

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XLIX    September / October, 1966    No. 5

## Has Judgment Day Begun?

*"God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." - Acts 17:31.*

THE words of our text are those of the Apostle Paul, spoken from Mars' Hill, in his celebrated discourse to the men of Athens. Of such great import are his words that they have been inscribed in Greek on a bronze plaque on the hillside.

Some have expressed the thought that we may have already entered a judgment Day, if not *the* Judgment Day of our text, and have asked the question: Has Judgment Day begun?

Before attempting an answer to this question, let us consider the two terms "judgment" and "day" and see how they are employed in the Scriptures.

The term "judgment" signifies more than merely the rendering of a verdict. It includes the idea of a trial, as well as a decision based upon that trial. And this is true not only of the English word judgment but also of the Greek word which it translates.

The term "day," both in the Scriptures and in common usage, though most frequently used to represent a period of twelve or twenty-four hours, really specifies any definite or special period of time. Thus, for instance, we speak of Noah's *day*, Luther's day, Washington's day; and thus in the Bible the entire time of creation is called a day, where we read of "the day that Jehovah God made the earth and the heavens" (Gen. 2:4) -- a long, definite period. Then we read of "the day of temptation in the wilderness" -- forty years (Heb. 3:8, 9); also of the "day of Christ," the "day of judgment," and "his day"; terms applicable to the Millennial Age, in which Messiah will reign over, rule, and judge the world in righteousness, granting trial as well as rendering sentence. Those who will carefully consult a complete concordance of the Bible with reference to the Day of Judgment, and note the kind and amount of work to be accomplished within that period, will

soon see the absurdity of the common view of a twelve or twenty-four hour day, and the necessity for giving to the term "day" its wider significance.

The Scriptures make mention of a number of judgment days. Two of these relate to the human race as a whole. Between these two, several others are stated as taking place.

The first of the world's two judgment days was at the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, when the whole human race was judged representatively in Adam, its head. Some have been disposed to resent this judgment, insisting that Adam misrepresented rather than represented them, but God, whose wisdom is infinite, states the contrary to be true.

The second and final Judgment Day for the world is yet future, when each will be judged individually.

### **WHO WILL BE THE JUDGE?**

We are further informed that when God gives the world this individual trial, it will be under Christ as Judge, whom God will thus honor because of his obedience even unto death for our redemption. God has highly exalted him, even to the divine nature, that he may be a Prince and a Savior (Acts 5:31), that he may be able to recover from death and grant judgment (including trial) to all whom he purchased with his own precious blood. Since it is the plain declaration of Scripture that "God has committed all judgment unto the Son," and has given him "all power in heaven and in earth," there is nothing to dread, but on the contrary, there is great cause for rejoicing on the part of all, in looking forward to the Judgment Day. The character of the Judge is a sufficient guarantee that the judgment will be just and merciful, with due consideration for the infirmities of all, until the willing and obedient are brought back to the original perfection lost in Eden. With this conclusion *all* the prophetic declarations agree. It is written: "With righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity" (Psa. 98:9).

### **BY WHAT LAW WILL THE WORLD BE JUDGED**

This coming judgment will be on exactly the same principles as the first. The same law of obedience will be presented, with the same reward of life and the same penalty of death. And as the first trial had a beginning, progressed, and culminated in a verdict and sentence, so also will the second; and the sentence will be life to the righteous and death to the unrighteous. The second trial will be more favorable than the first because of the experience gained under the results of the first trial. Unlike the first trial, the second trial will be one in which every man will stand the test for himself alone and not for another. None will then die because of Adam's sin or because of inherited imperfections. It shall no more be said, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge; but he that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." "The soul that sinneth, it [and not its children] shall die" (Ezek. 18:4; Jer. 31:29, 30),

Under the reign of Christ, mankind will be gradually educated, trained, disciplined, until they reach perfection, And when they have reached perfection, perfect harmony with God will be required, and any who then fall short of perfect obedience will be cut off, being judged unworthy of life. God had a right to demand perfect obedience of Adam, since he was created perfect; and he will demand the same of all men when the great work of restoring them is complete. None will be permitted to have everlasting life who then in the slightest degree fall short of perfection. To fall short of perfection, then, will be to sin willfully against full light and perfect ability.

We do not wish to be understood as ignoring the present responsibility of the world, which every man has, according to the measure of light enjoyed, whether it be much or little, whether it be the light of nature or of revelation. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," and "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Prov. 15:3; Eccles. 12:14). The good and evil deeds of the present time will receive a just recompense of reward either now or hereafter.

### **JUDGMENT OF TWO SPECIAL CLASSES**

Between the world's two judgment days discussed in the foregoing sections, a period of about six thousand years intervenes. During this long period, God has been selecting two special classes from among men, and specially trying, testing, disciplining, and training them to be his honored instruments during the second of the world's judgment days.

These two classes are respectively designated by St. Paul as the "house of sons" and the "house of servants" (Heb. 3:5, 6), the former being composed of those overcomers tried and found faithful during the Christian dispensation (the Gospel Age), and the latter being composed of the faithful overcomers who lived before the Christian dispensation. Those who successfully pass the trial for either of these special classes will not come into judgment (including trial) with the world, but will enter upon their reward when the world is coming into its second judgment day. They will be God's agents in the blessing of the world; in giving to men the instruction and training necessary for their final testing and judgment. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2).

### **JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS**

The world's second judgment day is immediately preceded by a judgment of the nations, as such. They are to be judged politically, ecclesiastically, and socially. Many Scriptures make this clear. However, while noting these, it is important to bear in mind the difference between national judgment and individual judgment. While the nation is composed of individuals, and individuals are largely responsible for the courses of nations, and must and do suffer greatly in the calamities which befall them, nevertheless the judgment of the world, as individuals, will be distinct from its judgment as nations. The day of individual judgment for the world will be the Millennial Age, as previously noted. Then, under the favorable conditions of the New Covenant, and granted a clear knowledge of the truth and every possible assistance and incentive to righteousness, all men individually, and not collectively as nations, will be on trial, or judgment, for eternal life.

The judgment of the nations which precedes this individual trial is a judgment of men in their collective capacities. The civil institutions of the world, social, political, religious, have had a long lease of power. And now, as the "Times of the Gentiles" come to a close, they must render up their accounts. And the Lord's judgment, expressed beforehand by the Prophets, is that not one of them will be found worthy of a renewal of that lease or a continuance of life. The decree is that the dominion shall be taken from them and that he whose right it is shall take the Kingdom, and the nations shall be given to him for an inheritance (Ezek. 21:27; Dan. 7:27; Psa. 2:8; Rev. 2:26, 27).

