

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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Great World Changes Long Foretold

"He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." - Rev. 21:5.

HUMANITY has long hoped for and believed in a new day, in which sorrow, pain, and death would cease, and in which peace, righteousness, and life would prevail; in brief, a dispensation in which the power of evil would be crushed and mankind be delivered from the reign of sin and death, which has so long obtained. The literature of the world shows that many intelligent people have refused to believe that the Divine purpose in the creation of our earth has yet been attained. Aside from the Bible, we continually find reference to the morning of the new day, to the Golden Age, etc.

Not to the longings of men's hearts, however, but to the promises of our God do we look for real instruction on this subject. The Bible most emphatically declares that the entire period of human history thus far has been a nighttime. The Prophet David explained, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5). Thus prophetically we are assured that there will be a morning, whose glory, brightness, and blessing will fully compensate for all the dark shadows of the nighttime past.

HUMANITY AWAITS THE DIVINE BLESSING

One of the most signal promises of the Bible was made some four thousand years ago by God to Abraham. It says, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." For centuries Abraham's posterity waited for the Messiah of promise, with the anticipation that he would use them in connection with his work of blessing all people. The Prophets of Israel foretold the coming King of the line of David -- that he would be a great reigning Priest, Prophet, and King. To him "Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess," and through him a blessing extend to all nations (Isa. 45:23; Isa. 25:6).

Still other prophecies respecting Messiah's Kingdom were repeated and amplified in the Parables of Jesus, in the teachings of his Apostles, "and finally, and graphically, in the last Book of the

Bible, the Revelation which Jesus gave the Church, through St. John. It declares that "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). This is without doubt a proclamation respecting the Kingdom of Messiah. Through it, God is to wipe away all tears from off all faces; and the King of kings and Lord of lords, whom Jehovah has appointed as earth's new Ruler, assures us that he himself will "make all things new."

Even the heathen poets sang of the Golden Age to come -- quite probably borrowing their thoughts from the Hebrew Scriptures and perhaps realizing in some measure that a gracious God would not forever permit a reign of sin and death, but would somehow, sometime, and through some agency bring to earth blessings to supplant the curse.

The promise of a new Age of blessing for humanity is in full accord with the prayer which our Lord taught us as his followers, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Why then should we hesitate for a moment to accept the explicit declaration of the Scriptures that a great change of dispensation' is coming, when instead of the world being subject to the prince of this world, Satan, who now worketh in the children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2), it shall be under the domain, the rulership of the Prince of Glory, who redeemed Adam and his race from the curse of death by the sacrifice of himself?

"IN THE TIME OF THE END"

After all these centuries of waiting, hoping, and praying, "Thy Kingdom come," many thoughtful people today are more and more awakening to a realization of the fact that we are living near the very dawn of the glorious epoch for which we have waited, prayed, and hoped. The past century and particularly the last fifty years have witnessed vast changes; modern knowledge, science, inventions, etc., bringing in labor-saving machinery, have revolutionized the affairs of humanity. Means of communication by telephone, telegraph, and wireless, and modes of travel by steam and electric trains and by airways have introduced marvelous opportunities and advantages to mankind. These are among the improvements and inventions that characterize the days of the Lord's preparation for the "times of refreshing and restoration" promised when the Lord shall appear (Acts 3:19-21).

How comforting and illuminating is the explanation of the Bible! It explains that the wonders of our day are the foregleams of Messiah's Kingdom and its blessings, the foregleams of the Golden Age. It explains that we are in the day of Jehovah's preparation for the Kingdom of his Son. We have numerous Scriptural declarations pointing to the end of this Age and the dawning of a new Age, and assuring us that at this time many would run to and fro, knowledge should be increased, and the wise should understand (Dan. 12:1-10).

KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED

This prophecy of Daniel is worthy of the most careful note, not only because Daniel was a prophet greatly beloved of the Lord, but because Jesus, the Redeemer, specially quoted a portion of this prophecy and thus attested its genuineness. The many running to and fro could seemingly refer to nothing else than the wonderful traveling which is a feature of our day and no other. In no other time was running to and fro a possibility to any extent. It is less than two centuries since the first crude locomotive was built and the first steamboat was launched. How greatly and how rapidly they have been improved! It might be said that there was no opportunity for running to and fro until within the past fifty years. Now, the world is grid-ironed with rails. Now, the ocean voyage of four months is cut down practically to as many days by mammoth vessels carrying three thousand to four thousand at a time. But still more wonderful, almost beyond the wildest

flight of human expectation, is the achievement of modern time of the ocean voyage in midair without a stop, by means of both the dirigible and airplane, the latter covering the distance in but a few hours -- at almost incredible speed.

Who knew, at the time of Daniel's prophecy, of these wonderful facilities for running to and fro? Who knew that these facilities would be so generally used in this our day? Only the Almighty! And he gave this as one of the particular signs of the ending of the present Age -- the dawning of the New Dispensation -- the long-promised Messianic Kingdom.

Likewise the marvelous increase of knowledge of our day along all lines marks another significant fulfillment of the Prophet's message. The next statement of his prophecy is that the wise of God's people shall understand. And now in the appropriate time all over the world there are Bible students who, as the wise referred to, are trimming their Bible lamps and being well supplied with the oil of the holy spirit, are receiving light, are understanding the things kept secret from past ages and generations.

PREPARING FOR THE REIGN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

One more token of the end of this Age, and the dawning of the new: God declared through the Prophet Daniel that "there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." The Redeemer, we believe, quoted Daniel's prophecy and referred to the same time -the present time of general distress, uncertainty and trouble which we recognize on every hand and which, in all the nations of the earth, is threatening the foundations of society, political, financial, and religious. The Savior bade his followers rejoice even in the midst of the trouble, because it marks the day of deliverance from the power of sin and death. He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

That the coming chastisement upon the world, representing God's rebuke of the nations, will prove a great blessing to humanity, we are fully assured. Well may our hearts rejoice then to note the Scriptural declaration that the Day of Vengeance is limited, that it will be cut short. We are assured that "a short work will the Lord make on the earth." To this end, instead of allowing the time of trouble to run its course and to practically exterminate the race in the reign of anarchy, the Lord declares that in the midst of the trouble he will establish his Kingdom on the ruins of the present civilization, and that under the ministration of the Kingdom, order and peace and blessing will soon be established on the earth, on a sure foundation, on a foundation of righteousness and truth.

