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The Pentecostal Message

"Received ye the spirit?" - Galatians 3:2.

WAIT for the promise of the Father, which ye heard from me, for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the holy spirit not many days hence.... Ye shall receive power when the holy spirit is come upon you." It is Jesus who has been speaking to the disciples, having "led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven." (Luke 24:50-53. A. R. V.) A cloud received him out of their sight, and at the bidding of an angel the little company wended its way over the three-quarters of a mile back to Jerusalem, passing Gethsemane, where forty days before, the One they had just now seen ascend into heaven had first been "lifted up from the earth." There is no record left us of the many questions that were raised in that short journey and in the *days* that followed. But we do read that they "all with *one accord* continued steadfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were *all with one accord in one place*. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder [Margin: parting among them, or distributing themselves], like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were all *filled with the holy spirit*." - Acts 2:1-4.

FORETOLD IN TYPES

"In the passover, we have the death of Christ," Brother Mackintosh writes, "in the sheaf of firstfruits, we have the resurrection of Christ; and in the feast of Pentecost, we have the descent of the holy spirit to form the Church. All this is divinely perfect. The death and resurrection of Christ had to be accomplished, ere the Church could be formed. The sheaf was offered and then the loaves were baked. And, we observe, 'They shall be baked *with leaven*.' Why was this? Because they were intended to foreshadow those who, though filled with the holy spirit, and adorned with his gifts and graces, had, nevertheless, *evil* dwelling in them," and soon that fact came to light in their association.

The brethren who received the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost were those who had become followers of the Lord Jesus before his sacrifice, and therefore before he had appeared in the presence of God for them, and thus before they could be begotten to sonship. John testifies: "The spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 3:39.) While they walked with Jesus he could say to them, "The spirit of truth dwelleth *with* you"; but could promise additionally, "and shall be *in you*," not merely "with" and "upon" you, as was the case with the prophets of the previous Age. (Luke 2:25; John 14:17.) What a misfortune for them and for all of us if he had heeded their desire and stayed with them for the establishment of a merely fleshly government. "It is expedient for you that I go away," are his words; "for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." - John 16:7.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSING THE SPIRIT

The miracle of Pentecost was intended in part to attract the attention of the people in Jerusalem, and to convince those who were in heart condition to believe, as well as to give confidence to those who were already disciples. Evidently the need for such miracles passed with the passing of the Apostles and those upon whom they bestowed the gifts of the spirit, but the need for "full assurance of faith has never ceased. It is therefore of great importance for us to be able to find a convincing statement as to how we may know whether we have been called, have been begotten (have, received the spirit), and are being developed, all by "the self same spirit" that operated both on and in the early disciples. Is it still true that "the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal"? (1 Cor. 12:7, 11.)

Brother John writes: "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us riot. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (1 John 4:6.) Attention to the Word of Truth as it came through the Apostles is then a fundamental test as to whether one is being guided of the holy spirit, "the spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive." We can let our light shine upon them, but we cannot give them our oil.

Long ago it was promised that the spirit would have the effect of obedience to the Lord's commands: "I will put my spirit within you [when the stony hearts are removed], and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them." (Ezek. 36:27.) Not the ways or the thinking of our own flesh or of any other natural man will be our guide, for "as for you, the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you [any human intellect, such as the philosophers to whom he refers]; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in him." (1 John 2:27.) Since the spirit cannot contradict itself, the "any one" not needed as a teacher must be outside the Body of Christ, for the spirit had revealed that God had set teachers *within* the Body for its edification. They only can speak according to the spirit, and *should* speak only according to the spirit, as Paul intimates in 1 Corinthians 2:12 and 13: "We received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." "Ye are not in the flesh [or dependent on the flesh] but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwelleth in you." - Rom. 8:9.

We can know assuredly that his spirit does not dwell in us to use us as his temple if ours is not the spirit of reverence, devotion, holiness; separation from the things of the outside world and the ways of the flesh. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that 'the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And that temple will have no "parish house" attached where provision can be made for the flesh to satisfy the desires thereof.

A primary step toward the receipt of the holy spirit is repentance, a regret for our former association with things of the world and the flesh and a turning from them with a positive determination they shall no more be permitted to control our lives. The story Brother Blackburn used to tell illustrating this is a very apt one. It was the definition a small child gave: "Repentance is being so sorry, you will never do it again." The message of the early Church was: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the holy spirit," (Acts 2:38) "the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Doubtless thousands who had no right, to do so sent up that cry, but in the context the Apostle indicates what are the credentials of those who can legitimately so address him: "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." "For as many as are led

by the spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Rom. 8:14-16.) The direction of its leading is "into all the truth." (John 16:13.) That leading should be a continuous process until that which "is perfect is come" beyond the veil. Then we shall know fully even as we are now fully known by the Father. (1 Cor. 13:9-12.) However, conformity to the spirit's leading can this side the veil have the sealing of the spirit, the stamp of its approval. Paul calls this being "sealed with the spirit of the promise, the holy spirit which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquisition; unto his glorious praise." (Eph. 1:13, 14, *Rotherham*.) It is easy to know this precious promise and to talk fluently about it to every willing ear, and many an unwilling one, too-for this is that promise that takes in "all the families of the earth." But to acquire its spirit is quite a different thing from just talking about it. Having its spirit means to have a love broad enough to take in all the world, our enemies, and all the brethren.

BEGINNING A NEW LIFE

The story of man's creation is simply told: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath [wind, spirit] of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7.) Did the spirit inspire this record so that it would fitly represent how lifeless humans, dead in trespasses and sins, are given life by putting his spirit within them? "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth." The result is a spiritual new creature, for "Thy words are spirit and they are life." Such creatures need have no fear of the second death, if they are entirely dependent on that Word as their source of strength, for they have been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." (1 Peter 1:23.) Having been begotten "through the Gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15), "the Gospel preached beforehand unto Abraham," if its work is permitted to continue in us, we will daily have more of its spirit until, marked with its sealing power, the image of our heavenly Father will be indelibly impressed upon this new creation of his. Our Pentecost then will have "fully come" and passed.

PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD NECESSARY

As God created a son "in his own likeness, after his image, so the new creation "which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth," "is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.) Knowledge that does not work to that end will be detrimental, puffing up instead of building up.

This all makes it very clear why the Bible lays its great stress on knowing God, and how irreparable the loss to those who are content just to know about him and his Plan. Also it is clear that the distinction between the two classes will be that the one will be sealed with his spirit, while the other company are those who are marked with Babylon's method of thinking, following the guidance of the intellect instead of the spirit, and contented to rely upon works instead of growth into his likeness.