Let us listen to a few passages from the pen of other Prophets which bear directly on this subject: "Come near, ye nations, to hear, and hearken, ye people ... for the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies" (Isa. 34:1, 2). Again: "The Lord . . . is an everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation" (Jer. 10:10). "A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a

controversy with the nations. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind [that is, intense and complicated trouble and commotion] shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth" (Jer. 25:31-33).

In calling attention to this subject, it is not our intention to arouse a mere sensation or to seek to gratify idle curiosity. Nor can we hope to produce in the minds and hearts of men such a condition of repentance as would work a change in the present social, political, and religious order of society, and thus avert the calamity. All the powerful causes which produce the trouble have been long at work; and no human power is able to arrest their operation and progress toward their certain end. No hand but the hand of the Lord could stay the progress of the present current of events, and his hand will not do so until the bitter experiences of this conflict shall have sealed their instruction upon the hearts of men. Our only object, therefore, in mentioning the subject at all, is to forewarn, forearm, comfort, encourage, and strengthen the "household of faith," so that they may not be dismayed but be enabled to look beyond the severest measures of divine disciplining in the chastening experiences of the world and see by faith the glorious outcome in the precious fruits of righteousness and enduring peace.

### **HAS THE JUDGMENT DAY OF THE NATIONS BEGUN?**

As we look about us and note the conditions in the world today, it is difficult to escape the conclusion, especially when these conditions are considered in connection with time prophecies, that the nations have already entered their judgment day, that they are even now being weighed in the balances and found wanting. Indeed, for years it has been seen that the gathering of the nations and assembling of the kingdoms, preparatory to pouring upon them his indignation, "even all his fierce anger," as yet another Prophet (Zeph. 3:8, 9) graphically describes it, has been in process.

Modern discovery and invention have made the remotest ends of the earth neighbors to each other. Travel, mailing facilities, the telegraph, the telephone, the radio and television have brought all the world into a community of thought and action hitherto unknown. Truly, the nations are "assembled" in a manner not expected, yet in the only manner in which they could be assembled, namely, in common interest and activity; but alas, not in brotherly love, for selfishness marks every step of this progress. The spirit of enterprise, of which selfishness is the motive power, has prompted the construction of the railways, the steamships, the airplanes, the telegraphs, the cables, the telephones, the radios, the television sets. Selfishness regulates commerce and international relationships, and every other energy and enterprise except the preaching of the Gospel and the establishment of benevolent institutions; and even in these it is to be feared that much that is done is inspired by motives other than pure love for God and humanity. Selfishness has gathered the nations and has been steadily preparing them for the predicted, and now fast approaching, retribution which is so graphically described by the Prophet as the "fire of God's jealousy," or anger, which is about to consume utterly the present social order. Yet this is speaking only from the human standpoint. From the standpoint of the Prophet, this gathering of the nations is ascribed, not to man's own efforts, but to God. Both standpoints are true; for while man is permitted the exercise of his free agency, God, by his overruling providence, is shaping human affairs for the accomplishment of his own wise purposes. And therefore, while men and their works and ways are the agents and agencies, God is the great Commander who now gathers the nations and assembles the kingdoms from one end of the earth to the other, preparatory to the transfer of earth's dominion to him "whose right it is" -- Immanuel.

The Prophet tells us why the Lord thus gathers the nations, saying, "That I may pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger." This message would bring us sorrow and anguish only, were it not for the assurance that the results shall work good to the world, overthrowing the reign of selfishness and establishing, through Christ's Millennial Kingdom, the reign of righteousness referred to in the words of the Prophet: "Then will I turn unto the people a pure language [their communications with each other shall no longer be selfish but pure, truthful, and loving, to the intent] that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

*We* see the deepening clouds of trouble. We hear the thunder-tones of judgment that "call the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof" (Psa. 50:1) from the east to the west. We see the lightning-flashes of truth and righteousness, and observe how the whole earth is now in the shaking process which will eventuate in the complete overthrow of all existing institutions, systems, and governments. Present events indeed speak in trumpet tones. Even as these words are being set up in type, a military expert (note -- not a preacher but an army general) ends his radio news-broadcast with a quotation from the Bible: "A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction" (Jer. 50:22). How shall we regard these things? Surely, dear reader, it will be with thoughtful and reverent hearts! *In* this eventful period everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that only the unshakeable things of truth and righteousness may remain (Heb. 12:25-29). Every one called to a share in the coming Kingdom must be a lover of righteousness, one who will courageously and loyally exercise an influence which is always favorable to righteousness, justice, mercy, and peace. All others will be shaken out. In the end only the true will remain. "Seeing that we look for these things, [let us] be diligent, that we may be found of him in [inward] peace, without spot, and blameless," as the Apostle exhorts (2 Pet. 3:14).

When our Lord was here in the flesh, the destruction of Jerusalem and the utter ruin of Palestine were close at hand. In those days our Savior forewarned his disciples against laying up treasures for themselves on earth. His counsel and advice to them was to lay up their treasures in heaven, and in the end they would find them there. The Lord's true people of today occupy a similar position. The great, symbolic burning day is near. Christendom is about to be destroyed. In this great symbolic conflagration the possessions of earth will be valueless. The opportunities for laying up treasures in heaven will soon be overpast. Let us, therefore, brethren, heed the Master's words, dedicating, or rededicating, as the case may be, our all of earthly life and fortune upon his altar and seek to employ time, talent, and ability in the service of him who hath called us from darkness to light; of him who will at last welcome the faithful to the place that he has gone to prepare, in the Father's house of many mansions; for there we shall find the heavenly treasures that can never fade, never tarnish, never rust, and the glory and luster of which will abide throughout all time. Amen.

- P. L. Read

## The Holy City and the River of Life

*"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven. . And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." - Rev. 21:2; 22:1.*

THE vision of the new Jerusalem, the account of which concludes the Book of Revelation and the Bible, is a symbolic representation of the final phase, the consummation, of the Divine Plan. John saw a wonderful city descending out of the heavens, to settle everlastingly upon the new earth created by God, to take the place of that old earth which had passed away. This city was to become the dwelling-place of God, where he would dwell with men, and into it there should nothing defiling ever enter; only those could enter who were accounted worthy of everlasting life. From the city there flowed a "river of life," having "trees of life" growing upon its banks, and from this water and food of life the sin-sick nations of the world were to derive sustenance and healing. The vision closes with a gracious invitation to all men, that they come and partake of the water of life freely.

This is not a vision of heaven, as so many have supposed. Its essential basis is the coming of divine government to the earth and the presence of God to be with men. It foreshadows the restoration of Edenic conditions upon earth, for the connection of this river and these trees of life with the Genesis story is too plain to be ignored. It pictures the time when this rebellious earth has become fully reconciled to God and, to use Paul's words in Rom. 8:21: "The creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." The Church of Christ has already (in the 20th chapter) been exalted to heaven and eternal association with Christ the Lord; the 21st and 22nd chapters tell of the corresponding completion of the Divine Plan for the earth, a completion which is to be effected during the Millennial Age.