St. John assures us that Satan with all his blinding influences will be bound, restrained, that he may deceive the nations no longer. The new Day, for which all creation has so long been waiting and longing, will have been fully ushered in; the fulfillment of the prayer of our Savior will then begin to be realized, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Very early in this new Day there will be realized the hope of all the waiting, suffering saints, who from the days of Jesus down to the present time, have been walking in his footsteps and looking forward, according to his promise, to share in the Kingdom by having a part in the First Resurrection (Rev. 20:5, 6). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Rev. 3:21).

But notice now the course of all belonging to the Kingdom class, throughout this Age: They are not reigning with Christ, but suffering with Christ. Jesus explained this. They are indeed of the Royal Family, because begotten of the holy spirit; they are indeed the Kingdom class, because

they are affiliated with the Great King; but they have not yet entered into their glory. They will do so only by the power of the First Resurrection. Thus it is written, "We must all be changed," because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15:50, 51).

Our Lord himself was the Pattern, the Forerunner, of all these. After his consecration and his begetting of the holy spirit, he was tested unto death, even the death of the cross, before he experienced his glorious resurrection change and ascended and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High. Similarly all of his followers, after consecration, must be tested, their loyalty must be proved, before they can share with him in "his resurrection."

Partly for the testing of these, their development takes place in a time when Satan is the prince of this world, and when his power is permitted to be exercised against their Lord. Only the overcomers - the victors-in the fight against the world, the flesh, and Satan, can share the glorious, promised Kingdom (the *sovereignty*) with their Lord. Note carefully Luke 16:16; 22:28-30; Matt. 11:11; 1 Tim. 6:12; Rev. 3:21, *A.S.V.*

St. Paul assures us that in due time God will give this Kingdom to the Christ. He tells us that Christ "must reign until he shall have put down all insubordination" -- everything contrary to the Divine will, everything sinful; until he shall have uplifted mankind out of the miry clay and the horrible pit of sin and death. This is the thought brought before us by St. Peter, saying, "Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until *the times of restitution of all things* which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." These times of restitution are the Kingdom times, the times of resurrection, the times of human uplifting from sin and death conditions to life, and joy, and peace, for all who will receive the Lord's favors upon his terms.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Another viewpoint of the work of God's Kingdom is represented in what the Scriptures term the "Judgment Day," which will be a thousand years long, in which all humanity will be individually on trial for life. The clear knowledge of God will then be given to all, as we read, "The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth," and "all shall know him." It is written that under that judgment-trial in which wholesome disciplines will be administered to all, it shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear that great Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people (Acts 3:19-23).

In order to give all of Adam's family that trial for life there is to be an awakening of all the dead, as we read: "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust"; in harmony also with the Master's words, "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth" (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29). We thank God for the wideness of his mercy, "like the wideness of the sea" -- that the Divine Plan is no respecter of persons, that every member of the race, condemned through Father Adam's disobedience, redeemed from the condemnation by the death of Jesus, shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the facts and of using that knowledge for his own recovery from sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, and death -- the ultimate attainment of human perfection and everlasting life in Paradise -- the restored earth.

The very essence of the Gospel of the Kingdom then is seen to embrace the hope of the awakening of all the dead-the coming forth from the sleep of death of all the millions of Adam's posterity, in order that they may benefit by the sacrifice given once for all by Jesus nineteen

centuries ago. The angels proclaimed Good Tidings for all people when Jesus was born; but the vast majority have gone into the tomb having but little knowledge of this message, and without deriving any benefit from our Savior's death. Hence the Resurrection Morning will mean the awakening of all in order that they may come to a knowledge of the Truth, and if they will, to attain everlasting life (John 3:16). The Divine law, however, will be the same in the future as now. God never changes and his law will never change. Hence we are told that all the wicked will God destroy. All who willfully reject the grace of God during that full opportunity will be destroyed in the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery (Rev. 21:8). But the way to everlasting life will be easier than now. No longer will it be a narrow or difficult way: no longer will it call for the sacrifice of every earthly right and interest in order to attain eternal life. No longer will the Adversary place darkness before the minds of men as light, and cause light to appear to be darkness; for his power will be restrained. No longer will it be true that "all who live godly shall suffer persecution." But on the contrary, those living godly will receive more and more of God's blessing; and instead of faithfulness leading to death, it will lead upward and onward to human perfection and everlasting life under the blessed conditions of the Kingdom which God has prepared for the blessing of the whole world (Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16, 29).

WHY THE NARROW WAY OF THE CHURCH?

The way for the Church in the present time is narrow, difficult, because evil is dominant now. The Lord makes use of this opportunity of evil's dominance to issue his Call for soldiers of the Cross, in order that the conflict between the evil and the good may serve to prove and to test the faithfulness and loyalty of those whom he has called to so high a station. And since the trials are more difficult, it does not surprise us that the reward is greater. The earthly reward for the world, as we have seen, will be everlasting life as human beings, in Paradise restored, on God's footstool made glorious. But the reward of the Church, if faithful, will be a change of nature from human to Divine, and a share with the Redeemer, Messiah, in his glory, honor, and immortality.

NO MORE DEATH

But, blessed thought, when the Prince of Life has put in force the laws of righteousness and equity with an iron rule, the masses of mankind will learn that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." They will learn that God's Plan and laws are best in the end for all concerned, and ultimately will learn to *love* righteousness and hate iniquity (Psa. 45:7; Heb. 1:9). All who under that reign have not learned to love the right will be counted unworthy of lasting life and will be cut off from among the people (Acts 3:23; Rev. 20:9; Psa. 11:5-7).

Witness then the consummation of the Divine Plan at the close of the thousand years of Christ's reign—a restored paradise, with all pain, sin, death, and the curse removed, and with all tears wiped away, and every voice in heaven and on earth praising God (Rev. 21:1-4; 5:13). Shall we not the more earnestly pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," and hail with joyful hearts all the signs and indications of our day that mark the dawn of the New Age and the fact that earth's glorious King draws near!

- *Selected.*

Notice of Annual Meeting

As announced in our May-June issue, the Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., is scheduled to be held on Saturday, September 28, at 10:00 a.m., in the Central Y.M.C.A., 1315 Pacific Avenue, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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

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

In the May-June Herald we said that Brother P. E. Thomson would not be a candidate for directorship this year. Later advices just received indicate that we had misunderstood his earlier correspondence. It is a pleasure, therefore, to make this correction. Brother Thomson's name will appear on the Proxy (and Ballot) Form to be mailed to Pastoral Bible Institute members on or about August 15, 1968.

The Four Freedoms

"If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." - John 8:36.

FREE indeed! Jesus intimated that some who think they are free are really imprisoned, confined, restrained from liberty; and he implied that there are degrees in the attainment of the freedom which he had to offer. In fact, this freedom of Jesus, as it applies to his Church in the Gospel Age, may also be divided into four stages or degrees, to be attained before its beneficiaries finally become "free *indeed*."

