a Priesthood, of which the Lord Jesus is the Head, and it is a family loved of Christ, washed from their sins by him in his own blood, anointed with the holy spirit and separated from the world unto God a priesthood of his own selection.

A priestly standing is one of constant subjection to the revealed will of God and an abiding consciousness of his presence. In this elevated and exalted position we walk in the liberty of Christ, holding him as our Head, subject to him in all things, and "not servants of man." Being made free from sin we are servants of righteousness, servants of God. (Rom. 6:18, 22.) Our blessed occupation during this night of the world's darkness is to stand in the House of the Lord, to praise his Name and "worship him in spirit and in truth." But no true worship can be rendered to God if the soul is in bondage.

As believers we have received an unction from the Holy One, Christ Jesus, our anointed Head. Moreover, we have an infallible interpreter ever present with us, and dwelling in us, the spirit of truth, the holy spirit, so that we are-without excuse if we abide by human wisdom instead of cleaving to the Word of God, or if we willingly remain in ignorance of what that Word declares.

May the Lord preserve us from walking in the false light of our carnal wisdom. Ought we not to consider his Word sufficient for our instruction and guidance in all matters of the Gospel truth, worship, and service? It is well for us to confine ourselves within the limits of his Holy Word, to hold all the truths it contains, adding nothing to them and omitting none of them.

What is to be the course of the true-hearted worshiper? The answer has been supplied by the Apostle in his letter to Titus, outlining the work of the ministry, "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works," thereby manifesting that it is a doctrine (teaching) of love, joy, and peace in the holy spirit, and that by consistent holy living we may "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." - Titus 2:11-14.

God's Word is sufficiently full and sufficiently accurate, enabling us to discern between truth and error; and the fashioning of creeds as the vehicles of truth is not holding God's Word to be sufficient unto every good work. God has laid down his own definitions, measurements, and dimensions of the truth, and it is our place to bow reverently and to believe what he has recorded touching the work of the Lord Jesus and the eternal salvation and inheritance which are obtained for us by his own blood.

After having the evidence that we are prospective members of Christ's Body, there is great danger of stretching out the hand to defend or maintain these arrangements by the exercise of human wisdom, even the appeal to human writings and human standards which, however true, can never embrace the fulness of God's Word. "Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful work." When we seek to count up his mercies towards us, they are passing knowledge; they are beyond all calculation, and it will take us an eternity of unbroken rest and blessedness to discover them.

We have no external, beacon to direct us, but we have that which is far better, the indwelling of the holy spirit, and this same spirit teaches us to abide in him, for without him we can do nothing. Thus, he would have us seek to know his mind and will in all things, that is, in every fresh change that we propose. In this respect, the Word must first be consulted that we may ascertain whether the counsel of our hearts is in any way opposed to the smallest injunctions of Christ. If so, it is plain that we have not the full guidance of God for our undertaking.

God through Christ Jesus is the Guardian of his truth and if we really have received the unction from the Holy One, there would be no divided Church; all would dwell together in unity, not merely to meet and fellowship together, but to abide in One-and that "with all saints. "But wherever separation comes in and divides believers from one another, the bond of brotherhood is made to yield to some other bond; the tie of life and union with Christ, witnessed by the holy spirit's presence and power, is sacrificed to some fleshly association." The bond that links God's people together is the love of Christ. He has bound us up with himself, in one bundle of life, no longer aliens or strangers but children and heirs, and he is not ashamed to call us brethren. He being raised' from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God shed forth that blessed spirit, giving gifts which should fit his Body members for, their various places in the Body, knitting them together in the unity of the spirit, that they might grow into him in all things, "which is the Head, even Christ."

The spirit's unity is described in the seven unities which follow: One Body, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph. 4:2-6.) These are all God-given, and if we do not endeavor to hold these truths in which every believer is supposed from the first to have been grounded and settled, we will surely become entangled again in that yoke of bondage from which God through Christ has set us free.

"A religion of form and ceremony, which is in truth a religion mixed with idolatry, will always consist well with worldliness." St. Paul saw the germs of a sectarian spirit working in the early Church and he spoke to them as carnal, saying, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified, for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" - 1 Cor. 1:12, 13.

Again, there is danger that the "I am of Christ" may be used in a sectarian way. It may be adopted in the way" of a proud and boastful assertion to imply that others are not "of him" because they are not taking the same course or viewing certain subjects of truth exactly in the same way. This tendency was also displayed in the early Church. Even John rebuked one who was clearly on the Lord's side "because he followeth not with us." (Luke 9:49.) The Master's reply to John should make us stop and think.

So, then, anything on our part which hinders the edifying of the one Body as a whole is a breach of the unity of the spirit. With such the holy spirit is grieved and the Word of God becomes of none effect; and love, that bond of perfectness, is chilled in the heart. We have a solemn warning in the following words of the Prophet Isaiah, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow." - Isa. 50:11.

May the God of all grace keep his people from compassing themselves about with sparks of human reason and expediency, for "they that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; That they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a 'god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed; and the workmen, they are of men: let them

all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 44:9-11.) The Prophet Isaiah thus clearly reveals that creature worship in any form is disapproved of God. "See thou do it not; worship God." (Rev. 22:8, 9.) "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love," let us "endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

"How blest the children of the Lord,  
Who, walking in His sight,  
Make all the precepts of, His Word  
Their study and delight!

"That precious wealth shall be their dower,  
Which cannot know decay:  
Which moth and rust shall ne'er devour,  
Or spoiler take away."

- T. G. Smith

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

The Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, due to be scheduled for Saturday, June 5, has been postponed to Saturday, September 18. Plans are now under way to hold it in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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

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

## **RECENTLY DECEASED**

Laura Atwood, San Francisco, Cal.  
Margaret Avett, Anna, 111.  
Emily Cajacob, St. Louis, Mo.  
Mary Campbell, Sharon, Pa.  
John T. Clark, Pawtucket, R.I.  
Emelie Diether, St. Louis, Mo.  
Sarah Ensoll, London, Eng.  
Minnie Gardner, Fresno, Cal.  
William E. Gary, Richmond, Va.  
Florence Gustafson, Elgin, Ill.  
Jenny Hollinger, Winnipeg, Man.  
Greta Irwin, Sussex, Eng.  
Joel A. Jones, Cardiff, Wales  
George Morris, Mobile, Ala.  
Victor Randour, Roanoke, Ill.  
Ernest W. Rittler, Seattle, Wash.  
George E. F. Rubin, Minneapolis, Minn.  
Chester A. Sundbom, Saginaw, Mich.  
H. Vernon Warren, Hot Springs, Ark.  
Jess Westmoreland, Seminole, Tex.  
Annie Wilcox, Houston, Tex.