Jesus finished his course at the cross. We begin ours there. Before the cross our condition was "dead in sin since the cross, "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 6:11.) Babylon and its, spirit hopes for life because of penances, book selling, and other substitutes for the cross on which Christ died for our sins and on which the world is crucified unto us and we unto the world. But this is not accomplished without the guidance and assistance of the spirit. "If ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8:13.) "Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh." That is the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that hath made us free from the law of sin and death." - Rom. 8:2.

"The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming [Literally: in the presence] of our Lord. Jesus Christ," 'to "present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." - 1 Thess. 5:23; Jude 24.

- P. E. Thomson

Our Priceless Heritage in the Bible

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." - Joshua 1:8.

THE greatest of God's priceless gifts to men are the Living and the Written Word. Many are the statements within the pages of the written Word, bearing testimony to the inestimable value of these gifts of His love. In the ages past, as in the present time, God's making known His will and character to men has been a source of incalculable joy and inspiration. It was so when in times past God spoke by the Prophets, but vastly more so now when "in these last days" He has spoken and revealed Himself through His Son. The greatly tried and afflicted patriarch Job prized above his daily food, the revelation he had of God. (Job 23:12.) The Psalmist found it "more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." (Psa. 19:10.) And to him it was a source of constant joy and of progression toward man's true objective, to glorify God by attaining the ultimate purposes of His will. "Blessed," he sings, "is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night" - and with what blessed results: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psa. 1:1-3.) No wonder that he later wrote, "Thy Word. have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee" - Psa. 119:11.

From the lips of Him who spake as never man could speak, how often the words were heard, "It is written" and expressions of like portent. Blindness He attributed to a lack of knowledge of the Word of God, saying, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." To perplexed and disappointed men He came, "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," and left them saying, "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" Luke 24:25-32.

No marvel then that Apostolic testimony to the importance of the Word itself is in similar tone. We cannot wonder at Paul urging: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly"; nor are we surprised to find him making special note of the qualifications of Timothy for efficient service in the Church-"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." (Col. 3:16 2 Tim. 3:15.) And thus it 'is that from the pages of this Book of books, adapted to the needs of all who love its unfoldings, there comes so much of "comfort of the Scriptures," so much that 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.)

To think of but a few of the influences and characteristics of that "precious Word": Human schemes and achievements astound a generation or two, then pass into the realm of the obsolete, relics of primitive stages in the onward course of progress. The classics in human literature are generally limited to the confines of a certain language. Shakespeare spoke to the race that speaks his tongue, and how unintelligible his greatest works are to numberless other tongues and races. The Bible speaks as clearly, as potently, as comforting and illuminating to 'all "kindreds and nations and tongues." Its language is universally complete.

"All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. But the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. 1:24, 25.) How illuminating is that Word! "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." (Psa. 19:7.) How manifestly it came from the One who in judgment is "no respecter of persons," for "the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12.) To a race sold under sin, helpless to break the chains of bondage, how assuring the word spoken by the Son: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) To sinners saved by grace, how assuring of . ultimate sanctification is the Savior's prayer "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth." (John 17:17.) To "the called according to His purpose" how comforting the words: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Pet. 1:4.) Well indeed has Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." - Matt. 4:4.

The Bible Wounded in the House of its Friends

That the great Adversary of God and man should be the enemy of a Book in which the character of God and His benevolent purposes for man are set forth, is no surprise. We marvel not that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4.) But to know that in the house of its professed friends that Word has suffered greatly because of misrepresentation is both sad and surprising. No wonder some hungry, seeking soul poured out his prayer, and in that prayer caught up the cry of many bewildered seekers after God, seekers perplexed by "so many creeds, so many ways that wind and lead"

"We plead, O God! for some new ray
Of light for guidance on our way;

* * *

This restless mind, with bolder sway,
Rejects the dogmas of the day
Taught by jarring sects and schools,
To fetter reason with their rules.
We seek to know Thee as Thou art --
Our place with Thee -- and then the part
We play in this stupendous plan,
Creator Infinite, and man."

It has been said that "Every Christian is either a Bible or libel." . Perhaps this was the very same thought in the mind of the Apostle that caused him to so urge the brethren to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." (Tit. 2:10.) And perhaps it was the same thing which led him to admonish Timothy to be "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in

spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12.) What other reason did he have when reminding other brethren that they should remember that as "the epistle of Christ" they were being known and read of all men? Indeed it was the failure of some professing Christians to thus adorn the Gospel of Christ by their daily lives that caused him in tears to write: "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." As we live and move before any who are praying for "some new ray of light for guidance on our way," are we a libel or a Bible? Are we fulfilling the glorious purposes of our calling, and being as Jesus said we should be, "the light of the world"? Are we really shining as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and known as such by those who know us, or are 'we causing others to look beyond us and say, "**We seek to know Thee as Thou art**"? Are we revealing to others within the circle of believers, and to such as are without, that we "have been with Jesus and learned of Him"?

That Paul was not alone in his tears over the Bible's misrepresentation in the house of its friends, is well attested by the laments of many others. Dean Farrar will be remembered by many as an outstanding character of some years ago, and some will remember his fearless exposure of the unscriptural teaching of eternal torment for the majority of our race. From his pen we cull the following pertinent quotations:

"It is one of our trials that the Bible, with its tender and hallowed bearing upon all that is sweet and noble in our lives -- with its words so stately and full of wonder, and full of music, like the voice of an Archangel -- should have been made in these days the wrangling-ground for sectarian differences; but if with our whole hearts we are striving to live according to its spirit, we need fear but little that we shall trip in a right pronunciation of the shibboleths of its letter. Surely it is deplorable that, because of mere questions which after all are but questions of doubtful authorship, of historical accuracy, or verbal criticism, having for the most part little or no bearing on the spiritual or moral life, party should be denouncing party, and Christian excommunicating Christian, and so many hands tearing in anger the seamless robe of Christ. It is, alas, the due punishment for our lack of charity, that while we have been so eager about such controversies, the love of many should wax cold."