THE FIRST FREEDOM

Paul, the great attorney of Christ, writing to the Ephesians, declares: " ... Ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. . . . Ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:1, 2, 12). Truly a condition of condemnation, confinement, and misery.

Thus it is seen, from the standpoint of the truly free, that all men who have not known Jesus Christ as their Savior are "carnal, sold under sin"; clad in the "filthy rags" of their own righteousness; "captives" of death, "hid in prison houses" of disease, of poverty, mental and physical; preyed upon by "that corruption that is in the world through lust." Miserable prisoners in a filthy dungeon!

And as for *many* generations most men have been born in this dark and dismal dungeon, they do not realize their condition; and in all sincerity reply to Him who speaks to them of possible freedom as did the Jews of old: "We have never yet been in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?"

Nevertheless, *some* of "the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the earth, in the deep darkness of death, upon them bath the light shined" (Isaiah 9:2). A ray of sunshine has pierced into the dungeon.

"He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," declared John the Baptist of Jesus. Those who have come to this Light, and have heard the proclamation of "release to the captives," and have qualified by faith for its benefits, feel that they have been made "free, indeed."

THE SECOND FREEDOM

But sooner or later, some of those who have been justified by faith, and so experienced the First Freedom of Jesus, realize that they are not yet entirely free. Though released from the dungeon, they are still confined to the house! Their condition is described by the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians. He has been writing mainly to Jewish Christians, but in the fourth chapter of the Epistle he seems to broaden his theme to embrace all those who show by their conduct that they are still laboring under a certain restraint. He writes: "I say that so long as the heir is a child, he differeth nothing from a slave, though he is lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the day appointed of the father. So we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the rudiments of the world." To do justice to the Apostle's very idiomatic Greek, the word ren-

dered "rudiments" might be more freely translated "goose-stepping." The Jewish converts were still ostentatiously and foolishly trying to keep in step with the Jewish law and traditions; the Gentile converts were still marching along to the "hep, hep" of their Gentile associates. The Apostle continues: "Howbeit, at that time, not knowing God [well], ye were in bondage to them that by nature are no gods: but now that ye have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how turn ye back again to the weak and beggarly [cringing] 'goose-stepping,' whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?" This marching along with the world is not freedom for the Christian. It is bondage.

The Apostle James also has something to say of Christians who are still in bondage. "Whence wars and fighting among you?" he demands. "Come they not from your pleasures that war [with your consciences] in your members? . . . Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" This inward fighting is not freedom.

"Ye were called for freedom," continues Paul to the Galatians, "But ... the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would:"

So both the world and the flesh crack the whip over us, and we continue on our "weak and beggarly" course until our partially freed spirits get tired of the miserable performance and we turn again unto Jesus to hear him say: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

The word "yoke" used by Jesus in this passage is not the same Greek word he used in the parable in which he referred to "five yoke of oxen." It is the word used in Acts 15:10: "A yoke upon the neck of the disciples"; in Galatians 5:1: "Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage"; in 1 Timothy 6:1: "As many servants as are under the yoke of bondage"; and none of these suggest a partnership yoke. It carries the same thought as the "yoke" of Jeremiah 27:6, 11: "The nation that shall bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him...." Jesus invites the justified believer to submit to him - to his rule. And he intimates: "Compared to the servitude you are under, my rule is freedom. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Some of the dungeon-freed earthlings accept this further freedom; and of them Paul writes to the Colossians (Col. 1:12, 13): "Giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the [present] inheritance of the saints in light [by releasing us from the dark dungeon of condemnation], and [further] translated us into the Kingdom [sovereignty] of the Son of his love." These have now been released from the house -- the house of Adam -- the house of human mindedness.

No longer citizens of the world, their "citizenship is in heaven"; while properly described as "aliens and strangers," they have been appointed "ambassadors for Christ," hence are assured extraterritorial privileges and protection in "this present evil world." "For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, that the righteous [be not forced to] put forth their hands unto iniquity." Thus the Psalmist explains the matter in the 125th Psalm; and he counsels those who have received the freedom of God's out-of-doors: "Forget thine own people and thy father's [Adam's] house" (Psalm 45:10).

Truly these doubly freed ones may say with the Psalmist (Psa. 18:17,19): "He delivered me from my strong enemy [death, the dungeon] ... He brought me forth also into a large place" -- out of the house, into the condition of the consecrated, the spirit-begotten.

A glorious freedom - but is their freedom yet complete?

THE THIRD FREEDOM

No! The Apostle writes in the seventh chapter of Romans a vivid description of a condition of mind experienced by every freedman who, released from the dungeon of the Adamic condemnation and from the house of human-mindedness, has received a new mind, "which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." The Apostle reminds us that we are still obliged to carry around with us a "body of death" -it is the only body "we," the New Creatures, have -- a body that in many of the laws of its being is contrary to the New Mind -- the will to serve God. "For I delight," says Paul, "in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members."

Thus even in the open air of God's outdoors the freedman finds that he is still infested with some of the crawling things of his former prison cell: the habits, desires, appetites, passions, entrenched in his fallen flesh -- reckoned dead, indeed, but still actually alive and in torment.

The Apostle is very sensitive to this condition. The "law" in his mind and the "law" in his members are "warring" against each other, and he feels himself a victim of this internal strife. He is "brought into captivity" - he uses a word meaning a prisoner of war, literally, "spear-hedged" -- and is pricked on every side by his tormentors as he seeks to escape. "O wretched [literally, trial-enduring] man that I am," he cries; "who shall deliver me out of this dead body? I thank God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Eagerly we inquire: When, O Paul, shall this deliverance come? Is there some formula of immediate escape that you have discovered, and of which we also may avail ourselves? Answer, we pray; for we, too, long to be free indeed!

Not here does the Apostle directly answer this question; elsewhere he is explicit. "We wait for a Savior," he writes the Philippians, "who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" -- his risen, spirit body. And to the Corinthians he writes: "We know that, if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, ... being burdened." Thus, to the Romans, the Philippians, the Corinthians, the Great Apostle writes the same message: "Indeed, we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon; that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life" (Rom. 7:22-25; Phil. 3:20, 21; 2 Cor. 5:1-4).

So those who may be said to have been successively released from the dungeon and the house, are still traveling and travailing in an alien country; they are still "groaning" and "seeking another country, even a better."

But meanwhile shall we be content with merely "groaning"? Is there nothing that we can do about the "body of humiliation" with which we are still hampered? Cannot we get rid of some, at least, of the dungeon soil and crawling things?

