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Thy Kingdom Come

*"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." - Matt. 6:9, 10.*

IT is well, at the outset, that we define what we mean by "a kingdom," for the term carries with it two distinct thoughts; or, we might say, a kingdom has two phases: a kingdom consists of (1) those having royal power and authority, those who exercise dominion; and (2) those subjects and territories governed or ruled by the reigning house. For instance, when we speak of the Kingdom of God, we refer to that which is ruled over by God, or is under His sway; including, thus, the Ruler and the ruled.

Man, in the beginning, was in subjection to God, his Creator, made "in the likeness of God." This was a dominion of life; for the covenant with the first pair was that of a continuance of life, dependent only on their obedience. But man is not now in such a blessed condition; rather, since the fall in Eden, the race is spoken of in Scripture as being subjects of the prince of darkness. True it is that "the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whosoever He will" (Dan. 4:17); yet this domain is not in the hearts and lives of men, for in this sense man is truly under the dominion of Satan, whose power in man works death. (Heb. 2:14.) All of the race are born subject to the prince of darkness, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity." (Psa. 51:5.) Even those who will be of the very elect "were dead in trespasses and sins; and in times past walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2:1-3.) Satan's sway, his dominion over the race, is continued and made tenacious by the power of darkness, darkening the mind to the light of truth. (2 Cor. 4:4.) And how we are daily made conscious, both in our contact with fellow man and by the world conditions, that "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." (Isa. 60:2.) Wherever man is found on the face of the whole earth, there, too, is found ignorance of the true

God, superstitious religions, vanities, false philosophies, injustices, fears, cruelties, etc.; always sin and death. What a dominion!

A RIGHTEOUS KINGDOM PROMISED

But it is the unvarying testimony of Scripture that this condition is to be done away; to be superseded by "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," "tings of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets" (Acts 3:19-21), for "the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed; it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms"; it shall be "the desire of all nations," wherein "righteousness shall be laid to the line and justice to the plummet."

Continually we read in the Old Testament Scriptures of a Kingdom which God has promised to establish in the earth to take away the reign of sin and death. It was that which Enoch saw by faith and prophesied of; it was that "city" for which Abraham looked. Its coming and wonders were sung by Prophet and bard, when "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth" (Isa. 25:6-9); when "the righteous shall flourish; and there shall be abundance of peace so long as the moon endures"; when the cries of the needy shall be heard; when souls will be delivered from deceit and violence (Psa. 72); when wars should cease, and implements of war be no more; but rather be recreated into implements of domesticity (Isa. 2:2-4); when God shall put His law in the inward parts of man, and write it in their hearts; and He shall be their God, and they shall be His people (Jer. 31:33); when even the very earth itself shall blossom as a rose in its hitherto barren spaces.

However much we study the Word of God, we are continually reminded that what God purposed for the human race, before He ever permitted the reign of sin and death, is the provision of a Kingdom of heavenly origin that should "bless all the families of the earth" (Gen. 22:18); even those who are now in their graves. (John 5:25-29.) This occupied the mind of Jesus; and He taught that it should be the object of our prayers: "After this manner pray ye: Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven" (Matt. 6:10) -- as though saying, Let this be continually in your prayers, the object of your desire, that man be again brought under the sway and dominion of God. And Jesus urged, stressing the point, that His hearers seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, even now, for it is to such who succeed in this, a little flock, that His Father is to give the Kingdom. "Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." (Luke 12:32.) When we consider what that Kingdom is to accomplish -- writing the law of God in the hearts of all the willing and obedient, until all such have been recreated in the image and likeness of God, making the knowledge of the glory of God fill the earth as the waters cover the sea-we easily perceive that only a spirit power of heavenly origin is sufficient for it.

OUR SHARE IN IT

As in the Old Testament, so in the New; the Kingdom is ever before the minds of the inspired writers; but, instead of the "all families of the earth" who are to be blessed, it is rather the preparation of the "Seed," who are to exercise the royal power and authority, that is almost wholly in view. ("Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?") This is that viewpoint, or phase of the Kingdom, that we as Christians are particularly interested in. The requirements and qualifications for joint-heirship in that Kingdom are exact and undeviating. Let us ever bear this in mind "Whom God foreknew, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." - Rom. 8:29.

HUMILITY NECESSARY

As Jesus opened His discourse in the Sermon on the Mount, He stressed the prime characteristic for membership in that Kingdom, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." Not that all who are humble spirited will be of that Kingdom. Oh, no! but it is an essential characteristic, for it is clearly stated as being the prime characteristic of Jesus, "who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "Let this mind be in you." - Phil. 2:5-8.

How we as human beings do want to be somebody! We are ever on the alert to exalt self; and even when in a wrong course, swift to justify ourselves in word and conduct. Difficult it surely is to become dead to self, absolutely; it is a strait gate, a hard way to enter into life, and only a few, a "little flock," will find it; yet it is a necessity to discipleship, a prerequisite to joint-heirship with Christ. "If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him." It is only as we are converted and become as little children that we shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:1-4.) God is not choosing many of the mighty of this world, not many wise or great; and such of these that He does call must put off those characteristics which pertain to the flesh, the "old man," and "be renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him [a new man]." (Col. 3:10.) Furthermore, all our boasting of our many works for the Lord will go for naught; for in the day when the Kingdom is made up, there will be found left out all those who base their hopes and prospects of inheritance on having made claim to being the Lord's very own, and of having prophesied and done many wonderful works in His name; while included will be those who, as true disciples, gloried only in Christ, and sought with singleness of purpose and a simple sincerity of heart to know and to do the will of their Father.

But it is clearly stated in 1 Corinthians 6:9 that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God"; and as "we were by nature children of wrath even as others," it necessitates that a mighty deliverance and change take place to fashion us as coheirs in the Kingdom of light. And this is just what God has accomplished in us, as the Apostle states it: "The Father hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: He hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son." - Col. 1:12, 13.