The Bible Alone Makes Wise Unto Salvation

"The Bible teaches us its best lessons when we search its pages as wise- and humble learners; when we judge of it by the truth, which we learn from it, and not by the prejudices and prepossessions which we bring to it.... Let me entreat you not to confuse mere questions of exegetical or scientific learning with the deep, awful, and imperishable lessons which the Bible, and the Bible only, can bring home to your souls. In whatever way those questions may be decided, the infinite inner sacredness of God's Word remains inviolate forever. There may be shifting clouds about it, but through them break beams of eternal radiance; there may be mingled voices, but clear and loud among them all are- heard the utterances of eternal wisdom. Other books may make you learned or eloquent or subtle; this Book alone can make you wise unto salvation. Other books may fascinate the intellect; by this alone can you cleanse the heart. In other literature may trickle here and there some shallow streams from the 'unemptiable Fountain of wisdom' -- and even these, alas! turbid too often with human passions, fretted with human obstacles, and choked at last in morass or sand -- but in this Book, majestic and fathomless, flows the river of the water of life itself, proceeding from the throne of God, and of the Lamb."

From the "Divine Plan of the Ages" we quote in similar strain from Chapter III:

"The Bible is the torch of civilization and liberty. Its influence for good in society has been recognized by the greatest statesmen, even though they for the most part have looked at it through the various glasses of conflicting creeds, which, while upholding the Bible, grievously misrepresent its teachings. The grand old Book is unintentionally but woefully misrepresented by its friends, many of whom would lay down life on its behalf; and yet they do it more vital injury than its foes, by claiming its support to their long-revered misconceptions of its truth, received through the traditions of their fathers. Would that such would awake, re-examine their oracle, and put to confusion its enemies by disarming them of their weapons! . . . Other writings upon religion and the various sciences have done good and have ennobled and blessed mankind, to some extent; but all other books combined have failed to bring the joy, peace and blessing to the groaning creation that the Bible has brought to both the rich and the poor, to the learned and the unlearned. The Bible is not a hook to be read merely: it is a book to be studied with care and thought; for God's **thoughts are higher than our thoughts, and His ways** than our **ways**. And if we would comprehend the plan and thoughts of the infinite God, we must bend all our energies to that important work. The richest treasures of truth do not always lie on the surface."

To this we all agree as being applicable to Christian people in general. Are we as willing to test ourselves by the same rule? Honesty demands that we shall so examine ourselves.

God's Book

The Bible is not only the special book of God because inspired by Him; it is His book in the sense that he has the sole right and ownership of it. And because it is God's property, and intended by Him to be the book of the common people, it has never been recognized by Him as being the peculiar possession of a clergy class. And yet; no blacker pages in human history can be found than those recording the attempts made from time to time to make the Word of God to men the exclusive right of the few. For twelve hundred years it was kept "clothed in sackcloth," the sackcloth of dead languages. When it was brought out of that state and given to the people, only God can fully estimate the cost. Could we with Him number up the years of imprisonment its possession meant to faithful students of its pages in darker clays; could we with Him measure the pains, the sufferings borne on rack and stake, by which the freedom of that Word was secured to us of a happier day, would we ever cease to give thanks to God for its preservation at so great a cost? If all the fires of martyrdom were caused to pass before our vision -- fires John was given to see in his Patmos vision of the "souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, grid for the testimony which they held," would we ever be found fighting against liberty of conscience in the study of an open Bible? Surely not! Lest we forget that the human heart is ever capable of reacting to influences which make wrong to appear right, and that wrong be thought "doing God service," let us take but one leaf from the pages on pages of the blackest record of man's inhumanity to man -- his religious intolerance:

"Besides the common forms of persecution and death, such as racking, burning, drowning, stabbing, starving and shooting with arrows and guns, fiendish hearts meditated how the most delicate and sensitive parts of the body, capable of the most excruciating pain, could be affected; molten lead was poured into the ears; tongues were cut out and lead poured into the mouths; wheels were arranged with knife blades attached so that the victim could be slowly chopped to pieces; claws and pincers were made red hot and used upon sensitive parts of the body; eyes were gouged out; finger nails were pulled off with red hot irons; holes, by which the victim was tied up, were bored through the heels; some were forced to jump from eminences onto long spikes fixed below, where, quivering with pain, they slowly died. The mouths of some were filled with gunpowder,

which, when fired, blew their heads to pieces; others were hammered to pieces on anvils; others, attached to bellows, had air pumped into them until they burst; others were choked to death with mangled pieces of their own bodies; others with urine, excrement, etc., etc.

"Some of these fiendish atrocities would be quite beyond belief were they not well authenticated. They serve to show to what awful depravity the human heart can descend; and how blind to right and every good instinct, men can become under the influence of **false, counterfeit religion.**"

Ah, present day Christian, say not your Bible cost only a few dollars or pence. Its cost is written in the anguish, the horror, the inhuman and Satanic awfulness inflicted on these suffering souls who purchased for you the liberty to read its pages unmolested and unafraid.

And again, "lest we forget," and because we live in a different day, and far removed from such inhuman treatment as the historian records of the past we then conclude that there is little danger either of our being called upon to thus suffer "for the Word of God," or of our being among those blinded into being the ones to inflict suffering on other faithful witnesses, let us remember that the "souls under the altar" are still being told that "they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, should be killed as they were." In God's way of looking at such things it matters not what the mode of being "killed" may be. Thus until the last members of the Church have finished their appointed time, there lies within the bounds of possibility for each one of us, a state of mind by which the afflicted or the afflictors may be our role, as pertaining to this altar picture.

Shall we not then prize the liberty we enjoy today. Shall we not rejoice in the possession of a Book which is not of man, but God's own revelation, inspired by His Spirit, and taught to the humblest of His children by that same Spirit? Shall we not remember that it is written "They shall all be taught of God," and the one great fundamental lesson He teaches is that "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life," and "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Shall we not remember that as great truths are dearly bought, so has the liberty we enjoy been purchased at tremendous cost, and that it should be very zealously guarded against all expedients calculated to discourage its right and proper enjoyment? Shall we not all make it our special concern to see that we are ourselves closely following the Living Word, and through Him being truly sanctified by the written Word? And will it not be our greatest concern to assist others to know our Jesus and the power of His Spirit in their life also? Surely so.

Then "With each individual Christian standing fast in the liberty wherewith he was made free by the Lord (Gal. 5:1; John 8:32), and each individual Christian united in loyalty to the Lord and to His Word, very quickly the original unity which the Scriptures inculcated would be discerned and all true children of God, all members of the New Creation, would find themselves drawn to each other member similarly free, and bound each to the other by the cords of love far more strongly than are men bound in earthly systems and societies. 'The love of Christ constraineth us' [holds us together, Young's Concordance]."- 'Blessed Bible, precious Word may we ever seek to find --

*"Its richness, sweetness, power and depth,
Its holiness discern:
Its joyful news of saving grace
By blest experience learn.*

*"Thus may Thy Word be dearer still,
And studied more, each day:
And as it richly dwells within,
Thyself in it display."*

- Herald, June 1938.