Yes, indeed! There is the cleansing by "washing of water by the Word" to be done, and we all find plenty of scrubbing needed in the corners! The Apostle's exhortation is: "Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilements of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

It is not difficult to define the defilements of the flesh, but what of the defilements of spirit which we must seek to wash away? What are they?

The English word "spirit" and the Greek word so rendered, both have the significance of unseen power or force, ("like the wind," as Jesus explained) whether personal or impersonal. The mind is the unseen power that controls the body; the motives and intentions, often deeply hidden and disguised even from our own consciousness, constitute the unseen power that dominates our minds. These motives and intentions are often tainted with "spiritual" pride, or ambition, or vainglory, or insincerity. These are defilements of the spirit.

In Hebrews 4:12 it is written: "The word of God is living, and active . . . and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Word both discerns and cleanses, even the defilements of the spirit. But the process must be continuous. The fleshly "tabernacle" is inherently weak, fundamentally unsound, persistently vicious. Its reactions powerfully influence the deepest functions of the mind. The Prophet Jeremiah realized this when he declared (Jer. 17:9): "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?" Even our motives, at best, are obscure and mixed!

However, the longer the cleansing process through "washing by the word" continues, and the greater the degree of freedom from defilements of flesh and spirit attained, the more keenly conscious of the dead body still on his back, does the freedman in Christ become. Often his voice is heard raised in plaintive song:

"If I in Thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of Thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
The fetters of flesh, and be free!"

The gyves, the fetters, that bind the free spirit, must still be struck off by the Great Armorer, before the liberated prisoner is free indeed!

THE FOURTH FREEDOM

So one who has conceived a passionate desire for the ultimate and complete freedom of which Jesus spoke can never be satisfied as long as his thoughts and actions are in any degree "subjected to vanity," to that "corruption that is in the world through lust." This "corruption of blood" affects every man of Adam's condemned race. So long as the judicially justified freedman's thoughts or actions ever wander, even for a moment, from the objective of serving God to which he has pledged himself, he is to that extent "subject to vanity" and to the corruption of carnal desire or "lust," however innocent he may be of offense according to the standards of the present evil world. So he increasingly longs for that new sphere of life to which he has been invited by his Lord; but the desirability of the vast "change" which this involves is purely a matter of faith. For, if he is a realist, or if he has learned sufficient humility, he cannot feel that he is prepared, fitted, competent for the new status and environment to which he aspires. He cannot with confidence assure himself that mentally, morally, and physically he is ready to meet so profound and sweeping a change.

What *can* the seeker after the ultimate freedom of Jesus do to complete his preparation for the great Change -- a metamorphosis vastly greater than would be the instantaneous transformation of an ant into a man? As a matter of fact -- *nothing*, but trust. This the Apostles intimate. "Having done all [that you *can* do, or that is commanded], *stand*. God's spirit is working in the freedman

candidate. The trials and difficulties of his experience are producing qualities in him suitable to his future sphere. He has "need of patience, that having done the will of God, [he] may receive the promise" (Heb. 10:36). Yet patience is not a deliberate or voluntary acquisition. James says (James 1:3, 4) that "the trial of our faith" *produces* patience, and that it is our part to "*let* patience have her perfect [complete] work, that ye may be perfect [complete] and entire, lacking nothing." Does this mean perfection in the flesh, mental, moral, and physical? Ah, no! It means that Christ's freedman must have certain educational and preparatory experiences; and if he draw back, the process will not be complete, the education unfinished.

But since it is admitted that perfection in the flesh is not to be expected nor attainable, there yet remains a tremendous work to be accomplished to prepare the freedman for his ultimate destiny. This work requires the energies of the divine Creator himself. "Wherefore," says Peter, "let them also that suffer according to the will of God, commit their souls [beings, conscious existence] in well-doing, to a faithful *Creator*." This is the only place in the New Testament that God is called the "Creator." It is indeed a sovereign act of creation that is now to be accomplished.

In the fourth and fifth chapters of Peter's First Epistle, the fact, conditions, and certain details of this creative work are set forth. He says:

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you . . . but *inasmuch* as ye are partakers of [the] Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of his glory ye may rejoice with exceeding joy. . . And the God of all grace [giving], who hath called you unto his eternal glory in [the] Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, *himself* to complete you, he will establish [adjust to surroundings, integrate], he will strengthen [mightily empower] you."

This, be it noted, is to take place "*after* that ye have suffered a little while"-- after the "light afflictions, which are but for a moment," are ended. This "establishing" and "strengthening" by our God himself, is just what, and *all* that is then needed. The work that we had begun, but never could finish to our satisfaction, is now to be completed, finished. Adjustments made easy for us, to our new and strange surroundings; integrated in the position to which we are assigned, so that we shall harmonize and cooperate with our surroundings as completely - aye, far more completely -than we did with our earthly circumstances; finally, empowered for all requirements -of space, time, wisdom, position.

Does this mean that the final and complete freedom will be miraculously given to those who truly suffer with Christ? Yes; such is the declaration of that Peter to whom were entrusted the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. His was the commission to first declare the Sovereignty open to the Jews, which he discharged at Pentecost; and later to similarly open the door to the Gentiles, when he received Cornelius into the Church. It is particularly fitting, therefore, that he should be the one to conduct, in anticipation, both Jew and Gentile overcomer through that open Door to full entry in the miracle of the First Resurrection, into the Kingdom. So he adds a seal, as it were, to his declaration quoted above: "*This is the true grace* [gift] of *God*. Stand ye fast therein."

-H. E. Hollister.

(NOTE: In quoting from the sacred Text, the improved translations of the American Revised Version, Rotherham's and other Critical translations, and the definitions of Dr. Strong's Greek Dictionary, have been freely drawn upon.)

The Bible The Book for Today

"Thy Word is truth." - John 17:17.

The Bible is the most interesting and instructive collection of writings in existence. Its sixty-six books are the handiwork of at least sixty authors, the latest of whom lived only nineteen hundred years ago and the earliest nearly five thousand years ago. Of all the books that are now before the reading public, this one is the most up-to-date. It presents a full and adequate explanation of life, life's problems and perplexities, and life's possibilities and opportunities. Above all, it points unhesitatingly to One who is the source of contentment, happiness and peace.

Popular tradition has it that the first books of the Bible were written by Moses about the year 1400 B.C. Expert examination in the light of modern knowledge has shown that Moses made use, in part, of preexisting documents and that the originals of these go back at least another thousand years.