LESSER AND GREATER HOPES

We fear, generally speaking, that among those who have been enlightened with the present truth, the uppermost thoughts concerning the Millennial Kingdom have been of a time when there shall be better economic conditions; when "every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree"; when "the desert shall blossom as a rose"; when "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth"; when wars shall cease for all times; when "the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing"; when "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." All this is true, and will surely come to pass, for God has spoken it, and his word never returns to him void, but accomplishes that which he pleases and prospers in the thing whereunto he sends it. (Isa. 55:11.) Yet these things are but incidental to the true import of that Kingdom; for "this shall be the covenant: ... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." "To the Jew first, after that the Gentile." The true import of that Kingdom will be to deliver all, living and dead, from the power of sin and death, "the bondage of corruption," and bring all, whosoever will, into subjection to God, under God's sway and dominion, restoring the God-likeness that was in the original creation. - Jer. 31:33; Rom. 1:16.

What a stupendous undertaking Who dare undertake it? To whom can God entrust such a task with the absolute certainty of its accomplishment? And the Scriptures answer -- To His sons: first, to Christ, for "the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." But He is to have joint-heirs; so we read: "Indeed, the earnest expectation of creation longs for the revelation of the sons [plural] of God. For the creation was made subject to frailty, . . . 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. For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together till the present time. And not only it, but ourselves also, possessing the first-fruit of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for sonship,-even the redemption of our body [the body of sons]." - Rom. 8:19-23, Diaglott.

A footnote from the Diaglott will serve to clarify this word rendered "creation " by the translator. Quoting: " 'Ktisis,' creation, has the signification here as in Mark 16:15: 'Proclaim the glad tidings to the whole creation,' that is, all mankind; and also in Col. 1:23, where a similar phrase occurs. That the brute and inanimate creation is not here spoken of, but mankind, is evident from the hope of emancipation from the 'slavery of corruption' held out in the 21st verse, and the contrast introduced in the 23rd verse, between the 'ktisis' and those 'possessing the first fruits of the Spirit.'"

This first-fruit of the Spirit here spoken of is our begetting to sonship, as elsewhere we read: "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures" (James 1:18); "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17); "unto us are given exceeding great and precious promises that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature [the nature of God], having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:4); "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." - 1 John 3:1.

"THE KINGDOM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS"

It is not only possible to be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13), but God has accomplished it on behalf of His elect. This has meant a new begetting, to be finally brought forth in a new birth. It is only to those who have thus been begotten again, who have received the first-fruits of the spirit, that the real meaning of the Kingdom of God can be discerned. (John 3:3-5.) And this deliverance from the power of darkness has been made possible by means of the enlightenment which has come to us through the knowledge of the truth.

One who has been born blind and has never experienced the sensation of light cannot even surmise what it means to see the form and shape of objects, the beauties of the world of color, etc.; but once light has penetrated to the optic nerves, and these have registered images on the brain, the great contrast between light and darkness is startlingly manifest. The one thus enlightened is delivered from the necessity of groping in blindness, and is enabled to follow along a chosen path, so long as there is light.

How well this illustrates what God has done for us. By means of the light of truth He has delivered us from the power of darkness of mind imposed upon us by the thralldom of the god of this world, delivered us from the necessity of walking according to the spirit that now rules in the children of disobedience. This same Word of truth that has enlightened us has also been the begettall seed to a new life, so that it is equally true that we have been translated into the Kingdom

of God's dear Son, have come under the sway of the law and Spirit of Christ, as His disciples -- as well as having been delivered from the kingdom of darkness.

But the fact that we have been enlightened does not necessarily carry with it the assurance of a place in Christ's Kingdom as His joint heirs. We must bear in mind that "many are called, but few are chosen." We recall, in this connection, one of the parables of the Kingdom the net cast into the sea that gathered of every kind, which when it was full, they drew ashore and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. (Matt. 13:47, 48.) Rather, since being enlightened, and no longer ignorantly servants of Satan, we are warned that we have arrayed against us all the forces of evil, "the world, the flesh, and the devil," which all have to be overcome by every one who is to be included in the final choice for the Kingdom.

And how logically necessary this is, for how could the Kingdom powers of the Millennium ever expect to write the law of God in the hearts of a sinful and disobedient race unless they first have mastered that law in themselves? How teach all men to love and worship God, to be meek and merciful and righteous, unless the teachers have first learned? How restore fallen humanity to the image of God, unless the restorers are themselves pure in heart? It is only "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." - Rev. 3:21.

"THE DAY IS AT HAND"

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand." It cannot be long, now, ere "the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, shall be heard saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." There is still sacrificing and toil to be done on behalf of fellow members of the body; each of us has some labor of love allotted him of the Lord in fashioning the antitypical temple stones. The Kingdom of God, "the Holy City," cannot come down for its beneficent reign until first the "wife hath made herself ready." - Rev. 19:6, 7; Rev. 21:1-6.

The time nears when "the saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom, and possess it." (Dan. 7:18.) Let us keep in mind that phase of the Kingdom, which is ours -- to be kings and priests unto God, ruling with power and authority to dispense all the long-promised blessings; considering, too, what are the qualifications of those who are to be joint-heirs with Christ in that Kingdom, even to be so devoted to the Father's will that it will be true of us as it was of Jesus, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart"; so that like Christ we will manifest the Father, because of his indwelling Word and Spirit. Ever pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, even as it is in heaven."

- *The Herald*.

The Shiloh Prophecy

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." - Gen. 49:10.

TO ARRIVE at a correct understanding of any Scriptural passage that presents difficulties, it is very necessary to proceed upon sound principles of interpretation. Failure to do so inevitably leads to twisting the Word of God to make it conform to the already conceived fancies of the mind. And when the mind fancies, it is never directed into channels of truth; for Satan is ever alert to lead away from "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ," to present darkness for light, and light for darkness. - 2 Cor. 4:4.