The Separated Life

"Be ye separate, saith the Lord." - 2 Cor. 6:17

SO LONG as the Church remains amid earthly environments and more or less subject to the enticements presented by "the world, the flesh, and the devil," she will find it necessary to keep fresh in mind the real facts of the separated life God expects of His people. She will also find it necessary to be frequently reminded that it is an important part of Christian experience to spend and be spent in the service of God. Inasmuch as the New Testament abounds in references to self-effacing sacrifice as a feature of our privilege in imitating Christ, let us give consideration to some of these, turning first to the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love. This is My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." - John 15:9, 12, 13; 13:14, 15.

True Nature of Love

In these several texts Jesus distinctly tells us to imitate Him -- "do as I have done unto you." Here He teaches us that there will need to be a laying aside of all feelings of superiority in our approach to our brethren. He gives no encouragement to any one to note the soiled feet of others and then in self-congratulation take the position that one's own are not soiled, and become occupied in parading the infirmities of others--some of which may be real enough to be seen, and some perhaps wholly imaginary. It is the true nature of love to "cover a multitude of sins." It is the spirit of true sacrificial love to believe that we would find it better than we thought, if we only understood. Verily, the noblest trait of Christian character springing out of loving God with all the heart, is that of loving one's neighbor as oneself. Will not such love abounding in one's heart be manifested in: "esteeming others better than themselves"? Will it not lead us to minimize the defects, and "if there be any virtue, any praise, any good report" to magnify these? With this love, which is the love of God and of Christ, really abounding in all hearts, will it not be easier to make all needed provision and allowance for diversities, which in the very nature of things will be found among believers so long as the Church is in the flesh? Surely so!

We know full well why God's Word makes love for the brethren so vital a matter, and makes our spiritual sonship dependent on our love for them. He has told us why, by pointing us to the Son in whom He was well pleased. That Son pleased not Himself. He came to reveal the love of God to sinful, selfish men. He came to completely separate His own from the world and its spirit by implanting love for righteousness and hatred for sin in their hearts, and He came to unite in a compact and heavenly unity the Church He redeemed, unifying them not by creeds and rituals but by the cords of the love wherewith He loved them. Love of self must necessarily be eradicated from the heart before this feature of sacrificial love will hold sway there.

United in a Bond of Benevolent Love

Between the saints who shared the experiences of the day of Pentecost, and those of us now awaiting the completion of the Church, there have been many differences of character, of experience,) of knowledge, and of service, but in heart the saints have been, and the saints still are, one in faith, because there has been faith in the one Lord. They have one hope, because

waiting for the same consummation, "that blessed hope." They have been one in love, when the love of God has been shed abroad in their hearts, and blest be that complete tie.

When believers are rivals in their love for the Lord, each heart absorbed with the greatness of the love and mercy by which salvation and sonship has come to them personally, they can be, praise God, united to one another in a bond of benevolent love which the influences of this present time of shaking will not disturb, and which eternity will wonderfully enlarge and confirm. The highest blessing of heaven will therefore rest on the one, who has labored by word and deed to foster the spirit of loving consideration for others, who has by life and conduct striven to remove barriers between brethren, by bringing them together in the bonds of Christ's love. Barriers that will grow higher and higher whatever other remedy for discord may be tried, will melt away before the warmth of the love of God. shed abroad in a truly sanctified, loving, benevolent Christian heart. And, beloved, if we want to have a place in the heart of God, the way thereto lies directly through the pierced heart of the beloved Son of God. That heart which knew no selfishness, no enmity, but which was full to overflowing with love to God and man. O that we may in a fuller and greater measure be known as "imitators of God, as dear children; and walk in love even as the Anointed One loved us."

- *Herald, June 1937*

Everlasting Punishment

"Ungodly men are like the restless sea, that never can be still, whose waters throw up dirt and mire." - Isa. 57:20 Moffatt.

THERE are laws of right-doing and equity which cannot be broken without incurring grave consequences. The prospect before men in the life to come is one of constantly widening experience and deepening knowledge of God and his creation, but that life must be conducted in harmony with right principles to be sustained by the Giver of all life. The violation of those principles is called sin by the Bible, and the consequence of continued and incorrigible sin, the Bible declares, is cessation of life. A wise man of Old Testament days expressed this vital law in pithy words: *"As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death"; "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death"* (Prov. 11:19; 12:28). St. Paul said that *"the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life"* (Rom. 6:23). This is the basis upon which is built the Scriptural doctrine of the consequences of sin.

The term "everlasting punishment" appears in the Authorized Version only once, in Matt. 25:46. Human ideas of "punishment," usually involving an element of revenge, reprisal or retaliation, are not what the New Testament means when it deals with the consequences of sin. A preferable term is penalty or, better still, retribution. The underlying principle is laid down by St. Paul in Gal. 6:7: *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* A passage in the Epistle of James puts the case very clearly: *"Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death"* (James 1:14, 15 RSV). The penalty must not be looked upon as a kind of arbitrary Divine retaliation against rebels who displease him; it is rather the logical and inevitable operation of natural law which demands that every disorderly or disruptive element must eventually be eliminated that the purpose of God in creation be realized in the happiness and fullness of life of every living being. The fact that we see not yet this law bringing forth its final results does not deny its truth; humanity is at this moment still in the early stages of that long experience which is at length to achieve that end. The close of this present life in the death of the body is only an incident in this long process and there is more, much more, to come. Eventually it will be evident that sin bears within itself the seeds of its own destruction and the sinner who will not renounce his rebellion against God signs his own death warrant.

EVIL AND SIN TO DISAPPEAR

The Bible emphasizes that eventually evil and sin will disappear from creation. In the whole wide realm of Divine government there will be no such thing as evil and no such thing as sin. In 1 Cor. 15:24-28 St. Paul looks forward to a time when the enemies of God have been overthrown, death has become a thing of the past, and in the plenitude of his sovereignty God has become "all in all." Eph. 1:9, 10 (RSV) stresses that God will, at the end, *"unite all things in him [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth."* In what is perhaps one of the grandest flights of eloquence in the New Testament, the Epistle to the Philippians speaks of the time to come when *"at the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"* (Phil. 2:10, 11). These and other lines of Scripture argument make clear that evil will eventually cease to be.