Internal evidence in the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis shows that this first part of the Bible, containing the accounts of the Creation, Garden of Eden, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel, and up to the lifetime of Abraham, originally existed in the Sumerian and Akkadian cuneiform script and the language of Abraham's ancestors living in the Euphrates valley some five hundred years before Abraham left that land to dwell in Canaan. This is very close to the era when primitive picture-writing was giving way to the more sophisticated cuneiform and it is quite possible that these early Bible stories were first written on clay tablets in a picture script.

In the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, cuneiform was the prevailing script and nothing is more likely than that Moses eventually inherited a collection of records thus written, including not only the original stories but the life history of the patriarchs preceding him, all of which he translated into Hebrew and edited, thus producing the Hebrew text of the Book of Genesis as we have it today.

To this Moses must have added the rest of the five books known as the "Books of Moses" -- Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, the latter as far as the 30th chapter - thus bringing the record to the end of his own life and the entry of Israel into Canaan. The Book of Job, from an independent source and probably at least four centuries old already, must have come into Moses' possession at the same time and been added to what soon became the sacred collection of Israel.

During the next thousand years the remaining historical and all the prophetic and poetic books of the Old Testament were added. The historical books appeared from time to time as high-minded men wrote up truthful records of the times in which they lived, the final one, that of Nehemiah, bringing the story down to the fourth century before Christ. The works of the Hebrew prophets belong to a period within about 800 to 400 B.C. and this was the time when the Messianic hope began to come to the front. By about this latter date and in the time of Nehemiah the Old Testament more or less as it is now was accepted as the sacred book of the Jews.

The whole of the New Testament was completed over a short span of years, from about A.D. 50 to 100. The writers were mostly the personal followers of Jesus the Lord Christ, with the

exception of St. Paul and St. Luke, and the unknown writer of "Hebrews." Acceptance of these books, and these only, as constituting the New Testament, came about slowly by general recognition of the Christian Church, and it was nearly two centuries before the New Testament as it now stands was universally endorsed.

Many other books, of various periods, both from Old Testament and New Testament times, were by common consent excluded from the collection now forming the Bible; these are known collectively as the Apocrypha.

The Bible is the oldest book in existence. It has outlived the storms of forty-five centuries. Men have endeavored by every means possible to banish it from the face of the earth; they have hidden it, burned it, made the possession of it a crime punishable with death: the most bitter and relentless persecutions have been waged against those who had faith in it; but still the book lives. Today, while many of its foes slumber in death, and hundreds of volumes written to discredit it and to overthrow its influence are long since forgotten, the Bible has found its way into every nation and people of earth and has been published in more than a thousand different dialects and languages.

The writings of the Bible include law, ethics, poetry, drama, history, travel, prophecy, romance, philosophy, political and social instruction, everything that has to do with the life of man. Its authors were as varied in character as its contents. Kings, emperors and princes; poets, sages and philosophers; fishermen, statesmen and priests; poor men, rich men, preachers, exiles, captains, legislators, judges, men of every grade and class have contributed to the writing of this book.

General Smuts once said:

"Whenever I see anything great or anything really moving, my mind always passes into the language of the Old Testament. It is the language of the human heart, the language of the human mind and soul expressing pure human feelings and human emotions, with a universality which appeals to all races and all ages."

No other sacred writing possesses this appeal. The sacred books of Islam and Buddhism, the two great non-Biblical religious faiths, cannot be compared with the Bible. They give no detailed history of nations as does the Bible, neither do they pronounce with such authority and reason on the burning question of man, his origin and destiny; and of evil, its origin, the reason for its permission, and its end. The Bible merits the thoughtful consideration of every reflective person. Upon the earth there is distress of nations with perplexity; a voice that speaks with authority is sorely needed. The Bible is that voice. *The Bible is the book for today.*

As a record of history the Bible is unsurpassed. Over two thirds of its contents are historical narratives. These narratives are authentic and reliable. Prof. Sayce, one of the great archaeologists, has said: *"I do not for a moment hesitate to assert that the investigations in Assyria and Egypt thoroughly corroborate the statements of the Old Testament"*; Prof. Yahuda, another authority, declares *"Every archaeological discovery in Palestine and Mesopotamia contemporary with the Bible period bears out unfailingly its historical accuracy."*

A famous minister of the nineteenth century, Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, said this:

"The Bible is the chart of history. It affords a panoramic view of the whole course of events from the Creation and the fall of man, to the final judgment and the inauguration of the new Heaven and the new Earth."

"Without the Bible, history would be a spectacle of unknown rivers flowing from unknown sources to unknown seas; but under its guidance we can trace the complex currents to their springs, and can see the end from the beginning."

There is evidence in the opening chapters of the Bible that they were written in Mesopotamia about twenty five centuries before Christ. The history thus commenced was continued by successive writers for some two thousand years and was completed only four centuries before the birth of Christ. In the later decades of the nineteenth century the historical accuracy of these writings began to be questioned by critics, but today that skepticism has been proved unjustified, largely in consequence of the decipherment of Egyptian and Asiatic written records and the further discoveries of archeologists. A tremendous amount of excavation has been undertaken in Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Egypt since the war of 1914, and practically every part of Bible history has now been confirmed or illuminated by the results of this work. Numerous books have been published setting forth these facts. *The verdict of twentieth century research is that Bible history is true!*

There is poetry, drama, and philosophy of a high order in the Bible. The Book of Ruth is an idyllic romance of three thousand years ago; the Book of Esther a rare study in human character. The passionate drama of the Book of Job stands in strong contrast to the measured soliloquies of Ecclesiastes, and the staccato epigrams of the Book of Proverbs to the delicate loveliness of the Song of Solomon. The crisp sunlight and shadows of the Book of Acts make it one of the most vividly interesting books of travel ever written, and the Book of Psalms is full of the most inspiring poetry. Each of these books is one to be read slowly and sympathetically as a work of art having its own characteristics and its own peculiar appeal.

The English language has been built up largely around the Authorized Version of 1611; the English love of liberty and justice is due in no small measure to general appreciation of its teachings; the finest of British characteristics must be attributed in considerable degree to three hundred years of consistent reading and preaching of the Book. Very truly, then, was it said by the famous biologist, Prof. T. H. Huxley, some eighty years ago, *"Consider the great historical fact that for three centuries this Book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history; that it has become the national epic of Britain; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of a merely literary form; and, finally, that it forbids the veriest hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past, stretching back to the farthest limits of the oldest nations of the world."*

In the practical things as well as in the cultured tastes of daily life, therefore, the Bible is a sure guide. For good health of body and of mind the Bible contains ample instruction. For guidance in affairs of nations as well as in relations between individuals, the Bible is the best authority. It has inspired the creative genius of writers, poets, and painters through the centuries; it is no less effective in the lives of ordinary men and women who will read and ponder over its pages. *The Bible is the book of daily life.*

Finally, and above all, the Bible is a Divine Revelation.