We are all well aware that the promise of the Seed to "bless all the families of the earth" is the great promise of Scripture; and that the germ seed of all promises is in the statement of God to the serpent in Eden, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Losing sight of the fact that this promise of the Seed runs through all prophetic utterances, either directly or indirectly, and that all God's plans for the children of Adam are based upon that promise of the Seed, we are apt to have the wrong thing in view in interpreting this passage of Genesis 49:8-11. But having this original promise in mind, and also following its development down to the time of Jacob's blessing of his sons, this blessing is then seen to have a relationship to that promise and is a step in its development.

Let us see. Originally the hope set forth was vague and indefinite. Who and what was the seed? When would the seed appear? It was applicable to no one in particular, and might be applicable to many. But as the centuries rolled on, the promise was continually narrowed down as to whom it might apply. After the flood, Noah voiced these words: "Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem," thus indicating that Jehovah, the covenanting God, was henceforth to be in a special sense the God of Shem. Years later, the choice was further narrowed to Abraham and his seed; then Ishmael is excluded and Isaac designated; Esau set aside, and Jacob chosen. And then, when Jacob was ripe in years and his days were numbered, he "called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days."

We do not know, of course, as to just how much trust these twelve individuals had in the promises of God; yet the subsequent history shows that the promises were greatly respected by some of them, for these promises continued a vital force in their later national existence, a determining factor in many decisions.

Into Jacob's presence came first, Reuben, the eldest of the brothers. Will the promise continue through him? Harken! "Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Thus is Reuben counted out of the chief blessing.

Next, of Simeon and Levi it was said: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united. . . I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." They, too, are set aside.

Now comes Judah. Will he also be passed by? Not so; for distinctly is Judah pointed out as the tribe that is to furnish the Messiah: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be: Binding His foal unto the vine, and His ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and His teeth white with milk."

If we apply here the principle that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10), we are confronted with such testimony; for the several promises of the 8th verse of Genesis 49, are much more applicable to Jesus Christ than to the literal Judah -- either man or tribe: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee." This reminds us of the language of Psalm 72. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust. . . Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him."

Yet primarily in this is set forth the coming royalty and conquering power of the tribe of Judah. Not yet was Judah so, for "Judah is [now but] a lion's whelp." But in the days of Joshua and during the period of the judges, it was the tribe of Judah which continued to grow, until, at the death of Saul, the prophecy came to a head in Judah being made the royal tribe, and David, king.

What we are particularly interested in, at this time, *is* the 10th verse: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."

Examining this word "sceptre," we find that it is a translation of the Hebrew word "shebet"; and it is the regular word for "tribe," and is so rendered in the 28th verse of this same chapter: "These are the twelve tribes ["shebet" - Hebrew] of Israel." This being so, and using the English word "tribe" to translate the Hebrew "shebet" of Genesis 49:10, we then read, "The *tribe* shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Obviously, this was intended to be a prophecy and promise of Judah's continuity as a separate and distinct tribe until the advent of Messiah, the Seed. All tribes were to share in the blessings of Abraham, but only Judah's tribal history was promised to continue unbroken until Shiloh should appear. And this was true only of Judah. All other tribes were broken up and removed, or assimilated into Judah; so that, at the time of the First Advent, all Israelites, of what tribe so ever, were commonly designated "Jews." The Apostle Paul, in his writings, on several occasions used this common designation. This prophecy was designed to be an encouragement, and a rallying point, in times when the visible sceptre did pass away. To us, who live 1900 years beyond the coining of Messiah, Christ, this is a fact of history. But remember, as these sons of Jacob gathered *around* their father to be blessed, the Seed that was to bruise the Serpent's head was a very vague personage, who existed only in promise. This prophecy, in the blessing of Judah, was an assurance to all Israel of God's unchanging purpose regarding the sending of the Messiah, and of the fulfilling of the promises to Abraham.

We find much that is of interest and instruction in the comment of the sacred historian as found in 1 Chronicles 5:1, 2, "Now the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel, (for he was the first-born; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's)." According

to the custom of the times, which also was later incorporated into the law of Moses, a double portion of the Father's possessions fell to the first-born (see Deut. 21:17); but, Reuben, by his actions toward his father's concubine, forfeited this; and this particular blessing was transferred to Joseph, of whose *two* sons, adopted by Israel (Gen. 48:16, 22), Jacob said, "Let my name be named on them." "Moreover I have given to thee [Joseph] one portion above thy brethren," each son receiving an allotted portion, forming two distinct tribes in Israel. Also the right of dominion fell to the firstborn. This also, of course, was lost to Reuben by his foul deed; and Jacob acknowledged that, when he said of Reuben, "Thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power." All this Reuben should have been, but, "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Joseph, although receiving the birth right, or double portion, did not receive the superior honor of dominion, as this was conferred upon Judah -- not the man, but the tribe, as we note, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp," etc.

In 1 Chronicles 5:2-"For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler," the Hebrew word "nagid," translated "chief ruler," refers back to the Shiloh of Genesis 49:10, and might have been translated "prince," and so is marginally. Leeser gives it as "prince." In Daniel 9:25 we read, "Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince," etc. The word translated "prince" is the same word "nagid" rendered "chief ruler" in 1 Chronicles 5:2. Thus we have these names, "Shiloh," "chief ruler," "Messiah," "Prince, all referring to the same individual. Daniel 9:25 is definitely a time prophecy pointing to the first advent of Christ-to the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit at Jordan, when He became "Messiah the Prince,"

This phrase, "until Shiloh come," has been variously translated. We do not have a Septuagint translation, but one commentator states that the Septuagint renders it, "until He come to whom the rule belongs." If so, this compares favorably with the statement recorded in Ezekiel 21:27, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is." But most translators render Shiloh "peace," "rest"; thus one who brings peace, rest. This quality of peace and rest is in many places ascribed to Christ. In fact, it is one of the outstanding characteristics set forth of the Messiah, as we read in Isaiah 9:6, 7, "And His name shall be called the Prince of Peace." And in this connection we are reminded of the invitation and promise of Jesus as He spoke to those who followed Him, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." - Matt. 11:28, 29.