All life is the gift of God; no created being can continue to live except by the power of God constantly animating his bodily frame and enlivening his mind. *"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground"* says the Genesis account (Gen. 2:7), *"and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."* If that flow of life-power ceases, or if God withdraw it, death results, consciousness ends, and the inert body returns to the elements of which it is composed, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." In a vivid passage relating to the animal creation the Psalmist defines the process: *"thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust"* (Psa. 104:29). Hope for a man's future life after death rests entirely with God, Who can invest that life with a new body adapted to its new environment, and this is what is involved in the Christian doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. St. Paul in 2 Cor. 5 talks of being *"clothed upon"* with a *"house from heaven"* following the dissolution of *"our earthly house of this dwellingplace."* The relation between such a resurrection to everlasting life and the contrasting destiny of the obdurately evil is laid down very plainly by our Lord when he said *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him"* (John 3:36).

In line with this principle the Scriptures present the ultimate end of the sinner as withdrawal of the gift of life. If, at the end, sin and evil are to be no more, if all intelligent life in every sphere is to bow the knee to Jesus and give praise and worship to him, then there must come a time when sinners are no more. Says Job: *"they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same. By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed"* (Job 4:8, 9). *"He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death"* runs Prov. 8:36. The two prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel unite in the terse declaration: *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Jer. 31:30; Ezek. 18:4). David adds his word: *"The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth"* (Psa. 34:16), and puts the responsibility squarely where it belongs in the brief maxim *"Evil shall slay the wicked"* in verse 21 of the same Psalm. These are not just a few casual observations having no particular authority behind them; they are expressions of a fundamental truth which these men, and others like them, being men of God profoundly influenced by his holy spirit, fully understood and held tenaciously. These writings form the true basis of Christian theology and must be given due heed on that account; they insist that the penalty for sin is withdrawal of life, the ending of conscious existence.

MISUNDERSTOOD SCRIPTURES

There are two words in the New Testament which have been productive of much misunderstanding. One is damnation and the other is everlasting. The first, damnation, has a meaning today which it did not bear in the seventeenth century when the Authorized Version was produced. At that time it meant, simply and positively, to be condemned; the nature and duration of the condemnation depended upon the circumstances of the case. Thus in Wycliffe's Bible the words of Jesus to the woman taken in adultery are *"Woman, hath no man damned thee?"* Likewise the "resurrection of damnation" of John 5:29 is literally a "resurrection to judgment" which at least brings the case of "those who have done evil" before the judge for consideration. The Greek is rendered "judgment" and "condemnation" some eighty times and "damnation" only fourteen times, and the Revised Version has abandoned "damnation" altogether. Thus wherever the word "damnation" is found it must not necessarily be assumed that the condemnation is final and irrevocable. It may in some cases be limited in scope, as in Rom. 14:23: *"He that doubteth is damned if he eat,"* where the meaning is that the person partaking of the Lord's supper "unworthily" stands condemned or judged in his action but not necessarily doomed.

One of the strangest and most misunderstood statements of Jesus is that in Matt. 25, where the King in the parable says to the unworthy "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ... and these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." "Punishment" here is kolasis, a word which means, primarily, to cut off or lop the branches of a tree as in pruning, and in general indicated restraint or correction. From this it became a term for the restraint of offenders or criminals to prevent continuance of their misdeeds, and this is the sense in which it is used here. ("Fear hath torment" in 1 John 4:18, where "torment" is kolasis, is another example where restraint rather than punishment is the obvious meaning.) Penal punishment is timoria, a totally different word. Here in Matt. 25 the contrast is between the everlasting life of the worthy, who enter into what elsewhere is called "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21) and the everlasting restraint from sin of the unworthy. This is the same thing as the everlasting fire of the same passage. Another reference to the same judgment is found in Rev. 20:11-15 where the King seated on the Great White Throne -- the "throne of his glory" of the Matt. 25 parable -- arrays all people before him to be judged "and they were judged every man according to their works." Here, under a very similar symbol to that employed in Matt 25, the unworthy are "cast into the lake of fire." Earlier in this 20th chapter of Revelation the Devil also has been cast into this lake of fire, a parallel allusion with the fate of the "devil and his angels" in Matt. 25. In both passages the picture is one of judgment which proceeds throughout the Messianic Age, the "Day of judgment," and the outcome at its end when the eternal issues, for good or for evil, are decided for every man. The everlasting fire and the fiery lake are symbols for that utter destruction which overtakes all evil and every incorrigibly evil being. Isaiah saw the same thing when at the close of his vision of the new heavens and new earth he said of those who have right of entry into that eternal world: "they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men who have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh" (Isa. 66: 24). The worm is undying until there is nothing left upon which it can feed; the fire unquenched until it has consumed all there is to burn -- just as in Jer. 17:27 where a fire was to be kindled in Jerusalem that "shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and it shall not be quenched."

Passages which speak of sinners destroyed by everlasting fire are metaphors taken sometimes from the story of the destruction of the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven and sometimes from the known use of the Valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem for idolatrous human sacrifice by fire in the days of the Hebrew kings, and its later use for continuous burning of the city garbage. "Gehenna" -- the Greek form of Hinnom -- occurs fourteen times in the sayings of Jesus (rendered "Hell" in the AN.); the idea in each case is that of utter destruction, a destruction as complete as by fire. In Matt. 3:12 and Luke 3:17 the chaff which has been separated from the wheat is burnt up with "unquenchable fire." In Matt. 9:43-48 it is better to enter into life maimed than being whole to go into the unquenchable fire, the parallel passage in Matt. 18:8 calling this the "everlasting fire." In the same passages it is shown that Gehenna and the unquenchable fires relate to one and the same thing, and in Matt. 10: 28 the assertion is plainly made that it is possible for God to "destroy both soul and body" in Gehenna. This corresponds with declarations such as Psa. 92:7: "when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever."

"WHATSOEVER A MAN SOWETH"

Thus understood, the consequence of sin in the face of full light and full opportunity is incurred solely by the individual's own choice and will. It might well be that deliberate continuance in evil-doing can destroy a man's capacity for repentance and conversion to the good life. Perhaps a man is capable of destroying his own soul. Sixty years ago Dr. Paterson Smyth wrote "We must believe that through *all eternity, if the worst sinner felt touched by the love of God and wanted to*

turn to him, that man would be saved. What we dread is that the man may not want, and so may have rendered himself incapable of doing so. We dread not God's will, but the man's own will. Character tends to permanence. Free will is a glorious but a dangerous prerogative. All experience leads towards the belief that a human will may so distort itself as to grow incapable of good." More recently Prof. Alexander Finlay said "If life depends upon fellowship with God, the possibility must remain that the time may come when a man, no longer being capable of fellowship with God, shall die and become extinct, simply because there is no life left in him, because his soul is dead." In a sermon delivered by Dr. Samuel Holmes, a Presbyterian minister of the United States, in 1907, he said "It is implicit in the teachings of both Jesus and Paul that when a soul, through its persistence in sin, comes to the point where it is morally irrecoverable, it comes also to its final death . . . A living creature remains alive only so long as it conforms to the conditions of living. Shall we think otherwise of the human soul ... When a man has continued in sin, has gone on dwarfing his moral and spiritual nature until every appeal of God is in vain, is it not in accordance with the analogies of life that extinction is the certain outcome?" A noted Churchman of the late nineteenth century, Dr. C. A. Row, Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, summed up his book, "Future Retribution," in the words "the disease of moral evil, willfully persisted in, for aught we know to the contrary, may be capable of destroying man as a conscious being ... Inasmuch as man is destitute of self-existence the length of the period during which he will continue to exist must be dependent on the good pleasure of Him who by his all powerful energy maintains him in being every moment . . . Evil beings will cease to exist whenever it pleases the All-merciful to cease to exert that energy which alone maintains in existence the evil and the good."