Man does not live by bread alone. He enjoys a full and rich life only by consciously seeking to fulfill the Divine will. For all such the Bible is the teacher.

The Bible declares that sin and death are intrusions among men and will one day be eliminated. The first human beings were created sinless, undying, with ability to use the earth's resources for good. Tragically, men forsook the laws of righteousness and allowed selfishness, malice, and injustice to influence their course of life. Inevitably, pain, disease and death followed and have continued until now. Bible history follows the course of that sad progress, and tells of the coming to earth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to redeem the world from its sin and the consequences of its sin. The immediate fruitage of 'his life and death on earth is the development of the Church - a worldwide assembly of Christians devoted to his service. A further fruitage will become evident when his Kingdom on earth has been established, and under his beneficent control, and the administration of his Church, humanity will be instructed and guided in that better way which will "make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth," abolish disease, poverty, and all the ills from which mankind now suffers, and bring to an end sin and death. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" for "there shall be no more death."

The Bible, then, is the book of the future. Time spent in reading, studying, and discussing it will not be time wasted. It cannot fail to broaden the mind and ennoble the character. It cannot fail to make the reader more thoughtful for others, more desirous of serving his fellowmen, more confident of the future. It cannot fail to establish intelligent faith in God, and a conviction that men have a mighty destiny before them, reaching far beyond the limits of things that are now seen and known, and stretching into eternity.

- A. O. Hudson, England

The Basis of Faith and Hope

"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." - 1 Cor. 15:14.

THE OLD lie of the Serpent, "Ye shall not surely die," hides the great significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The immensity of the resurrection is dulled in our minds by our being, in times past, more or less influenced in thought by the vain philosophy built upon that first lie; for if, as is the common thought of humanity, "there is no death, what appears so is only transition," then Jesus did not die in reality, and His so-called resurrection was no resurrection at all.

But death is the opposite of life; death is a falling away from life; and resurrection is a setting up again, a giving back, a restoring again of that which was, but had ceased to exist-life. Death is the cessation of being; resurrection is the restoration of being. The more this truth is impressed upon our minds, the more clearly is Christ's resurrection shown to be a display of God's mighty power, a power superior to sin and death; and it becomes an assurance that the reign of sin and death will end, and a full opportunity be given to all to also partake of a resurrection. (Act. 17:31.) "For since through man came death, by a man came also the resurrection of the, dead." - 1 Cor. 15:21.

The deeper the yearnings for God, the more the resurrection appeals to and satisfies the longings of the heart. Our sense of love and justice and equity, and our discerning of disappointments, injustices, and failures of this present life, draw us to accept the resurrection as a fact. It vindicates God.

That Christ did rise from the dead is a clearly established historical fact; as we read in 1 Cor. 15:4-8: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas; then of the twelve: after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; after that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles; and last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." (We note that this list does not include the testimony of the women.)

We little appreciate how our faith and hope rest on the testimony of these witnesses, for if their witness is false, our faith is groundless, and our hope of a future life vanishes. The writers of the New Testament constantly appealed to the fact of Christ's resurrection as the basis of faith and hope; for as the Apostle states in 1 Cor. 15:3, it was one of the first or foremost truths, one of the foundation doctrines of our faith: "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept." - 1 Cor. 15:17-20.

The Gospel of the Resurrection

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, salvation by His sacrificial death, and His resurrection, this was the substance of the apostolic preaching. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25), "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death. Therefore know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." - Acts 2:23, 24, 36.

The testimony is that if Christ is not raised, then we are still under the dominion of sin and death. Why? Because no power or force has as yet been made apparent that can deliver from death, and overcome sin. Without the resurrection, the holy life, the ministry and sacrificial death of Christ avail nothing. Indeed, without the resurrection Satan is verily the conqueror; those qualities of which Jesus was the embodiment—innocence, purity, faithfulness, truth, love—all are crushed, triumphed over by malice and hatred and wickedness; the Prince of light is blotted out by the prince of darkness! But how the words of the Apostle ring out as a joyful paean: "But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

We are living in a day when Christianity is very lightly held; when it is being scoffed at, and openly assaulted. We are witnessing a rising tide of infidelity, indeed, a paganistic philosophy that violently decries the tenets of Christ, holding them to be swinish, and characterizing Jesus as a weakling. Such do not discern that by raising Christ from the dead in the power of an endless life, God has set His approval on all that Jesus did and taught. Christ is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:15.) Men who love darkness instinctively shun the doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection, for by it we are brought face to face with the necessity of choosing or rejecting a moral renovation and a spiritual quickening, of choosing between self-will and God's will. We find ourselves brought before God, enlightened as to our nakedness and proffered Christ's righteousness as a covering, His Word and Spirit as our life. There is no sidestepping the issue. To put off making the good choice is in effect rejecting.

JESUS' LIFE NOT FORFEITED

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was dependent upon his not having forfeited his right to life. His death was sacrificial and substitutional, as he himself said, "I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17, 18.) It was in fulfilling the Father's will for him that Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice and offering for sin (Heb. 10:5-9); and it was because that offering was perfectly acceptable to God, and perfectly performed, that God raised him from the dead and highly exalted him. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden in it" (Acts 2:23, 24). Christ's right to life was never forfeited, although life itself was yielded up on the cross, and that by the will of God; "wherefore God hath highly exalted him," and "made that same Jesus, who was crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Phil. 2:5-11; Acts 2:36).

Thus the resurrection of Christ brings a new hope, especially to those who by faith can receive it. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to, his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3, 4). To the Church is unfolded the high calling of God, even to joint-heirship with Christ; and this hope of joint-heirship is calculated to bring about a purification of self; to sustain the doer of righteousness in his combat with the forces of evil; to lead to a despising of the shame and ignominy of espousing the cause of Christ; to cause us to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; to count the afflictions which are but for a moment as light; "knowing that he which raised up Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus" (2 Cor. 3:14).

But Jesus Christ "by the grace of God tasted death for every man"; "the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all"; "and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." And that all mankind are assured of a share in that which was gained for them by Jesus is part and parcel of the resurrection message, as declares the Apostle: "God hath

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

"FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST"

In brief, what shall we say that the resurrection of Jesus Christ means to us? It means that a power has been manifested that can triumph over sins and death; it means the final, ultimate vindication of God's justice and wisdom and benevolence; it means that a new and living hope has been given, even the hope of "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away"; it means that from henceforth we can look on all things from a new standpoint, even from the standpoint of those who are alive in Christ, who have already by faith received eternal life and can view all things in the light of eternity; it means the final extermination of sin and death, and that "all who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth," for the resurrection of all inheres in him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 5:28; Rev. 21:1-5; John 11:25). Yes, we can now "sanctify the Lord God in our hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and reverence" (1 Pet. 3:15). The great fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the basis for that hope.