And that this Shiloh prophecy was pointing forward to the First Advent is *conclusively shown* in the 5th chapter of Revelation. John had wept much because there was no one found worthy, in heaven or in earth, to open and read the scroll which he was seeing held forth in the vision. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not, behold: the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." And John turned, and instead of seeing a Lion he saw "a Lamb as it had been slain." And then a new song was sung; "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." Of no one else is this true but of Jesus, the Christ, Messiah, the Prince -- the Shiloh of Genesis 49:10.

Still we have the statement that there would always be a law-giver in Judah "until Shiloh come." The Hebrew word "chaqag," translated "lawgiver," is in other places, variously translated "decree," "appoint," "portray," "set," "governor," "be printed," "law"; so the prophecy refers not to a line of rulers with authority to promulgate laws, but rather promises that not only would the

children of Israel be held together, borne up, by the continuous existence of Judah as a tribe or kingdom, but, also, there would be prophets and seers to proclaim the law of God, which law was their only code. This was fulfilled in Moses' law being continued as their national code, both civil and religious, until the advent of Christ.

We must remember that God's idea of a kingdom in Israel was not political. God, Himself, gave them their laws at Sinai; they were not left to enact laws for themselves. In fact, the true conception of a kingdom in Israel is theocratic, and any departure from the law of Jehovah was apostasy. See Isaiah 33:22: "For Jehovah is our judge, Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king; He will save us." And when the children of Israel desired a visible king to rule over them, as other nations had, and Samuel prayed unto the Lord about this, "The Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." - 1 Sam. 8:7.

Israel was to be a stiff-necked and backsliding people; yet in spite of this tendency, or should we rather say, foreknowing this tendency, God made promise in Jacob's blessing on Judah that He would not forsake them; that until the coming of Messiah, He would continue to send them prophets and seers to declare to them His word. To those immediate sons of Jacob this promise could mean little; it was to those of much later date that force and meaning could be found in it, a potent message for many a sad day, when Israel, having wandered from Jehovah and His Law, and experiencing the plagues and chastenings resulting from such a course, would have their consciences aroused and the law again declared to them by men of God's own sending.

In closing we briefly consider the 11th and 12th verses of Genesis 49, "Binding His foal unto the vine, and His ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and His teeth white with milk" -- a picture of peace and plenty, after the gathering of the people (nations) to Shiloh. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Yes, in His Kingdom, Christ shall set forth the truth in rich abundance, cleared of all dregs and sediments -- "purified seven times"; for "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." - Isa. 25:6-8.

- *F. A. Essler.*

God's Secret Purpose

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." - Col. 1:27.

WE HAVE in Scripture discerned the outline of God's wondrous Purpose on behalf of suffering humanity—a deliverance of the "groaning creation" from sin and degradation to eternal life -- to be effected by the Messiah as the Divine Agency when the Kingdom of God is established on this earth. Then shall God's will be done on earth as it is done in heaven; "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." (Isa. 25:8.)

But now we shall trace in the Scriptures another Purpose of God which (like Ezekiel's "wheels within wheels, full of eyes round about") is hidden within the frame of his Purpose for the nations. This inner Purpose is the divine selection of *a class to be associated with Christ* in the work of blessing all the families of the earth. These comprise a "Little Flock," who, instead of being restored to human perfection, will be granted a share with Christ in the First Resurrection -- a change from earthly nature to heavenly nature -- far above angels, principalities, and powers, like unto their glorified Redeemer and Head. This unspeakable honor St. Paul refers to as "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14.) The very contemplation of such a prospect fills the mind with an overwhelming sense of wonder and awe.

Inasmuch as this, the Heavenly Hope of the Bible, is so generally misunderstood as applicable to all who have taken the initial necessary step of belief in Jesus (God's requirement for justification from Adamic sin unto eternal life on this earth—a most glorious prospect in itself), we shall draw copiously from the Scriptures to show that this Hope is limited to those who go on to self-sacrificing discipleship in "following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," numbering in all "an hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." (Rev. 14:1-4.) These alone have "liberty to enter into the holiest [eventually the actual presence of God] by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has made for them." (Heb. 10:19, 20.) It was to open this "way" that Jesus died nineteen centuries before God's Kingdom was due to be established, and for their selection the Gospel-Age interim was set apart. This, says St. Paul, is "the sacred secret which had been hidden away from the ages and from the generations, but now hath been made manifest unto his saints -- unto whom God hath been pleased to make known what is the glorious wealth of this sacred secret among the nations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1: 26, 27, *Rotherham*.) The Old Testament is replete with predictions regarding the restoration of the earth and its inhabitants when God's "footstool" shall be made glorious, but within its pages we find no direct word concerning spiritual hopes. And yet, hidden in types and figurative language, in the light of the New Testament, these can be traced.

First, there is that most beautiful of marriage proposals, Psalm 45:10-11: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord and worship thou him." Here the elect Church of this Gospel Age is pictured as a Bride, the ultimate Wife of the great King, Immanuel. To this view of the Church the Apostle's words agree "I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." - 2 Cor. 11:2.

Again, the same truth was foreshadowed in Abraham's selection of a wife for his son Isaac, through the instrumentality of his servant Eliezer. Thus God, through the medium of the holy spirit calls the Church to be associated with Christ, the Bridegroom, who will receive her at his second advent. And in the blessing bestowed upon Rebekah, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions" (Gen. 24:60), we may glimpse the Bride of Christ sharing with him the work of blessing all the families of the earth. (See Gal. 3:29.) Intermingled with St. Paul's practical exhortations to

the Ephesian Church, this same truth is emphasized: "Submitting yourselves one to another in reverence of Christ -- ye wives unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. Because a husband is the head of his wife, as the Christ also is the head of the assembly, he being the savior of the body. Nevertheless as the assembly submitteth herself unto the Christ, so the wives unto their husbands in everything. Ye husbands be loving your wives, even as the Christ also loved the assembly and delivered himself up in her behalf, that her he might sanctify, having purified her with the bath of water in declaration, that he might present unto himself the assembly all glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any of such things, but that she should be holy and blameless. So ought the husbands also to be loving their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself. No one in fact ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Christ the assembly, because members are we of his body. For this cause will a man leave his father and his mother and will cleave unto his wife. And they two shall become one flesh. [Gen. 2:24.] This sacred secret is great. I however am speaking as to Christ and the assembly. " - Eph. 5:21-32.