Eloquent in its brevity is the word of the Psalmist (Psa. 37:10), a word expressed in literal down-to-earth terms which cannot be misunderstood: *"For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be."*

- A. O. Hudson, England

Jeremiah's Three Questions

"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then, is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?" - Jer. 8:22.

GILEAD was a place of aromatics, and was termed a mountain of spices. It was first called Gilead by Jacob by reason of a covenant that was there made 'between him and Laban, his father-in-law. It is written that "He set his face toward Mount Gilead." The expression was evidently by anticipation, as though given by him in advance of his reaching there, for after arriving there we find him making no further effort to continue his journey, but he remained there until overtaken by Laban. It was as though he had received a certain assurance in advance that a treaty of peace and reconciliation would be made between him and Laban, that the balm of friendship would be poured upon the sore of enmity that had existed between them.

Gilead was very fruitful, abounding in both the necessities and the luxuries of life, thereby yielding both profit and pleasure, being full of people. It therefore was a prosperous land from a material standpoint.

God, in a statement in the Psalms, said, "Gilead is Mine." Many strangers resorted to Gilead to profit by its merchandise; this we will find referred to in the account of Joseph being sold by his brethren into Egypt.

In Jeremiah's use of the words contained in his three questions, we know that he -did not refer to the physical condition of Israel, he did not refer to the natural balm contained in the balsam tree of Gilead, nor did he refer to the physicians of the natural body, any more than do we in using this text which was placed on record for our meditation and our use. Jeremiah uses it in reference to the moral condition of Israel after the flesh, even as we would use it in reference to the heart condition of Israel after the spirit.

Balm Still in Gilead

The balm of the word of the Lord was still in Gilead of old. There were still competent physicians of that word, valiant prophets of God who would have skilfully applied the healing balm, who would have gladly ministered to the sickness of Israel.

Then why was Israel not recovered? Simply because she applied not to those true physicians who had the healing balm, who since the world began had preached of judgments and of Restitution. It is written of Israel that she had "hewn out for herself cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water." Israel repaired not to those true prophets or physicians who held the balm or word of God, but she appointed and hearkened to a false priesthood, who were no longer repositories for the true word of God, but who had become "broken cisterns that could hold no water."

This is why Israel was not recovered. A substantiation of this is found in an overwhelming mass of evidence from God's Word, amongst which we might cite Hosea 8:11-14; Psa. 74:4-9; Mal. 2:7, 8; Ezek. 22:7, 8, 12, 25-28.

Untempered Mortar

In the concluding portion of the last cited Scripture we note the following words, "And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar." How significant, how full of meaning is this statement! Instead of the rightly tempered, perfectly balanced balm which would have been applied by the true prophets of God, these false prophets daubed with untempered mortar, no longer a soothing, healing balm, but in the removal of the spirit of God's law, that law had lost its temper; it had become a dead, lifeless letter, had become unbalanced; and these false prophets, instead of having the true balm with which to heal, daubed with untempered mortar which rendered the recovery of Israel impossible.

And thus do we find it today. Among religious teachers are to be found those attempting to instruct and to teach the people who are themselves lacking in a knowledge of the truths of the Bible. Again there are those who have a great head knowledge of the Scriptures, but who, lacking the love, lacking the spirit of those Scriptures, also attempt to teach others. Both of these classes are equally "daubers of untempered mortar"; and so let us avoid either of these obnoxious extremes, let us be balanced dispensers of the balm of Gilead, the precious Word of God.

As a judgment upon Israel for her neglect of the balm placed in Gilead, for her neglect of the physicians there, Gilead, together with Mount Zion, the holy Sanctuary, was given a prey to the Romans. The fruitful land was turned into barrenness, and it was polluted with the blood of her people. Jehovah who had once said "Gilead is Mine" now has a different story to tell of her. Through the Prophet Hosea He says in chapter 6, verse 8 (Hosea 6:8): "Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood."

Lessons from the Balsam Tree

The balsam tree of Gilead had medicinal virtue all through the wood or tree itself, the seed of the tree, and the sap of the tree. In the wood, or the tree itself, we have a beautiful picture of the Word of God. The balsam tree was a saving, healing tree; the Word of God as expressed in Jesus and the Scriptures, is the only means of salvation, either for the Church or for the world of mankind.

The balsam tree carries a seed with it that well pictures the seed of the new nature; a seed that through the operation of the Holy Spirit is generated within a tabernacle of flesh, which like the seed of the balsam tree, when planted in the ground, germinates and brings forth. What a beautiful picture does it present of our begetting by the Holy Spirit as new creatures, and an earnest, if we shall continue faithful, of the new birth to come -- a birth which shall be not from a corruptible seed, not from a seed which being mortal contains the possibility of corruption within itself, and which under the reign of sin and death must finally eventuate in death and decay. But it shall be a birth from an incorruptible seed, which will never die, and which will never decay, even as says the Apostle Peter: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." - 1 Pet. 1:23.

In the sap of the balsam tree we have a beautiful picture of the Holy Spirit circulating through God's Word. Even as the sap of the balsam tree of Gilead circulating through that tree imparted life and vitality to it, so does the Holy Spirit circulating through the Word of God, impart life and vitality and generating power to it, without which it would be but a dead letter of knowledge, a fit for the head but a misfit for the heart, as sounding brass and a clanging cymbal.

As the sap of the balsam tree generates or causes the seed of that tree to form, so does the Holy Spirit operating within our minds and hearts, generate the seed of a new nature, fertilizing, sustaining, nourishing, and promoting its welfare until triumphantly it shall finally emerge from its womb of flesh.