- *F. A. Essler*

The Question Box

"I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old." - Matt. 13:10; Psa. 78:2.

Question:

Did our Lord speak in parables to *teach* the multitudes, or did he speak in parables *so that they might not understand?* - Matt. 13:1-3, 10, 11, 34-36; Mark 4:1, 2, 11, 12, 30, 33, 34; Luke 8:4."

Answer:

This question is a most interesting one and has been the subject of reverent study on the part of many able Bible scholars. Their conclusions, however, have not been identical, some believing that the purpose of our Lord in employing the parabolic method in his teaching was to *reveal* the truth, while others have been convinced that his purpose was to *conceal* it. In view of these differences of opinion we can scarcely hope to "settle" the question. However, we trust the following discussion may contribute in part to its solution and prove to be not without some profit to our readers.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

In the first place, whatever truth there may be in the view that some parables were meant to *conceal* the truth rather than to *reveal* it, it seems clear that this position is untenable if maintained as applicable to all the parables. How, for example, can any one suppose that in the parable of the Good Samaritan, by which our Lord so strikingly illustrated the true meaning of the command to love one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18, 34), his purpose was to conceal that meaning? Certainly his meaning was not concealed from that "certain lawyer" who had sought to put Jesus to the test, for when, at the conclusion, our Lord put to him the question, "Which, now, of these three, thinkest thou, wast neighbor unto him that fell amongst the thieves?" he correctly replied, "He that showed mercy on him" (Luke 10:25, 36, 37).

All the parables may be broadly classified either as (1) typical (those in which the truth pictured is by means of exhibiting a concrete example), or (2) symbolic (in which the pictorial representation of the truth taught is by means of symbols).

The parable of the Good Samaritan is the first of the typical parables. Its purpose, we have seen, is to reveal, not to conceal, the truth. The same intention will be found in all the other typical parables of our Lord.

SYMBOLIC PARABLES SPOKEN TO THE DISCIPLES

Turning now to the symbolic parables which actually clothe the truths taught in a figurative dress, so that, along with the purpose of *illustration* (present in all parables) an intention of concealment is also *possible*, there are a number in which, as a matter of fact no intention of concealment is present, but only the purpose of illustration. Such is the case with all the symbolic parables which Jesus uttered, not before a mixed group of hearers, but before the narrower circle of his disciples, as for example, that of the Treasure hidden in the Field, the Pearl of great Price, and the Fishing Net (Matt. 13:44-50).

In these parables symbols are employed which *might* (on occasion) serve to conceal; but this intention cannot be present, as none of the "multitude" are in the audience. The hearers are all his disciples to whom the purpose of concealment could not apply. Moreover when, on concluding these parables Jesus asked them, "Have ye understood all these things? they said unto him, Yea, Lord." Evidently his purpose had been to reveal, not to conceal; a purpose, moreover, which had been achieved.

SYMBOLIC PARABLES SPOKEN TO HIS OPPONENTS

We have shown that our Lord's purpose in typical parables can be only that of revealing. We have also noted that when spoken to his disciples only, apart from the multitude, even the symbolic parables were not spoken with the intent to conceal. Let us next examine a sample of his symbolic parables addressed not to his disciples, but to his opponents. To them it was that he spake the parable of the wicked husbandmen who ill-treated every servant the householder sent them and finally killed his son. Was this parable intended to obscure his message to them? Was it not rather to strike at their conscience and awaken them, if possible, to their sinful condition? According to the record "When the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, *they perceived that he spake of them*" (Matt. 21:45). Evidently his meaning was not obscure to them.

SYMBOLIC PARABLES OFTEN EXPLAINED

Again, in many symbolic parables the figurative veil is so transparent, or it is so directly drawn aside by an added explanatory statement that for this reason there can be no question of an intent to conceal anything by them. An example of the latter may be found in the parable of the Importunate Friend, where the meaning of the parable is expressly given, and where, for that reason, an intent to conceal cannot be supposed (Luke 11:5-10). As a sample of the former we may take the case of the Prodigal Son. Surely this parable does not hide from us the love of our Father who is in heaven! Rather it discloses that love with a pathos and a power so divine that, beyond all other forms of speech, it is calculated to touch and melt our hearts (Luke 15:11-32).

A DIFFICULT TEXT

Thus far in our discussion we have found nothing to support the view that a purpose to conceal was present in the parables considered, but in every case have noted only an intention to reveal. However, we have yet to examine what has long been recognized as one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament. It is our Lord's reply to the question, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" According to St. Mark he replied: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables; that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them" (Mark 4:11, 12).

St. Luke reports our Lord's answer in briefer, yet almost identical terms "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand" (Luke 8:10).

Now, if we take these words as they stand, and read them in a plain, honest way, they teach us that, in speaking to the multitude as distinguished from his disciples, the Lord selected the parabolic form of instruction, not only to conceal the truth from them, but for the further purpose of preventing them from turning from their sins and receiving forgiveness.

We have already noted that, in the case of some, though not all of the symbolic parables, there *might* be an intention to conceal, as well as to reveal. However, we could not accept the additional thought which seems to be contained in both St. Mark's and St. Luke's report of our Lord's answer. On the contrary, we know that he came to call sinners to repentance, not to frustrate that repentance.

Had we only St. Mark's and St. Luke's condensed reports we would be puzzled to understand the meaning of our Lord. Fortunately, however, St. Matthew's account is more complete. He tells us *at length* what Jesus said when his disciples asked him why he spake to the multitude in parables. He says it was 'Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables, because [not "in order that" but "because"] they seeing, see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should' see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:10-15).

Here, in St. Matthew's fuller account, the difficulty suggested by the more condensed report of St. Mark and St. Luke is removed. For here it appears that it is *the people* who have closed their eyes, not Christ who has closed them; it is *they* who *will not perceive* and understand, because they do not want to be converted and healed.

Nor need any suppose that Matthew's account can be accepted only by rejecting those of Mark and Luke. If we carefully compare the three reports, we find that the reports by Mark and Luke do not misrepresent but merely condense the answer of our Lord which Matthew reports in full. Matthew's six verses are compressed into two verses by Mark and into only one by Luke. In Matthew's fuller account it may be seen that there is authority for every word in the briefer reports, and that there is no real conflict between them.