Note again the words of John the Baptist: "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice, this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." (John 3:29.) John does not identify himself with the Bride class. He was the last of the Prophets; a faithful member of the House of Servants of the Mosaic Dispensation, but did not live on to attain the Gospel privilege which followed Jesus' redemptive work. Of him Jesus said "There has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist, and yet I say unto you, the least one in the Kingdom of God is greater than he." (Luke 7:28.) These words are understandable only as we recognize that the humblest position in the Bride class being selected during this Age, is a higher honor, than that which belongs to the very noblest of the previous dispensations.

In Hebrews 12:23 we read a most significant expression: "the Church of the Firstborn." On the memorable night thirty-five centuries ago when Israel was delivered from bondage, the tenth plague which slew the first-born of Egypt, was stayed in each Israelite home where the blood of the "Passover Lamb" was sprinkled on the door-posts and lintels. These miraculously spared first-born were exchanged by divine command (Num. 3:12, 13) for the tribe of Levi, who were set apart from the other eleven tribes to a mediatorial work in connection with the Tabernacle (and later Temple) sacrifices and services. In the division of the Promised Land, the tribe of Levi received no inheritance; rather, as the Lord himself said: "I am thy part and thine inheritance." (See Num. 18:20; Deut. 10:8, 9.) We may accept these facts and the wealth of other Levitical functions as divinely ordained types prefiguring Jesus and his associated saints and their mediatorial work in the Millennial Kingdom.

Turning from these representations of the elect in type and figure, we consider some of Jesus' teachings relative to this class. To the disciples, his presence and ministry marked the proximity of the long awaited Messianic Kingdom. All their hopes and expectations were of an earthly nature. Gradually and in small portions he imparted to them the wondrous truth concerning their special relationship to himself--truth which they comprehended only after the Pentecostal blessing of the holy spirit. We submit a number of Scriptures in which this truth, this emphasis upon a class chosen by divine arrangement, is embodied--Scriptures the more impressive when contrasted with God's promise to bless all the nations eventually.

Matthew 7:14: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."

John 12:26: "If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be."

Matthew 13:11: "It is given unto you [the disciples] to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them [the people in general] is it not given."

Matthew 11:25: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

Luke 12:32: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

John 15:5, 16, 19: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. . . . Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. . . . I have chosen you out of the world. "

John 14:3: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, ye may be also."

John 17:6, 20, 16, 24: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. . . . They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. . . . Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.

Matthew 24:31: "He shall send his angels . . . and gather together his Elect."

Matthew 25:21: "Good and faithful servant. . . . I will make thee ruler over many things."

To which may be added two verses from the Book of Revelation

Rev. 3:21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

Rev. 2:26: "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. "

The Apostolic letters - directed exclusively to these "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1), and for their spiritual edification, encouragement and instruction-are commentaries in themselves upon our theme. The following selections should prove conclusively the Scripture basis for the doctrine of a "high calling," a secret purpose of God, during the Gospel Age.

2 Pet. 1:3, 4: "Exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye, might be partakers of the divine nature. "

Acts 15:14-17: "How God . . . did visit the Gentiles, to take out a people for his name."

Rom. 8:28-30: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. "

1 Pet. 1:2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God."

Eph. 1:4: "Chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."

1 Pet. 2:9: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood."

1 Thess. 1:4: "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

Rom. 8:28: "The called according to his purpose."

Rev. 17:14: "They that are with him are called and chosen."

2 Pet. 1:10: "Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

1 Cor. 1:26-29: "Ye see your calling, brethren.... not many wise men after the flesh, . . . not many noble, are called."

James 2:5: "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith? "

1 Thess. 2:12: "Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his Kingdom and glory."

2 Pet. 1:3: "Called us to glory and virtue."

Rom. 8:16, 17: "Joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him."

Gal. 3:27, 29: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. . . . And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise. "

2 Tim. 2:12: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him."

1 John 3:2, 3: "When he shall appear, we shall be like him."

Phil. 3:20, 21: "Our polity is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

1 Cor. 12:12-28: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, . . . so also is [the] Christ."

Rom. 12:5: "We being many, are one Body in Christ."

Eph. 5:30: "We are members of his Body."

Eph. 1:22, 23: "The Church which is his Body."

1 Cor. 6:2, 3: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . [and] angels?"

1 Cor. 15:47-49: "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

1 Cor. 15:53: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. "

Rev. 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. "

There thus emerges a Scriptural portrait of a body of Christians, who in gratitude for the grace of God in Jesus Christ, emulate him in the consecration of their lives to God's will; and under the Divine disciplinary experiences are transformed into Jesus' likeness. They are "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:20, 21), the grand meeting place of God and mankind in the Millennium. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my special treasure." (Mal. 3:17.) St. Paul describes their change to glory when the "secret of God is finished" (Rev. 10:7) in these words: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." (1 Thess. 4:16, 17.) This is described elsewhere (Rev. 19:7) in these words: "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." In the Reign of Glory to follow, the Bridegroom and the Bride will lift up poor humanity from sin and sorrow, from degradation and death, and give to each and all the fullest opportunity to return to human perfection and to Divine favor and everlasting life. *Then* shall "the Spirit and the Bride say, Come.... And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17.) "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." - Matt. 13:43.