John's introductory synopsis of the vision (Rev. 21:1-8) records the words he heard from heaven: *"Behold the tabernacle [dwelling-place] of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."* It is sometimes suggested that this chapter records two separate descents of the Holy City to earth; this is not likely. It is more probable that John prefaced his account of the actual vision with a short summary and then, in Rev. 21:9, addressed himself to the vision in detail.

The city as it appeared to John was square in outline, surrounded by a high wall of gleaming green jasper, the golden buildings set in terraces, one above another so that at the center its height appeared to be as great as the width. This square form symbolized the justice and righteousness of the new Divine government; and its intimate connection with the heavenly powers was shown by its towering up to the skies. The wall rested upon twelve foundations bearing the names of the twelve Apostles, and at each of the twelve lofty gateways there was posted a guardian angel. The number twelve had particular significance to the ancients, for they pictured the sun as issuing forth from twelve successive portals in the heavens in turn, as month succeeded month, and this, with the division of the day into twelve hours, invested the number with the idea of earthly or material completeness and universality. Hence the twelve gateways, facing three each to north, south, east, and west, symbolized the universal invitation to all peoples of earth to enter the Holy City: "Whosoever will, let him come" (Rev. 22:17). "In this mountain will the Lord of hosts make unto *all* people a feast of fat things" (Isa. 25:6). The twelve foundations bearing the names of the

Apostles stood for the universal appeal of the Gospel upon which the City is built. The height of the wall, one hundred and forty-four cubits, indicated the full comprehensive nature of the Kingdom, that it will contain all of God's earthly perfected creation; nothing will be left outside.

The first function of the Holy City is to cleanse the nations. God is pictured as dwelling in the center of the City, seated upon his Throne, his Son Jesus Christ beside him, for the purpose of "wiping away all tears" from the eyes of men (Rev. 21:4; Rev. 22:3-5), and bringing healing to all. This work is denoted by the spectacle of a River of Life, seen by John to proceed from the Throne and issue forth from the City to flow through the country outside. The Authorized Version verse division of Rev. 22:1, 2 is unfortunate and obscures the true sense. Rightly expressed, the passage reads: *"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street of it [the city]. And on either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."* The term "street" means a broad highway, and "tree of life" is a generic term referring, not to one single tree, but to the species generally. John saw this broad highway extending outward from the *city* and the river flowing along its center, the sides of the river being flanked with trees of life bearing twelve varieties of fruit. This is much like the vision seen by Ezekiel when he saw the river of life issuing from the Millennial Temple and flowing out to the east country, the trees of life on its bank also being for food and healing (Ezek. 47:1-12). This "street" corresponds to the "Highway of Holiness" spoken of by Isaiah in his 35th chapter: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it [overlook it or miss finding it]; *for he* shall be with them." This "Highway of Holiness" is the symbolic road along which mankind will be invited and exhorted, during the Millennial Age, to travel, toward harmony and reconciliation with God through faith in Jesus Christ and acceptance of him as Savior.

*"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it"* (21:24). These are the peoples to whom are addressed the words in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats: *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Matt. 25:34). When the evangelical work of the Millennial Age has been completed and all who are capable of recovery have become reconciled to God and attained human perfection, they are depicted as being the perpetual citizens of the Holy City. Every man will be a king, for God created man lord of the earthly dominion, and all men will share in the task of administering this earthly dominion in harmony with divine laws. Hence all are "kings" and all will bring the glory and honor of sinless manhood into it.

Here the veil is drawn. The Holy Scriptures do not take us beyond the end of the Millennial Age to talk in detail of the "ages of glory to follow."

Of the condition and life of the redeemed through the everlasting years they say nothing. We are shown the Plan of God for this earth at its triumphant conclusion, sin and evil banished forever, irreclaimable evildoers destroyed, the Church of Christ exalted to the heavens, and all the nations fully converted to God and enjoying his munificence on the restored and perfected earth. *"Not a stain of sin mars the peace and harmony of a perfect society."*

For the further glories of revelation, of knowledge and of activity that must assuredly be the lot of all the redeemed, we must wait until the time shall come; but we can wait in full assurance that as Isaiah predicted (Isa. 32:17), *"the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."*

- A. O. Hudson, Eng.



## Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart

*"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." - Psa. 119:105.*

IN THE tabernacle erected in the wilderness the Holy of Holies represented the place of God's dwelling among His people. Within that sacred place there was the ark of the covenant, and enshrined in that ark, covered by the mercy-seat, overshadowed by the cherubim, and illuminated by the glory of the shekinah light, there rested the two tables of the law-holy words graven by the hand of God, these words representing His righteousness and man's consistent attitude thereto. Thus in the heart of that sacred enclosure, curtained off by the surrounding white linen wall, God placed in this inmost shrine a sacred and profoundly significant revelation of a holy God to sinful but not forsaken men.

In the age of law there was necessarily this fixed location for that which would represent God's presence with Israel, and toward which center the worshiper's mind would habitually turn. Thus it was that the beloved Daniel opened his window toward Jerusalem as three times a day he made supplication to his God. But in this our favored day, since "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," the approach to God is through "a new and living way." No longer is it necessary to think that alone in Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim may worship be offered to God, but access to the sacred place of worship and intimate communion is now open to all who in any place offer Him worship in spirit and in truth.

Once God spoke to His people "at sundry times and in divers manners," but now He "hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." (Heb. 1:1, 2.) Once it was in the words of the law spoken from clouds of "blackness and darkness and trumpet," but now His voice is heard in the tender tones of grace, speaking peace through One of whom He has said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." - Matt. 17:5.

Still, however, at the center of our worship, and as the inmost shrine of our devotion, there the Word of God must be. If we would worship in truth, surely the instructions of the Word are of greatest importance lest "strange fire" mingle with our approach to Him. In true prayer we speak to God, and our prayers are purified of dross only when they are offered as directed by the Word. In that same Word God speaks to us, but "the word spoken" will profit us nothing if the heart is out of tune with the infinite One who speaks through that medium of communication with us. This is made important because for us the New Testament contains a message peculiarly intended for the ears of the heart, and thus the apostle prays, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His invitation, what the glorious wealth of His inheritance among the saints." - Eph. 1:17, 18, "Diaglott."

In this New Testament message there is a revelation, perfect, grand in its simplicity, and purifying in its influences, which ought to lie deeply fixed in our heart of hearts. This message should pervade all our worship, give clearness to our reason, ennoble our affections, and cause our daily walk to bear witness to its elevating power. Therefore, says the same apostle, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Antecedent to Paul's day, having the Word deep in the heart was recognized as important. The Psalmist found it so and thus gave testimony thereto: "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee." (Col. 3:16; Psa. 119:11.) Certain it is, if our minds are well stored with the Word, our songs will

be of His grace, and because that Word enlightens our pathway, the pitfalls of sin will be discerned and avoided.