The leaves of the balsam tree of Gilead were white and were very thickly distributed over its branches, literally covering the tree and giving it a very white appearance. This might very properly picture the covering robe of Christ's righteousness, also the purity and spotlessness of the Word of God. In Psalm 12:6 we read that "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times"; and in Prov. 30:5: "Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him."

The balm of Gilead had rather a sharp, biting taste, but was wholesome to the digestion. How like unto the Word of God, which is indeed sharp and unsavory to the unregenerate appetite. We read that it was folly to the Jews and a stumbling block to the Gentiles, but to the chosen ones of both Jews and Gentiles it was the power of God unto salvation. Ofttimes the truth is sour to the taste, but afterwards it becomes sweet. There is a class who have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, who in days gone by have experienced the healing power of the balm of God's Word, but who for various reasons have again become sick, yet refuse to apply that precious balm for their recovery. They have become deaf to the warnings of the Holy Spirit; they are in the attitude of crucifying the Lord afresh, and of putting Him to an open shame. To such-a class a solemn warning has come through the Prophet Isaiah in the following words "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isa. 5:20.) Such a course if persisted in can have only one final ending.

"The Sympathizing Jesus"

The balsam tree of Gilead exudes or weeps a kind of gum very much in the form of tears, a picture of the tears of grief and sympathy shed by Jesus, that Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us. We see Him over Jerusalem, as He grieved and wept over her, and we hear those sweet words of pathos : "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not." And behold Him at the grave of Lazarus, when with a heart full of sympathy for those sorrowing sisters, the emotion of grief gripped Him and He wept tears of sympathy.

The balsam tree of Gilead was first granted to but one land, that of Judea; from thence it was introduced to other peoples; but it was taken to them first by merchants of Judea. And so was it with the balm of the Word of God; to the Israelites was it first given. We read in Psalm 147:19, 20: "He showeth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for His judgments, they have not known them."

We remember Jesus expressly commanding His disciples not to go into the way of the Gentiles nor any city of the Samaritans, but only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But when the time came for the spiritual balm of Gilead to go to other nations and to other peoples, it was even as with the natural balm of Gilead, it was taken to them by Jewish spiritual merchants. To refresh our memories we refer to two Jewish evangelists, Paul and Barnabas where they are spoken of in Acts 13:46 as follows: "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

Grew Only in the King's Garden

Historians tell us that when first the balsam tree grew in Judea, it was permitted to grow in the King's garden only. Subjects of the King had full access to the balm for their needs and sicknesses, but they were not permitted to control the output of the balm or the balsam tree itself. And so is it with the spiritual balm, the Word of God. It was not of men nor did it originate with man, but it came from heaven itself; it was given to man through Jesus and the Apostles and through the Prophets by whom it was preached since the world began.

Historians also tell us not alone that it was permitted to grow only in the King's garden, but that it grew in two orchards of the King's garden; that the King's garden was laid out in two parts or orchards, and one of these orchards was much larger and finer than was the other. What a beautiful picture does this present of that day so shortly to come when there will be two phases of God's Kingdom in operation: not only the heavenly or larger, greater phase of that Kingdom, but also the lesser or earthly phase of that Kingdom which also will be glorious, and from both phases of which shall flow the healing balm of the even-balanced, even-tempered Word of God. Speaking of that time Isaiah says in chapter 29, verse 24 (Isa. 29:24): "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." Here we see a day is coming when the spirit of love and the truths of the Bible will go hand in hand, it will be a rightly tempered, perfectly balanced Gospel, not untempered mortar.

It has been written of the balm of Gilead that it was recommended for the breaking up or dissolving of stones or calcium formations in the body. What a picture again is this of the spiritual balm of God's Word in its power to break up and dissolve the hardest formation of all in a man or woman, a stony heart. Jeremiah 23:29 says: "Is not My Word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Again we read in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 36:26): "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

"The Great Physician Now is Near"

Today a world distraught is casting about for healing balm. She sees one by one her concoctions failing to bring peace, failing to bring healing to the sickness of the peoples of the earth. She seeks for balm, but refuses to seek it in Gilead; she seeks a physician, but refuses to seek for him in Gilead. She refuses the only Physician who can heal all her diseases.

Fascism, communism and other isms will be tried by a despairing, dying world, and all failing to bring about healing, this world will finally gaze on a discarded mound of broken cisterns, for even as did Israel after the flesh, even as did many of Israel after the spirit, so will the nations of this present evil world heap to herself cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

But as final destruction descends upon her, there will be those who will cry out: "Save, Lord, or we perish. To those will be granted an opportunity of life in the next Age "wherein dwelleth righteousness." And as the great Physician is then seen pointing the way to the healing balm, to those who shall have been delivered from the besieged city, who shall have been delivered from the power of Satan, He will be seen pointing toward literal Gilead, the Gilead of old, for from Palestine shall the word of the Lord go forth, the healing balm for every ill.

Jeremiah's Cry Goes Forth Today

We sometimes wonder if there are those who, coming among the Lord's people, ever have occasion to ask of us the question of Jeremiah, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" Possibly this question may come from some lonely heart, it may come from some seeker after truth and righteousness. Has such an one ever come to us in search of the true balm of Gilead and gone away without receiving it? This is a question to which each one of us should give serious thought.

And then again in those all too rare moments of self-examination, , does that question come to each one of us? How about **our** heart and mind? Is the balm of Gilead to be found there? Is the true and great Physician reigning within **our** hearts? Does He hold individual *sway* there?

Let us hold fast those spiritual blessings that have been bequeathed to us, ever remembering that we wrestle not with flesh and blood, for our great Adversary is watching spiritual Israel at this time as never before, and if we let down our guard, he will be sure to reach some vulnerable spot.

So let us shine as lights in a dark place. Thus will we be "living epistles known and read of all men;" so shall we fight the good fight of faith; so shall we lay hold on eternal life; so shall we at last be caught up to that heavenly phase of the King's garden, from where we shall be used in assisting the world up from sickness to health, from death to life, and from destitution to restitution.

- *Herald, September 1936*

The Question Box

Romans 5:15-17.

Question:

In Romans 5:15-17 St. Paul seems to be arguing that the sacrifice of Christ was more than a corresponding price for the forfeited life of Adam. In Rom. 5:15 he says the grace of God and the gift by grace "much more" abounded. In Rom. 5:16 he says that the gift was "*not* as it was by one that sinned" - the context implying that it was greater. In Rom. 5:17 the phrase "much more" is once again employed in reference to the work of Christ in contrast to that of Adam. How are we to understand these verses?

Answer:

This question is a most interesting one. To secure a satisfactory answer to it is a rewarding study.