From the heart of each saint who has "fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 6:18-20), there wells up a joyful echo to John's words of praise (Rev. 1:5, 6)

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

- *W. J. Siekmavn.*

That I May Win Christ

"Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ." - Philippians 3:8.

WE NOTE that this is a letter written by Paul long years after he had found Christ as a Savior. He had *found* Christ, but he had not yet *won* him. In this letter he is revealing the great objective underlying all of his reactions in the service and fellowship of Jesus. To many, Christ is made a means to an end, but to Paul, Christ was the end to be gained, and all phases of the Christian life were looked upon as means to that end. Overtake Paul where we will in all the long years of his after life, and we will always find him reaching forward to this attainment. Let us observe that he is not revealing that his thought is focused primarily on gaining a place in the Kingdom, attaining a crown, etc., but that "I may win Christ."

In all undertakings, even in temporal things, so much depends on a proper beginning. Any one starting out in a business life without some definite plan of action will be almost certain to make a failure of the attempt. Our Lord teaches that this is sure to be true of any one attempting to live the Christian life. The cost is to be carefully considered, and the goal clearly understood.

It is worth while noting the two questions asked by Saul when he met Jesus:

Question No. 1: "Who art thou, Lord?" This question was never fully answered to Paul. Throughout his whole life he was asking that same question. Oh, "That I might know him and the power of his resurrection." Like the Psalmist, who was so eager to know God that he too could say, "As the hart panteth for the water brook, so panteth my soul for thee, O God." What a blessed thirst after a knowledge of God. Jesus' definition of eternal life was "Knowing God."

Question No. 2: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the answer to that question was not forthcoming in a day, nor in a year. Paul discovered a further and greater answer to that question the longer he lived. His longing to know God, and his fervent desire to learn more and more of what the Lord would have him do, made Paul the outstanding example to us that he is. Progress in the Christian life is an utter impossibility to us, too, unless we are constantly asking these same questions.

The difficulty with most of us is that we "came into the truth" all too suddenly. We go back to some date in the past when we first caught sight of some of the outlines of truth, and there "we came into the truth." Ask Paul after his years in Arabia, perhaps fourteen, "Paul, when did you come into the truth?" Ask him the same question ten years later, twenty or thirty years later, and fancy him smiling at us and saying, "When did I come into the truth? Why, my dear brother, I am only *just coming into the truth* as yet." True, he came very quickly to a knowledge of the fundamentals of the truth, the doctrines constituting the faith once delivered; but this was not the end of progress. It was merely the beginning. To obtain a full knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord, was to Paul, too great a matter to be fully grasped at once. He liked to write about "unsearchable riches" and of "love surpassing all understanding," and to urge all to seek "all the fulness of God."

Very early in the new life he grasped the fact that sin was the one great problem -- the effective barrier to fellowship with the Lord -- and that as a foundation of all progress, knowledge, and

fellowship, the question of sin must be given the needed attention. Paul did not offer many excuses for sin, but he constantly emphasized its sinfulness, and he insisted on holiness as the standard of the Christian. In his ministry to the Church he preached the facts of a full deliverance from sin through faith in Christ. To the ungodly his ministry was by no means calculated to "strengthen the hands of the wicked by promising him life." Felix trembled, when Paul reasoned "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment. " He was able to say after years of preaching, "I am free from the blood of all men"; "I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God."

The point is just this: We must have proper views of sin and God's attitude toward it, and understand his remedy for it, if we are to enjoy a real, intimate fellowship with, and *win* Christ. Paul made a sharp distinction between being in contact with Christ and being "in Christ. "

Many of us have fallen into the habit of using some important texts in a rather superficial way. For example: "For me to live is Christ." The meaning, some would say is "to live for Christ"; "that I might win Christ" -- "win a place in the Body of Christ." This was not the meaning Paul placed on these statements. He meant exactly what he said. The thought of many is really limited to "contact" with Christ. Paul's objective was nothing short of "union" with Christ, and not merely contact with him.

The difference between contact and union may be illustrated thus:

Place an indissoluble substance in a glass of water, and you can have all the contact possible, but no union. Place in that same water some dissoluble substance, and at once you will have perfect union. That is what Paul meant in the above and other similar texts. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This thought should be clear enough to us. We have little difficulty with the words of Jesus when he teaches the same union with the Father. He declared that none of his words and works were his own, but those of the Father, who dwelt in him. As Jesus could say, "The Father liveth in me," so Paul desired so to be in Christ and Christ in him that he could say, "Not I, but Christ." And what will all this lead to in Christian experience? It will lead to the sweetest and most intimate fellowship with Christ.

The Bible is truly a most wonderful Book! All the emotions of our souls are embodied in suitable language for us in the Word of God. We are glad for all the pictures and illustrations it furnishes us. We get a thrill out of the illustrations of a soldier standing fully equipped for the battle, and out of the illustrations of servants, watchmen, etc. But there are some emotions that would be left without a fitting expression if only these illustrations were used in the Bible.

Let us look on another picture provided in the Word of Inspiration for us: The Book of Canticles depicts two lovers vying with each other in expressions of adoration and love. Love, consuming love, has a language all its own, a language of the heart. Our Lord is here brought before us as a Lover. "He is seen as manifesting his love to those who appreciate it and to whom it is more precious than all else." By the use of this love story we want to raise our voice once more in a plea for greater emphasis on the devotional life of the Christian.

The Song of Songs, as another has said, is a book for the heart. . . . The inspired title of the book, *The Song of Songs*, indicates its surpassing excellence.... No subject could be greater or sweeter than the love of Christ, and those responsive movements which it awakens in the hearts of those who know it. To have the personal enjoyment of the love of Christ transcends all other joys This song delineates in a figurative way the affections that are in the heart of Christ towards his own, and the affections which have place in their hearts towards him."

We fear there is more emphasis put upon the head knowledge and far too little upon the heart devotion to the person of Christ.