### **How Much of the Word is Hidden in our Heart?**

Church history tells of a time when the Bible was forbidden to the people. It was buried in dead languages, and at most there were only a few copies, and these chained to pulpits in places of worship. Today we have it printed in many languages and dialects, and over its pages the devout searcher for truth, in most countries, may meditate and pray with perfect freedom. But notwithstanding the more favorable conditions of this time, are there as many as might be whose devotion to this, divine revelation is such as we have expressed in the familiar lines:

"O! may these heavenly pages be  
My ever dear delight;  
And still new beauties may I see,  
And still increasing light!"

If all copies of our Bible and all Biblical literature with which we are familiar were somehow destroyed, what portions of that professedly treasured Word could we contribute toward its restoration? Remembering the inspired warning, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip," is it not made important that we too may say with the Psalmist, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart"? Many are the reasons why the Word of God should be stored up in the memory. Blindness can come, various physical afflictions can remove from us the joy of reading its pages for ourselves, but if the memory be filled with its promises, prophecies, and precepts, there can be unbroken contact therewith. Then, too, what weapon is so effective as "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," when Satan comes with his subtle temptations? No better weapon has been given us whereby we may "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." Fortified with that Word, our faith will never be found standing "in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God," for a "thus saith the Lord" will be required for every item of our faith.

Such a book as the Bible is needed by the human heart. "Whoever made that book made me," was the remark of a Chinese teacher who, himself a Confucianist, was reading the New Testament in Chinese in order to teach the English missionary the language of China. And will this testimony not be corroborated by every openhearted reader of that same book? It reveals, as no other literature in the world does, the heart of God in relation to the sons of men, whose joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, sins and doubts, and longings and failures remain ever the same. Only in the light of that revelation can these varied experiences find a satisfactory interpretation. It has been well said by some one, "As long as the heart has passions, and as long as life has woes" the comfort of the Holy Scriptures will be the boon of the inquiring or troubled heart. And what a telescope it is by which the eye of faith may look far beyond the horizons of physical sight, seeing the King in His beauty, and catching visions of future glories and perfect knowledge framed in the large dimension of eternity.

The whole earth seems to be explored for figures with which to convey to our minds the completeness of the Bible, of which the words of Paul are beautifully corroborative when he says, "All Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.) It is a lamp and light to guide individual steps along life's devious paths, a sun above showing whither the path as a whole trends and leads—even to heaven itself. (Psa. 119:105.) God's Word comes as the rain in showers of refreshing, and it distils as the

dew when the heart is stilled into meditative quietness, and sweet as honey to the taste. (Deut. 32:2; Psa. 19:10; 119:103.) There is milk for babes and strong meat for the mature. Freedom is its promise. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He who follows it walks at large in liberty, is the word of the Old Testament writer, and Paul in prison declares, "The Word of God is not bound." (2 Tim. 2:9.) Great treasure indeed to the individual believer, and also to the Church of Christ collectively. Its Author-One, though speaking by many voices-is the Author and ruler of life, who in His Word describes, directs, rebukes, consoles, elevates the soul which none but He Himself can thoroughly know, and none but He can abidingly satisfy, none but Himself can finally save.

### **"Speak, Lord, for Thy Servant Heareth"**

No "private interpretation" of individual or church can ever be allowed to petrify or fossilize the Word, which holy men spake because "moved" to do so by the Holy Spirit, and which that same spirit will move humble searchers to study and understand. Nothing is made clearer in the Bible than the fact that the Holy Spirit will ever be making fresh applications of that Word to our present need. To be what God wants it to be to us, it must be taken as a personal message, a message calculated to wash and sanctify us. Possible it is to treat the Bible as an idol, to make it a book valued mainly because it is understood to support a line of interpretations dear to us, the product of our own imaginations. The remedy for this is a rich possession of the spirit, the spirit of teachableness and obedience, which prays, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Then the Word will be made a living message, with new power, new aspirations, and "the man of God may be thoroughly furnished" at all times and have his feet directed according to that Word.

"The Light of the world is Jesus." In Scripture all leads up to Him or on from Him. Therefore, to make Him the Master-light of our life is to follow a sound and wise law of interpretation based on the facts of the case. In this we have His own example, when He would clear away misunderstandings and fill hearts with burning joy, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:27.) Thus we look unto Jesus our Light and Life, and He is also "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." This looks into the future associations promised those who shall reign with Him. All this, therefore, involves an eventual attainment of perfect training and a fixity of character in the principles of righteousness. And for this same training and character, this mature power to judge of all things in the light of perfect truth, and estimating all issues with proper insight, the Word of God is the chosen instrument Jesus taught us the spirit would use. Thus, indeed, it was written long ago: "I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation." - Psa. 119:99.

Many passages of Scripture set forth the close relationship between the pure Word and our sanctification through its assimilation. In John 17:17 our Lord prayed, as given in the Authorized Version, "Sanctify them through Thy truth," and this may well be taken to prove the Word the most effective medium of our sanctification. The Revised Version reads, "Sanctify them in the truth." At first sight this may not seem so easy to understand. But this version implies rather strongly that there is need for a devotion to the whole sphere of purifying truth, all of truth brought within our reach as we endeavor to "comprehend with all saints" the immeasurable lengths and depths of divine revelation. Thus, only as we seek to be sanctified in the truth can we be preserved from blending its pure gold with the alloy of human invention, or altogether debasing its lofty inspiring significance and standards.

Can we affirm to God, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart"? Can we affirm it so truthfully that under test we will be found fortified, sanctified, and matured by it? Then, remembering that He

who is the Living Word has made us know that He too must be enthroned in the heart, can we affirm in confidence that He has an undisputed rulership there? Truly, if the written Word and the Living Word are both in possession of our hearts, sin can never gain the mastery over us.

This being so, how deep a truth lies in the words of another apostle: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7.) Here love is the test of our light and cleansing. The proof that we are in the light of God's Word is found in our universal fellowship with all who have Jesus as their light and the cleansing of His blood. He who walks in this love is in the light. He who walks not in this love walks in darkness, and in that darkness there can be no vision of the face of Jesus Christ. If no vision of His face, "the light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ" is obscured; therefore, no sanctification, no transformation into His image. Like the foolish virgins of the parable, whose lamps were no doubt as well trimmed as those carried by the wise, but alas! no oil in their vessels with the lamps-so it can be with us. A well known Bible is no substitute for a Christ-filled heart. It is only when the beauty of His perfection is brought into our hearts and lives that we see light in His light and gloriously receive and reflect the light of the glory of God. Shall we not prize still more highly the Word of God, knowing that it really is a "boon most sacred from the Lord." Shall our prayer not be:

"Divine Instructor, gracious Lord,  
Be Thou forever near;  
Teach me to love Thy sacred Word,  
And view my Savior here."