Let us first glance back at what has gone before. In the development of his great theme, namely, that the salvation of every man, whoever he may be, rests on the righteousness which faith procures (Rom. 1:17), St. Paul has shown:

- (1) The need of the whole world, both Gentile and Jew (Rom. 1:18-3:20).
- (2) God's provision to meet that need (Rom. 3:21-26).
- (3) That the wondrous gift of salvation was offered to Gentiles as well as to Jews in accordance with the principle of Jewish monotheism (Rom. 3:27-31).

Such a conclusion would be very difficult for his readers, especially his Jewish readers, to accept, and so he devoted a whole chapter (Rom. 4) to show that this mode of justification is in keeping with the decisive example, Abraham.

In the first eleven verses of the following chapter he shows that the righteousness thus obtained will not fail the consecrated believer no matter what the tribulations of the present may be.

Next comes the paragraph containing the verses to which our question relates, a paragraph which runs from verse 12 to the end of the chapter. (Rom. 5:12-21)

The main argument in this paragraph is given in verses 12, 18, and 19. (Rom. 5:12, 18-19)

In the Authorized Version Rom. 5:13-17 are shown in parentheses. Omitting, for the moment, these parenthetical verses and reading only Rom. 5:12, 18-19, the main argument may be more readily discerned. We offer the following paraphrase:

"Since, condemned as we all were, we have found reconciliation in Christ, there is, therefore, between our relation to him and our relation to Adam the following resemblance, namely:

Verse 12

"As by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that [in Adam] all sinned;

Verse 18:

"Therefore, as by one offense [the disobedience of Adam] there was condemnation for all men, so also by one act of justification [the act of God who, in consequence of the death of Christ has pronounced justification for all sinners] there was for all men justification of life.

Verse 19:

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners so by the obedience of one [the holy life and vicarious death of Christ] shall many be made righteous."

It must be apparent that in these three verses St. Paul is arguing the *parity* between the two works--the work of Adam and the work of Christ -- *not their disparity*. However, in Rom. 5:15-17 he ascribes a certain superiority of action to Christ's work as compared to Adam's. Why does he thus interrupt his parity argument?

The parity argument is clear: Even as death passed upon all because of certain matters stated (Rom. 5:12) so the free gift came upon all men to justification of life (Rom. 5:18).

Since this parity idea is the main argument, *it follows that Rom. 5:15-17, when properly understood, demonstrate this parity*. Let us see if they are capable of being thus understood.

In these verses the thought of the Apostle appears to be this: "If, from the first factor which, from one point of view may be regarded as a comparatively insignificant one, namely, the offense of one, there could go forth an action which spread over the whole multitude of mankind, will not the conclusion hold *all the more strongly*, that from two factors (the grace of God and the gift of Jesus through this grace) acting on the opposite side, powerful and rich as they are, there must result an action, the extension of which shall not be less than that of the first factor, and shall consequently also reach the whole of the multitude? If the offense affected all mankind, shall not these also?"

If we have correctly understood the Apostle's thought, it will be seen that the "much more" of Rom. 5:15 is to be understood in the sense of "much more certainly." The Apostle is not here concerned with demonstrating that there is more of grace in Christ than there was of death in Adam. What he wishes to prove is that if a slight cause could bring sentence of death on all mankind, this same race, every member of it, could surely experience the effect of a cause much more powerful.

The point may be illustrated thus If a very weak spring could flood a meadow, is it not safe to assume that a much more abundant spring, if it spread over the same space of ground, could not fail to submerge it? If Adam's act could bring death to all, much more certainly can we believe that the grace of God and the gift of Jesus must be capable of extending a saving influence to the same multitude of people.

When we reach Rom. 5:16, a second difference between the work of Adam and that of Christ is brought to view. In the case of Adam and his ruinous work there was only one actual sinner -his race played only an unconscious and purely passive part, being yet unborn. Contrast this with the work of redemption to be wrought by Christ. Here it is not a case of one sinner to be justified but

that of a multitude, having added their own contingent of sins to the original transgression. In the matter of condemnation in Adam, mankind were passively and collectively subjected to the sentence of death, whereas in regard to their relationship to Christ, we have to do with persons who lay hold individually and personally of the decree which justifies them. "Note well this circumstance," instructs the Apostle, "unlike the judgment of condemnation which resulted from the sin of one, Adam, the free gift of justification has reference to the sins of many (Adam's entire family)." There, on the one hand, was a single and solitary condemnation, which embraced them all through the deed of one; here, on the other hand, is a justification (collective, indeed, but appropriated by each individually, and thus transformed into as many personal justifications as there are believing sinners) which cannot fail to establish the reign of life as firmly, nay more firmly, than the reign of death resulted from the condemnation of all in Adam.

The superiority of the work of Christ is thus a second time noted as proving the Apostle's main (his parity) argument. It is as though he were to say: "What a difference between the power of a spark which sets fire to the forest by lighting a withered branch, and the power of the instrument which extinguishes the conflagration at the moment when every tree is on fire and makes them all live again!"

We come now to Rom. 5:17. Here once again, as in Rom. 5:15, "much more" has the sense of "much more certainly." Unquestionably there is a greater abundance of life in Christ than there was of death in Adam.

- P. L. Read

God is Love

I cannot always trace the way
Where thou, Almighty One, dost move;
But I can always, always say,
That God is love.

When fear her chilling mantle flings
O'er earth, my soul to heaven above,
As to her native home, upsprings,
For God is love.

When mystery clouds my lonely path,
I'll check my dread, my doubts reprove,
In this my soul sweet comfort hath,
That God is love.

Yes, God is love; a thought like this
Can every gloomy thought remove,
And turn all tears, all woes, to bliss,
For God is love.

Recently Deceased

Will A. Bagnall, Leicester, Eng.
Willie L. Colberg, Dobbs Ferry, N. Y.
Bessie D. Ducey, Lexington, Mass.
Edward Gallagher, St. Louis, Mo.
Barbara Hauser, Hartford, Conn.
Ohmer A. Krull, Muncie, Ind.
Pauline Makosiej, N. Brookfield, Mass.
James Moore, Boston, Mass.
Estella H. Newell, Chicago, Ill.
Martha Olson, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
Earl W. Parker, Roseburg, Ore.
Elina Peterson, Chicago, Ill.
Mary Regar, San Bernardino, Cal.
Clara E. Richmon, Pittsfield, Mass.
Almedia Shinault, Richmond, Va.
Minnie E. Smith, Litchfield, Me.
Vivian Smith, Medford, Mass.
Dovie Stratton, Denver, Colo.
Frances Wilson, Chicago, Ill.