THE SECRET OF THE STAIRS

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs." (Song of Solomon 2:14.) It is the espoused bride that speaks. We have learned many important secrets, the mystery hid from ages, etc. Have we learned the secret of the stairs? Stairs represent a means of rising from lower to higher levels. If we went into the Empire building or any skyscraper structure and desired to go to the top, we could ascend by the stairs. We would not find one continuous flight of stairs leading to the top. Perhaps ten or twelve steps, then a landing, and so on to the top. Those landings would represent the different attainments of professing Christians. Many have climbed only a few flights and have reached their heaven. They have contact. Others may climb a little higher and learn a little more "about Christ." Others who entered the high-calling lost sight of everything but Christ himself. Not until they have reached the top by the last flight of stairs revealed to their devoted eyes will they rest content.

And is there really any secret about these stairs? There must be, for we observe that when one talks about some of the higher possibilities of the Christian life, many are disposed to consider he is merely indulging in some flights of fancy. There is more than one saint who has been "caught away" into blessed visions of Christ, and in that heaven has heard things that cannot be uttered. There are some very vital features of Christian experience which must remain matters of personal experience. They cannot be written in a book for others to read, nor spoken audibly for others to hear. These thrills are to be found in the secret of the stairs.

This, beloved friends, is the life that is lost *in Christ*. He is "the chiefest among ten thousand." "Yea, he is altogether lovely."

- J. J. Blackburn.

Humility

"He that is least among you, the same shall be great." - Luke 9:48, A.R.V.

TO the Greeks meekness was a deplorable lack of courage, so they had no word that Christian writers could use to represent humility as a virtue. For that purpose, therefore, they appropriated two Greek words, one meaning "gentleness," and the other meaning "to depress." The first of these our translators have usually given as meek, and the second as humble. Perhaps because the ancient Hebrews were of a different spirit, the writers of the Old Testament had at their disposal eight words to express these qualities. The most frequently used of these is translated both meek and humble. However, as in English, each of these words is given as a synonym of the other, so in our consideration we will not have to make any fine distinctions between them.

Some manuscripts favor the *King James Translation* of our text, "shall be great," and some favor the "is great," of the *American Standard Version*, and since both are teachings that can well come from our Divine Instructor, we need not take time to decide in favor of either. In our heavenly Judge's eyes the one who is humble is already great, and will be great through the eternal future, if he has the faith to appropriate the "grace sufficient," thus maintaining that humility to the end of this period of testing.

Pride was raising its ugly head when the discussion arose among the disciples as to which would be greatest in the Kingdom. (Matt. 18:1.) Evidently supreme intuition saw some sentiment deeper than that which the mere words conveyed, for in Luke 9:47 we read, "When Jesus saw the reasoning *of their hearts*, he took a little child" "in his arms" -- a child not yet old enough to have been contaminated much by the pride of the elders--and taught them the lesson of humility, a lesson necessary for every Christian of the entire Age. "Whosoever shall *humble* himself as this little child [thus taking an active part himself in cultivating this virtue, not leaving it entirely to the Lord or circumstances], the same is the greatest in the Kingdom."

THE HUMBLE WALK WITH GOD

Jesus' lesson on humility which we have been considering seems to have been imparted soon after Peter, James, and John had been with him in the Mount of Transfiguration. This and other similar favors shown them could easily have caused the three to fall under the temptation to be proud. Heeding Micah 6:8 would have spared them, and us, that danger: "He bath showed thee, O man, *what is good*; and what doth the Lord *require* of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to *walk humbly* with thy God?" One can be sure his walk with God is entirely too limited, or not at all, if being in his presence, the presence of the Emperor of the universe, has not had a humbling effect. Even being in the presence of one of the so called great of earth, will usually leave on the mind of one of the thus honored ones an impression of his littleness.

The margin of the *King James Version* has a reading just as essential for our instruction: "Humble thyself *to walk* with thy God." For the privilege of entering into his presence, it is necessary to be humble; not, "thankful that I am not as other men are," but thankful that he is willing to receive me though I am a sinner just as other men are making me acceptable in his Beloved.

Closely related in greatness and in kind is the assurance of Mark 9:37: "Whosoever shall receive one of such children [disciples are evidently meant] *in my name* [regardless of his imperfections, or the imperfections of the one who receives him] *receiveth me*." How out of all proportion is this

reward for humility on the part of one who has not one thing in himself to be proud of, but abundant reason for shame and humility!

JESUS' HUMILITY

As though receiving himself were not honor enough, Jesus, demonstrating his own humility, adds to the reward for the humility that accepts to fellowship those whom he receives, the assurance that the one who receives him receives the Father. To us the privilege of receiving him would be reward enough, but not so to his humble mind. He knows that the greatest of all blessings is to receive the heavenly Father into our lives. But that, too, like the receiving of Jesus into our hearts, is dependent upon our being humble enough to receive as fellow-members of the Body those whom God has invited into sonship. "If we walk in the light [if we are truth brethren, living the truth] *we have* fellowship one with another." Evidently one is not really "in the truth," "in the light," in the complete sense, *if there is one called one that he is depriving of his fellowship*, except on Scriptural grounds.

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship [partnership, gives the thought more accurately] one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," Brother John adds. Evidently if we do not practice such a partnership, the cleansing blood ceases to be ours. Perhaps this is the key to the reason we cannot have our heavenly Father and Bridegroom in our lives if we do not take our brethren into our fellowship, into our partnership. We, without that blood, are still condemned sinners, and such cannot be partners of the Father and his Son. The standing that acceptance of the cleansing blood gives us, must be maintained. There is no entrance into the heavenly presence for law breakers, but "love is the fulfilling of the law." Love never fails to *desire* the fellowship of the ones loved. Therefore, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." - 1 John 1:7; Romans 12:10.

In this last text we have an excellent means of testing ourselves on two points-humility, and love for the brethren. Can we honestly say, and can we prove, that it gives us greater pleasure to see another brother taking a higher place than ourselves in the Lord's service? If so, we are near the end of the way in Christian development. And if all the brethren of our association have attained that same degree of Christlikeness, never again will we see difficulties among brethren, never any separations.