- Contributed by J. J. Blackburn

## The Divine Shelter

*"See! a King shall rule justly, and princes do right, and a Man be a shelter from wind, and a refuge from storm, like pools in a dry, like a shadowing rock in a wearisome land." - Isa., 32:1, Fenton's Translation. .*

THE STRIKING language of the Prophet in this text contains a wealth of meaning to all who are weary of the dark night of sin and sorrow, and who cling with undiminished faith to the promise of a joyful morning without clouds, when sighing and crying shall flee away forever. Indeed the prophecy is so striking that we may well inquire, Of whom does the Prophet speak when he tells of one who shall be so complete a hiding place? If we are to understand him to refer to one among the sons of men, where can such an one be found? For six thousand years mankind has sought in vain for such a deliverer, only to discover that no arm of flesh has been competent toward off the succeeding waves of storm and tempest. The pages of history carry the records of man's shattered hopes, as through the ages he has repeatedly chosen some trusted leader to guide him into a happier state, only to find that it is not in the power of any human agency to break the fetters under which the whole creation groans and travails. Surely the experience of threescore centuries has demonstrated the verity of the inspired declaration, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." (Psa. 146:3, 4.) Who then is the man foreseen by the Prophet Isaiah?

Even if it be admitted that in some manner such a prophecy might be a forecast of a man's future glory and service to his fellows, yet it seems that the only possible application which would give full weight to the prophecy of so great a wealth of blessing, would be that it refers to the "Man" whom God has appointed to abolish sin and death, and to fill the earth with perpetual rest and peace. "The Man Christ Jesus" is the only One who can be the deliverer and the refuge from all the adverse conditions of wind and storm, and bring forth streams in the desert, or be the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land. In Him alone may the Church now and a sin-sick world by and by find the fruition of all true desire for emancipation and peace, for only in and through Him is it possible to find a complete satisfaction of the unutterable longings of the heart for perfect harmony with infinite love.

### A Thousand Years Earth's Coming Glory

Taken as a prophecy of earth's future glory under the reign of its rightful King in association with His Bride, the Church, our text leaves nothing more to be desired. Ever since man was driven out from the happy home provided for him, "eastward in Eden," where he had enjoyed intimate communion with God, and then because of disobedience sent out into the earth, cursed for his sake, to dwell where "the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness," and toil with sweat of brow against the thorns and thistles, the disappointments, suffering, and exposure to the unrelenting malice of a malignant Adversary, O how greatly he has needed a hiding place. Surely unnumbered souls have felt as Job must have done when he prayed in the midst of his affliction, "O that Thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that Thou wouldest keep me secret, until Thy wrath be past, that Thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" (Job 14:13.) "Many indeed have similarly longed to escape the afflictions traceable to the entrance of sin into the world, and to go "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." How blessed then to know that for a thousand wonderful years mankind will be in the hands of Christ and His Church, and through the Kingdom protections and advantages be hidden from the demands of a

perfect law, until qualified to fall into the hands of the living God without fear. In that glad day they shall find the promise fulfilled, far beyond all the dreams which have kept hope springing eternal in the human breast.

Truly, it is not in the power of human tongue or pen to portray the glorious perfection of the coming earthly Paradise condition when mankind have found shelter in the Rock of Ages and complete deliverance from sin and death through Emmanuel's reign. It is beyond our present powers of imagination to visualize the happiness of man's estate, when the great work of reconciliation between God and man is complete, and "the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. 21:3.) But this we know that in that glad day every God implanted longing of which a perfect heart is capable, will find its full realization and expression. Man will be at rest in God, world without end.

### **Every Man shall Love His Fellow**

Harmony with God will mean perfect harmony with each brother man in that eternal Kingdom of joy and peace; for then no more will "man's inhumanity to man make countless thousands mourn," but instead, earth's society will be fashioned after the order of that which fills the courts of heaven itself. O what a wealth of possibilities divine love has planted within the mind of man! Created in the image and likeness of God, there are springs of infinite and eternal possibilities hidden in that image and likeness far beyond our present ability to even catch a dim outline. Man, as God intends he shall yet be, is a noble, lovable, marvelous creation. When we read, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," we must not confine the meaning of this love of God for man to the limits of a great sympathy for him in his fallen condition. The love of God for man is centered in His eternal purpose, when in the exercise of His creative love and power He added a perfect human being to "the whole family of God."

Is there not more of heaven-born love, rather than mere human reaction, when a new-born babe adds to the number of the family circle. The two or three children who have preceded it are not loved less, but the new arrival becomes the center of every one's affection, and all combine to welcome the added treasure given them to love and cherish. So it must have been among the heavenly host when man appeared among the children of God. Are we not told that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" over the works of creation? And who but the First-born of all creation is represented in these illuminating words, "The Lord [Jehovah] possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I 'brought forth. Then was I by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth, **and My delights were with the sons of men.**" (Job 38:7; Prov. 8:22, 25, 30, 31.) Do these Scriptures not tell us something of the thrills of joy experienced by all former members of "the family of God" when roan, "crowned with glory and honor" came from the hand of Him whose name means Love?

And it was this noble creature that "God so loved." It was this marvelous being that Jesus gave His life to reclaim, and it is this conception of man as God beholds him by and by, that fills our own hearts with that unexplainable present love for mankind, even though for the present moment he is so marred and defiled by sin. Underneath the marred and sadly disfigured image borne by the mean as we see him today, we realize there are those latent qualities which six thousand years of the exceeding sinfulness of sin has not entirely eradicated. And so with "the love of God shed abroad in our hearts," and faith in His power to reclaim and perfect even to the uttermost all who

come unto Him, do we not find a sheltering love creeping into our own souls and feel the surging floods of living water welling up in our hearts for every struggling human being, filling us with, a longing to refresh them with its thirst-quenching sweetness? Surely, to have had contact with the "Man," that "shadowing Rock in a wearisome land," has filled our lives with love for the world, for whom He gave His life to reclaim from sin, that He might again crown them with the glory and honor of perfect manhood.

If these be the reactions we experience today as we come under the benevolent influences of the redemptive love of God, shall it not be so with the world of mankind when Jesus reigns from "the river unto the ends of the earth"? In that day "every man" shall indeed "love his fellow, justice give to each and all, dwell in love, and dwell in Jesus, who redeemed them from the fall. Living, as each one will be, under the sheltering wings of Christ's Kingdom reign, and receiving through its beneficent provisions; all needed sympathy and encouragement, "the brotherhood of man" will then become a beautiful reality. Living in constant contact with Christ and His Bride will bring them into an understanding touch with everything in human life. They shall learn to look for the man God intends, and forget the warped and twisted characters undergoing the regenerative operations of that glorious restitution day. The love of Christ will constrain them, to practise a sympathy with "all sorts and conditions of men" in all sorts of deformity, and thus together they shall attain the goal of perfect Godlikeness -- perfect life, perfect love, perfect rest, completeness. Verily the prophetic picture given in our text is no overdrawn forecast of earth's coming glory, or of the completeness of the deliverance man shall enjoy from wind and storm, arid conditions, or from the inhumanity of man to man.