ISAIAH'S VISION

To fully understand our Lord's words we must go back to the prophecy of Isaiah to which he refers. That prophecy is found in Isaiah's sixth chapter, which we considered in some detail in this Journal in the issue of September, 1940. There we said in part:

"Many have supposed that Isaiah was himself so to preach that the people's hearts would become hardened as a result; that he should deliberately seek to close their eyes and stop their ears so that they would be unable to see God's gracious character and purposes and could listen no longer to his voice of compassion and tenderness. Some have gone even further than this. By an extension of this selfsame doctrine beyond the confines of the one nation of Israel to the whole world of mankind, they have even charged God himself with inflicting what they term a 'judicial blindness' upon the great mass *of* our race which left them no chance of repentance - no hope of salvation. Such a gospel (?) *we* could not but reject, no matter whence it came, so utterly is it opposed to all we have learned of the character and Word of God.

"But what do these remarkable words signify? What is the meaning of the message Isaiah is commissioned to proclaim? We answer: God saw that their own stubborn and rebellious attitude had at last brought them into a condition in which they would no longer be able to return to God.

Once they had had the capacity to listen and repent, and as God, in mercy and kindness, had dealt with them, rewarding them for right-doing and chastising them for wrong, they had been able to profit by his instructions. But now they had lost that capacity. They had been so persistent in their backslidings; they had been so rebellious in heart; they had so resisted the pleadings, the warnings, the invitations of his grace; they had so hardened themselves against him, that they had brought themselves into a state in which they would be insensible to any further influence by which God might seek to cleanse and reclaim them. . . . Through long and continued neglect of their God-given powers of right-thinking and right doing, these powers have become atrophied, they cannot now function."

Exactly the same conditions obtained at the time of our Lord's first advent, and accordingly, he (at times) addressed the people in special symbolic parables. To whom did he really speak when he addressed a mixed audience? To whom has the Gospel ever been spoken by his faithful messengers since? And with what intent? Surely it was and even now is preached, not to hinder any, God forbid, but certainly with no thought of converting every hearer merely to reach those who have hearing ears. "Who hath ears to hear, let *him* hear," saith our Lord (Matt. 13:9). "Whosoever hath [already improved what light, grace, opportunities, have come his way] shall have them increased." Yet, while speaking (*in the presence of others*) to those with hearing ears, our Lord *is* careful to so speak that those whose ears are dull of hearing shall not be aroused to still greater prejudice, as they would be if the truth were spoken plainly. Hence he veils the Kingdom message that they shall not have their bitter enmity made more bitter. He puts his teaching in a form in which it can be apprehended by such as are willing to do the will of his Father (and by these only as they themselves prove more and more worthy of it and continue therein) but which would hide it from those whose persistent disobedience to known truth has deprived them of spiritual insight, and who are therefore in a condition in which they could derive no profit from a plainly stated message, and who might (strange perversity of fallen human nature) be still more hardened by it, if it were permitted to reach them.

CONCLUSION

We conclude, then, that in all of the typical and in most of the symbolic parables there is clearly no intent to conceal but only to reveal. However, we have seen also that in special circumstances, speaking before a mixed audience, Jesus did choose the parabolic form of teaching, not to hinder from repentance, any so disposed, but for the double purpose of concealing from unreceptive and impenitent hearts those disclosures concerning the Kingdom of heaven which were suited only to receptive and earnest hearers. In this he did but act in accordance with his own wise saying: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6). These special cases, however, are the exception, rather than the rule-the rule being prophetically stated by Asaph, of the Messiah who was to come, in the text stated at the head of this article, a free translation *of* which reads: "I will open my mouth in parables, that I may utter [not that I may conceal] things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Psa. 78:2).

- P. L. Read.

Explanation of Zionism

I HAVE received a number of requests for an explanation of Zionism.

Zionism is as old as the Jewish people, who originated in Ur of the Chaldees in Mesopotamia. Terah was the father of Abraham, the progenitor of the Jews, who migrated to the land of Canaan, to which the Romans eventually gave the name of Palestine. In this land, which they called Eretz Israel, after many vicissitudes, the Jews achieved their cultural and spiritual greatness. It was here that the Bible was developed, that David and Solomon reigned, that the temple was erected, burned and re-erected. It was here that the prophets spoke their moral law, that the Psalms were the prayers of the people, that the vast literature, biblical, apocryphal, and Talmudic was given to the world....

Palestine then has always been more than a geographical expression to the Jews. It has always been the spirit, the soul, of this people. In the religious liturgy of the Jews prayer after prayer cries for the return to Zion, to the land that God had promised Abraham and to which Moses led them out of Egypt. During every period of persecution Jews turned to Palestine as a place of refuge.

Zionism therefore is deeply ingrained in the religion, the traditions, the faith of a people whose relationship to that area is more than 4000 years old. Politically, however, the Jews have held Palestine for a comparatively short period. . . . In the year 6 A.D., Roman procurators were appointed for Palestine, which definitely established it as a Roman colony. Prior to that it had been conquered by Babylon, Assyria, and the Persians. In spite of these conquests and the frightful tribulations of the Jews, they managed to survive, not because they were a race or a nation, but as a fervent religious community bound to the Torah, the biblical law, the religious traditions, their faith in God and their hope for a return to Palestine, which represented to them not greatness but peace.

Modern Zionism is but one blossom on this eternal tree, whose roots are so deep in historic soil. The author of its political phase was Dr. Theodore Herzl, an Austrian journalist, who recognized in the Dreyfus case the inevitable recurrence of anti-Semitism, and who sought for the establishment, by political means, of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. His book, "The Jewish State," appeared in 1896, and a year later the first Zionist Congress met at Basel in Switzerland.

Since then Jews throughout the world have been split over the implications of Zionism. Many opposed it on the ground that the Jews were exclusively a religious sect and could only at their peril become associated with nationalistic or territorial movements. But the majority of Jews, particularly traditionally religious Jews, have favored this movement in all its manifestations, because to them Judaism has no meaning at all except in the words of the Psalmist:

"By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion."

At the end of World War I, after Palestine had been liberated from Turkish rule, the Jews were promised a "homeland" in Palestine by Great Britain and the United States. Great Britain also entered into a series of relationships with the Arabs which contravened this promise. Large numbers of Jews migrated to Palestine and millions of dollars were invested, particularly by American Jews, in agricultural, industrial, and educational enterprises *George E. Sokolsky* (in the *St. Louis Globe - Democrat*, just prior to his death.)

Entered Into Rest

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