EVEN "JEHOVAH HUMBLETH HIMSELF"

Jesus is the answer to the question of Psalm 113:5, 6: "Who is like unto Jehovah our God, that bath his seat on high, that *humbleth himself* to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth?" So we cannot go to a better one for advice as to how to attain this most difficult virtue. He advises, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." - Matt. 11:29.

Love means service. If our heads are to wear crowns in heaven, our necks must become used to the yoke here. Only the humble will accept the yoke, for that meant servitude. "By love serve one another" is the Apostle's advice. (Gal. 5:13.) The cross was Jesus' and the Father's greatest service to mankind; so it is into service with them that we are invited when Jesus' voice reaches us: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16:24.) The brethren to whom he first said that, thought they were already following him; but the lesson of the *full* denying of self, uncomplainingly, yea, rejoicingly bearing their crosses, they had not yet learned.

"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, *with him also* that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Isa. 57:15.) Since there is "none that is righteous, no not one," what else can we be but "contrite and humble"? And blessed is that attitude, for it will get for us the attention and assistance of the One who can perfect in us holiness. Peter's advice would never have been, "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy," if he had not known of God's promise of "grace sufficient," forgiving and assisting grace. (1 Peter 1:15.) "Though Jehovah is high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." And so this very quality of humility will draw from him his assistance.

Humility is a quality usually found in the truly great, whether they be of earth or heaven. Pride, the opposite quality, demonstrates an appalling smallness in the soul that harbors it, colossal ignorance of self.

A HUMBLE TEMPLE FOR THE ALMIGHTY

The sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah describes the glories of the new earth. But the next chapter opens with the assurance that even that will not be glorious enough to be a dwelling place for Jehovah. "Thus saith Jehovah, heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what manner of house will ye build for me, and what place shall be my rest? " Assuredly the most ingenious, the most skillful of men, could not build a temple here suitable for his dwelling. The truth regarding the temple actually planned for him is so astounding that Jehovah himself must be quoted as the authority for its description: "Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people!'" The glory of God fills these living temples when they have humbled themselves to walk with their God.

The temples built for the Jewish nation made them think they were essential to God's purpose. Like the Jewish nation, organizations and teachers have a habit of thinking they are necessary in God's plan. As soon as that thought is harbored, they become unnecessary. "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word." (Isa. 66:2.) "He forgetteth not the cry of the meek." (Margin, Psa. 9:12.) "God heareth not sinners," but he "has heard the *desire* of the meek." (Psa. 10:17.) The desire of a humble heart is in line with God's will.

Some very helpful and beautiful examples of meekness have come to us from the past. Abraham: "I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes" -- a good description of any human being. Jacob: "I am not worthy of all thy loving kindnesses, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant. " Gideon: "Behold my family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." Our list cannot be complete, but Moses and Joshua must not be passed by without mention. And the herald of the new age, John the Baptist, ushered it in with proper humility: "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear." (Matt. 3:11.) This way of expressing humility has lost much of its force for us who live in a different day. In his time the vilest of the slaves, the historians tell us, were given charge of the sandals. Jesus' testimony regarding the Baptist was different: "Verily I say unto you: Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." The Baptist had the humility that God rewards. Paul, classing himself as "the chiefest of sinners," "less than the least of all saints," with all his talents and faithful service, set us an example we will need much educating to be able to follow. "*Put on* therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, *lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing* one another, even as the Lord forgave you, so do ye." - Col. 3:12, 13.

HUMILITY, THEN FORBEARANCE, THEN SERVICE

Ephesians 4:2 enjoins, "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another *in love*." We will have to be "clothed with humility" in order to have this love that serves. (1 Peter 5:5.) Jesus, girding himself with a towel, finished his ministry with a visible lesson in humility, a reiteration of the lesson of cross-bearing.

SCORN FOR OTHERS NOT AN EVIDENCE OF HUMILITY

Proverbs 3:4: "Surely he scorneth the scorners and giveth grace unto the *lowly*," should give confusion of face to us who have taken pleasure in scorning others who proclaim themselves followers of the meek and lowly Nazarene, but who struggle in a lesser light than we enjoy. Instead of scorning, we should have had extended pity and a helping hand. One cannot but recognize how stumblingly they walk, but scorning them for it only brings upon us the scorn of the One who is our Judge. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and keep silence, because *He* hath laid it upon him. Let him put his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope [because then there will be no boastful, scornful words to disgrace us with our God]. Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him; let him be filled full with reproach. For the Lord will not cast off forever. For though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses. " - Lam. 3:27-32.

- P. E. Thomson

Notice of Annual Meeting

As announced in our March-April issue, the Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., is scheduled to be held on Saturday, September' 18, at 10:00 a.m., in the Central Y.M.C.A., 1315 Pacific Avenue, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

While only members of the Institute may vote (in person or by proxy), all those who love our Lord Jesus and his appearing are welcome to attend.

The Agenda will include a report by the Chairman, reviewing the activities of the Institute for the preceding period. Following his report, the election of directors for the coming year will take place. Opportunity will also be given for the consideration of such other matters as may properly come before the meeting.

The seven brethren now serving as directors are candidates for reelection. Brothers Frank Heitland, Laurence Iannaccone, Mitchell Rutkowski, William Urbaniak, and Edward Zielinski have also been nominated.

Recently Deceased

Margaret H. Black, San Antonio, Tex.

F. B. Edgell, Leigh-On-Sea, Eng.

John D. Gage, Davison, Mich.

Harriet Hiller, Ft. Worth; Tex.

Lydia Musk, Bury, Eng.

Mary Nitka, Milwaukee, Wis.

Jess E. Benne, Decatur, Mich.

Daniel W. Schnebee, Staten Island, N.Y.

Richard O. Skidmore, Alice, Tex.

John Szkaradek, Harvey, Ill.

Hubert Thompson, Essex, Eng.