### **Great Need of Compassion for the Groaning Creation**

Such a picture as we have before us of God's present sympathy for mankind in his fallen condition, and of His ultimate purpose in his full recovery, cannot but fill our hearts with comfort and joy. No one who has himself really experienced the love of God in pardoning grace can be a stranger to the impulses that love creates. True, there will be those who, like the man in our Lord's pointed illustration, though forgiven an enormous debt themselves, will, nevertheless, keep a strangle hold on a debtor owing but a few pence. Such, however, have not really experienced the thrill of conscious forgiveness, for none are forgiven beyond their own willingness and delight in forgiving.

But we are thinking now of those who really know by experience that mysterious inflow of sympathetic love which must have filled the heart of Stephen, when with glory-lightened countenance he entreated that his murderers be not charged with their crime. May it not be that the answer to that prayer is a matter over which we need not dispute. Who knows but that it was that forgiving love radiating from his angel-like face that burned so deeply into the innermost soul of Saul, and prepared his troubled heart for the voice of Jesus on the Damascus road. Sweeter to the heart of the noble Stephen than vindictive retribution could ever be, would be the adding of a character like Paul to the number of the elect of God. And what would it have meant to us if his murderers had been served with the punishment their crime deserved? Would we have ever known Saul as anything but a heartless zealot, blind to every human claim of love and pity? Surely we would never have felt the power that every true Christian has realized as flowing through this "chosen vessel," had God not certainly answered Stephen's prayer. But let it be remembered, Stephen could not have foreseen the immediate results of his forgiving spirit. He did not pray thus because he knew that ere long Paul would shake the Jewish world with his championship of the cause of Christ. No, he prayed thus solely because he had caught the spirit of his Master, who came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. And in all this we may find a lesson never more needed than at the present time.

## **Strong to Bear Injustice**

Manifestly many of the saints today are being placed in circumstances where there is plenty of opportunity to allow bitterness against others to gain no little possession of the mind. The world is full of injustice. In so many ways every man's hand seems to be against his neighbor, and the survival of the individual seems more and more to depend on a willingness to use any method to attain a reasonable share of life's necessities. In the midst of such conditions it is easy enough to develop a vindictive attitude, to be unmindful of the example of Jesus, who opened not His mouth in complaint against His murderers, and to forget the spectacle of angelic rapture never to be forgotten by Saul of Tarsus. When it comes to the matter of our daily life with its round of "all things working together for good," how little we can really know of the meaning of a thousand and one things that come and go from day to day. Could we always realize the possibilities hidden in our contacts with all sorts and conditions of men, is it not safe to say that many times our reactions toward their selfish ways and their unjust methods, would be different from what it often is. May there not be times when, if we have developed the spirit of Stephen, and are ready to really believe that "they know not what they do," we will find it so much easier to curb any bitterness that might be creeping in. Surely, if keeping company with the Son of Man cannot make one strong to bear injustice, and fortify one against the toil and pain of daily contact with any circumstance divine love sees best for us, then how can Jesus say to us, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? - Matt. 11:28.

Only let us remember that it was after He had suffered all the terrible agonies of Gethsemane that He said to His disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! **Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?**" (Luke 24:25, 26.) The whole tenor of Scripture teaching from first to last shows that the Christ must be first a suffering Christ before the right to reign can be enjoyed. How we need to constantly remind ourselves of our need of sharing the experiences of our Lord and Head if we would be qualified to reign with Him by and by. Did He not learn obedience by the things which He suffered, and at the same time was He not being made a merciful High Priest through being touched with a feeling of our infirmities? He gained thereby a greater sympathy with tried and sin-wounded men, and became thus a Savior more perfectly equipped for His saving work. And thus it is that chastening becomes so vital a part of the peculiar heritage of the sons and daughters of God. The great Husbandman does not prune wild brambles growing outside of His garden wall, but every branch within the wall that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bring forth more and more fruit. Then better far to be His wounded tree, bleeding from prunings perhaps, but from which richer fruit will yet appear.

Let us keep God's vision of perfect man consistently before our mind, not the warped and deformed creature who now afflicts us because sin has made him so. Let us visualize the everlasting benefits yet to come to men through the permission of evil, and train our vision on that ever brightening horizon where the prophetic beams of light are already promising the speedy coming of "the times of restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of God's holy prophets since the world began." Thus, even now, we shall find ourselves enjoying more and more of the spirit of Stephen, and thereby become sympathetic intercessors for those who, because blinded by the god of this world, cause us suffering and disappointment.

Taking this view of present experiences, and learning to interpret all of our trials in the light of preparatory lessons in patience and love, qualifying us for our future work in the Kingdom, shall we not even now, because of our abiding faith in God, by our manifest peace and joy though troubled on every side, and by our freedom from any taint of vindictiveness, be to weary, chafing



hearts all about us, a guide to "a shadowing Rock in a wearisome land." How better can we honor our God and reveal the quietness of spirit a knowledge of the truth can bring, than by our daily testimony witnessing to the fact that we have found the Man Christ Jesus a blessed shelter from the biting winds and stormy blast, a sheltering Rock under whose shadow there is peace, perfect peace. O what if we do sow in tears for a little while? What if we do find the struggle at times seemingly more than we can bear? The promise is sure, "We shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing our sheaves with us." When at last the long hoped for Kingdom reign does come, and the work of lifting mankind out of sin and death is our Age-long blessed occupation, shall we not then rejoice that we have had so much opportunity in the school of Christ to learn how to exercise the love of Christ for sinful man?

"Then cometh the end." And what an end! As the result of the work of Christ and His Church, the earth will be filled with a happy human family all in perfect harmony with their Creator. There will be no more one absent "prodigal son" among the children of God, but the "whole family of God in heaven and earth" one in eternal unity, eternal peace, and in a never-ending enjoyment together of the ceaseless unfoldings of the love and power and goodness of our gracious God. Surely God's "elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." Then dear tried and warfare encompassed saints, "let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing" for so great an undertaking as shall be given to us, when in a little while it shall be our privilege to lead the race back over the long way, until it rests again in the Paradise of God.

- *"The Herald"*

## The True Unity of Christ's Church

*"And thou shalt take fine meal, and bake it in twelve cakes.... and thou shalt set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the pure table before Jehovah." "And thou shalt place upon the table Presence bread before me continually." - Lev. 24:5, 6; Exod. 25:30.*

THE injunction was very precise: "Thou shalt set upon the table the Presence-bread before me alway." In two passages it is described as the "continual bread" (Num. 4:7; 2 Chron. 2:4). When the trumpet gave the signal for the march, the loaves and vessels were left undisturbed in their accustomed places, and over them all three coverings were placed, of blue, of scarlet, and of sealskin. There was therefore no interruption of the continued symbolism *of the Unity of the Chosen People*.

This thought pervades the Scriptures. If we go back to the days of the judges when the land was repeatedly swept by whirlwinds of judgment, when every man did as seemed right in his eyes, and there was no unity of government or authority, we find that the Presence bread was still offered with undeviating regularity. This is established by the incident told of David, when he sought the hospitality of the High Priest at Nob, and did "eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests" (Mark 2:25, 26). Evidently, through those stormy centuries the twelve loaves stood before God, an emblem of the essential unity of Israel. When, afterwards, schism came, and the ten tribes, under the leadership of Jeroboam, broke away from the house of David, still upon the holy table, in Solomon's temple, the twelve loaves were presented, representing an unimpaired oneness.

So when Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord, that had been broken down by Jezebel's orders, he took *twelve* stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name." In the Prophet's thought, as in God's, the sorrowful strife and alienation between the northern and southern groups were as though they were not, in view of the Eternal Covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

### A WITNESS TO THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE

When the ten tribes were carried into captivity, and scattered far and wide through Babylonia, Persia, and Asia Minor, still each Sabbath the priests brought the twelve loaves, and placed them on the Table of Presence, as though God knew well where to find his scattered people, and in his judgment they continued one. Then followed the captivity of the seventy years, and afterward the return to the Temple of the priests, the people, and the holy bread. And in our Lord's time, though Israel was rent and scattered, and Simeon and Dan had long since disappeared, still the twelve loaves were presented; and in a remarkable sentence Paul, speaking before Agrippa of the promise made unto the fathers, expressed his belief in the unbroken number of the tribes, when he said: "Unto which promise *our twelve tribes*, earnestly serving God, night and day, hope to attain." In the opening of his epistle, James sends greetings to the twelve tribes of the dispersion. Our Lord assured his Apostles, that in the regeneration they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. On the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem are written the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Dan is indeed missed out of the enumeration of Revelation 7, but the sacred associations of the twelve are still maintained by the dual representation of Joseph. Remember also Ezekiel's unfulfilled prophecy (Eze. 37:15-17, 21, 22).

## THE UNITY OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

Throughout this is one of those deep and subtle suggestions of the way in which the objective ideal of the Church, as an undivided and sacred unity, stands before God. . . . Amid all the storms that have swept the world since our Lord constituted his Church, throughout those disastrous periods of division and distraction, there have still been, in the Divine estimation, "one Body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Always the twelve loaves, the wine of his blood, and the frankincense of his merit, for we are made "accepted in the Beloved."

## NOT NECESSARILY A VISIBLE UNITY

It need hardly be remarked that this unity was never intended to be organic, because Jesus prayed that his own might be one as the Father and he were one. "Holy Father," he said "keep them in thy Name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are." . . . It is therefore certain that those who suppose that the unity of the Church must be patent to the senses have wholly misconceived the Divine ideal. *The members of the Body of Christ were never intended to be gathered into one organization, to repeat one formulary, or march in military array. Uniformity is far removed from unity; and you may have perfect unity apart from uniformity.* A tree is a unity, though there is a vast diversity between the gnarled branches and the cones which it tosses on the forest floor. A house is a unity, though there is no similarity between the gabled roof and the deep laid foundations. A body is a unity, but the eyelash differs widely from the bones of the skeleton.

*Uniformity is impossible where there is life, as the most superficial consideration of the autumnal produce of orchard, field and garden proves. Wherever, therefore, uniformity has been insisted on, death has ensued.* Just before the Reformation of the sixteenth century, it seemed as though the Inquisition had extinguished every trace of nonconformity with the tenets and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, she might have almost literally adopted the proud boast of Babylon: "As one gathereth eggs that are forsaken, so have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped" (Isa. 10:14, R.V.). But at this period it is incontestable that the religious life of Christendom was dead; except where the limited Piedmontese, in the high Alps, kept a spark burning amid the gray ashes.

## EXTERNAL UNIFORMITY UNATTAINABLE

The same mistake is perpetrated by those who demand uniformity of creed as by those who insist on uniformity of ritual. You cannot make all men climb alike, or express identical conceptions in identical words. *A creed is, after all, an intellectual effort, whereas religion is not the creature of mind or reason, but of the heart and spirit. It is a life, . . . the inauguration of that eternal condition of existence which will be still young when all human formularies and conceptions have been put away, as a man puts away the things of childhood.* If your soul is united to the Head of the Church by a living faith, through which the life of Christ enters and pervades it, you must be reckoned a member of the Body, though you may have passed through none of those ecclesiastical systems which at the best are but broken lights, reflecting the sunlight at different angles.

## VARIETY WITHIN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

In the Church there is room, therefore, for an infinite variety. Each brings his own contribution; and we must gather *with all saints*, if we would comprehend the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the love of Christ. You cannot see the whole sky, the whole mountain, the whole broad ocean, nor can I; but I will tell you what I have seen, tasted, and handled of the Word of Life, and you shall tell me what you have experienced. Thus our spirits shall have fellowship one with another. There will be a mutual exchange in commodities, as we report our discoveries of the unsearchable riches of Christ. For none has exactly the same viewpoint as another has; and none exactly the same definition or formula. Be yourself! Make your own discoveries of the manifold grace of Christ. If you cannot bring grapes from Eschol, bring pomegranates or figs. Bartimaeus and the man born blind had different stories to tell of the way in which they were healed, but they both saw, and owed the sight which revealed the world to the same voice and touch. Whether you swam to shore or floated on a broken piece of ship furniture, or a spar, makes very little difference, so long as you have been saved from the storm, and stand there with the rest in the circle round the fire lighted because of the cold. *You are probably right in what you affirm, but wrong in what you deny. You are justified in holding firmly to your special fragment of Truth, but be willing to admit that you have not everything, and that others may be as conscientious, as to truth, and as eager for its maintenance and diffusion as yourself.* Seek to gain from others whatever will perfect your religious life, rounding it to a more complete circle, and touching it to finer issues. "I long to see you," said the Apostle, "that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift . . . that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith" (Rom. 1:11, 12, R.V.).

## CHRIST THE BOND OF UNITY

Christ is the bond of unity to his Church -- Christ in each individual, and each individual in Christ. Let us never forget that gracious reciprocity. The sponge must be in the ocean and the ocean in the sponge. Each believer is written in the Lamb's Book of Life by the same fingers. Each of us has been grafted into the true Vine, though in different places. Each of us has some function in the mystical Body. We were in him when he died, and rose, and entered the Father's presence. In him we have access into this grace wherein we stand. We are in him, as those twelve loaves stood on that pure table. The gift of Christ, on the other hand, has been made to each one of us, that he might realize himself through all the experiences of his members. As of old it required *four* Gospels to reveal to mankind what Jesus Christ was, so all believers are required to set forth and exemplify to the world all the excelling glories of our Emmanuel. It is for this reason that we are told that the Church is his Body, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

## ALL ONE IN HIM

Was it not of this that our Lord spoke, when he said: "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me" (John 17:22, 23) ? In such radiance the Church now stands before God. He sees her essential unity. Its denial does not disintegrate it. Its obscuration does not impair it. The very members of the Church that compose the Unity may be unaware of it, and may denounce each other; but even so, the twelve stones are in the same breastplate and the twelve loaves stand side by side on the same table. The members of a large family of boys and girls may be scattered far and wide over the world, but to the mother, in her daily and nightly prayer, there is but one family, and to her they seem sheltered still under the wings of her brooding love.

When Savonarola was about to be burned, the Papal Legate, dressed in his scarlet robes, stood beside his scaffold, and cried: "I cut thee off from the Church triumphant and the Church militant." But the martyr replied truly: "You may cut me off from the Church militant, but over the Church triumphant thou hast no power." Only two things can cut a man off from the Holy Catholic Church, considered in her loftiest ideals, and these are unforgiveness to the brethren and departure from the living God.

But as surely as the Lord accounts us members of the same mystical Body, he bids us give diligence to *keep* the unity of that Body in the bonds of peace. *We are not required to create the unity, but to manifest it.* We are to recognize as one with us, those who may differ ... in their ritual and creedal expression. . . Without the other neither can be made perfect. Let us, therefore, in this way hasten the time when our Lord shall present the Church to himself, a glorious Church, without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing.

- F. B. Meyer

## The Beauty of Holiness

*"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." - 2 Cor. 7:1.*

HOLINESS IS moral purity; and it is written that "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14); and again, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8.) Purity of heart signifies purity of the will or intention, the mainspring- of life. To be perfectly holy or pure in every sense of the word would signify absolute 'perfection, which no man can now claim; but those who by faith are clothed with the righteousness of Christ are now reckoned "holy and acceptable unto God" (Rom. 12:1), the righteousness of Christ being imputed to them by faith. These, whose hearts are fully consecrated and loyal to the Lord, are "the pure in heart," whose privilege it is to see God.

While the heart of every accepted child of God must be pure from the very beginning -of his Christian life (otherwise he is not accepted or owned as a child), yet, as the Apostle suggests above, there must be from that time onward a gradual work of perfecting holiness in the fear (filial fear) of God; that is (being graciously reckoned of God as holy through Christ, from the hour of our entire consecration to His will, because our will and effort are to be so), we are to go on striving daily against our natural imperfections, and endeavoring as nearly as possible to make the reckoned holiness more and more actual. Thus we should continue to grow in grace and in the actual likeness of the Lord.

Some Christians make the very serious mistake of supposing that they, as merely passive subjects, may receive instantaneously the blessing of holiness as a mark of God's special favor. But such a conception is very far from the Apostle's idea, as expressed above. He presents the attainment of holiness as a life work, and the individual Christian as the active, and not as the passive, agent in accomplishing it. From the standpoint of a reckoned holiness, he is to go on day after day, and year after year, in the work of actual cleansing of himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit-of person and of mind-"perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."

In the exceeding great and precious promises we have abundant incentives to strive daily to perfect holiness; but these must be held before the mind that they be not crowded into the background by the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of its pursuits. The pure in heart-whose will is only t.) serve and please Him-do see God by faith and with the eyes of their understanding. They see Him in His Word and His Plan, as He graciously opens it up to their minds as meat in due season; they see Him in His mighty works-of creation, and of redemption and salvation; they see Him in nature, whose open book is ever eloquent in His praise to those who have eyes to see; by faith they see Him in the secret closet communions when there is no eye to see and no ear to hear but God's, where the heart may freely unburden itself of its load and lay down its cares and feel that unutterable sense of divine sympathy and love which only those can understand who have taken the Lord as their personal friend and counselor. They see Him, too, in His providences; for, having entered into their closets and shut to the door and prayed to their Father in secret, the open reward of His sure and safe leading always follows, according to His promise.

How blessed it is thus to see God -- to realize His presence and power and His abiding favor in all the vicissitudes of life; to watch Him and see how, as the days and years go by, He makes all things work together for good to them that love Him, and to see also, from the grand standpoint of

observation He gives us, how glorious a destiny He has carved out for us and for all the willing and obedient subjects of His authority.

If we cultivate acquaintance with God and with our Lord Jesus, communing with them through the divine Word and prayer, almost unconsciously to ourselves the work of perfecting holiness progresses. To be thus in communion with Them is to receive more and more of Their mind and disposition. And having the mind of God thus in us, as the controlling principle of our actions, to what purification of the flesh it will also lead!

It begins at once to clean up the whole man. Old unclean, as well as sinful, habits are put away; unseemly conversation is not permitted to pass the door of the lips, or if, by force of old habit, slips of this kind occur, they are promptly repented of and rectified; and unholy thoughts are not entertained. The same spirit of holiness prompts also to the cleansing and purifying- of the body, the clothing, the home, and all with which we have to do; for the outward man must be in conformity with the pure heart within, and with the heavenly Guests that make Their abode with us. - John 14:23.

It is quite possible, however, that the more we succeed in purifying ourselves of the old carnal nature, the more we may realize the imperfections that still remain; for the purifying process is also an educating one: we learn to appreciate and admire purity, holiness, the more thoroughly we assimilate it, until "the beauty of holiness" becomes the most desirable of all possessions, that which is lacking of its glory is our deepest concern, and the great work of perfecting holiness becomes the chief business of life. Let the good work go on, dearly beloved, and, in the end, the Lord Himself shall be your exceeding great reward.

- *"The Herald"*

## **RECENTLY DECEASED**

May M. DeGroot, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
Agnes Galecki, Milwaukee, Wis.  
Mary Ganczak, Milwaukee, Wis.  
James R. Gaskill, Fresno, Cal.  
Ethel Green, Albany, Cal.  
Hilma L. Hannus, San Francisco, Cal.  
Annie Hawley, Cheshire, Eng.  
Eva Kazmer, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Tony Mallia, Miami, Fla.  
Paul W. Mansfield, San Leandro, Cal.  
Max C. Norman, Chicago, Ill.  
John Olar, Aurora, Ill.  
Sara E. Scruggs, Albany, Cal.  
James J. Shahan, Fairmont, W. Va.  
Cora Sundbom, Saginaw, Mich.  
Joseph Swiderek, Chicago Hts., Ill.  
Ruth Vastola, Spring Valley, Cal.  
Mildred I. Wasserman, San Francisco, Cal.