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## Notes on Immortality

What Is Man? What Is the Soul?  
What Is the Hope of the Church?  
What Is the Hope of Mankind?

Some years ago, at the request of the president of one of our Middle-West colleges, the following "Notes on Immortality" were submitted to him by the writer. They are presented here with the thought that they may be of some interest to our readers, particularly to the several hundred new subscribers to our Journal, whom it has recently been our privilege to welcome. (Readers acquainted with the six volumes of *Scriptures Studies* will recognize the large debt these notes owe to those volumes, especially Vols. I and V.)

It will be found convenient to consider the matter under nine main headings, which may first be stated, and then discussed, in the following order:

1. The Terms Mortality and Immortality Examined
2. The Terms Immortality and Everlasting Life Distinguished
3. What Is Man?
4. What Is the Soul?
5. The Church Distinguished From the Remainder of Mankind
6. Athanasia
7. The Hope of the Church

8. The World's Hope

9. Summary

## **(1) THE TERMS "MORTALITY" AND "IMMORTALITY" EXAMINED**

*Immortality* signifies a state or condition in which death is *an impossibility*. Most people limit the word to mean everlasting life. Immortality, however, means inherent life, a condition in which death could not occur. This point will be more fully developed later in these notes.

To the word *mortality*, however, more often than not, an entirely false meaning is assigned. The common idea is that it signifies a condition in which death is *unavoidable*. This understanding is erroneous. The word signifies a state in which death is *a possibility*, but by no means a certainty.

With these points recognized we are prepared to consider the creation of Adam. Adam was created *mortal*; created in a condition in which death was a possibility or everlasting life was a possibility; according as he pleased or displeased his wise, just, and loving Creator. Had he remained obedient, he would have continued living until now -- and forever -- and yet all the time he would have remained mortal, liable to death if disobedient. Nor would such a condition be one of uncertainty; for God, with whom he had to do, is unchangeable; hence Adam would have had full assurance of everlasting life so long as he continued loyal and obedient to the Creator. More than this could not reasonably be asked.

Previous to his disobedience Adam enjoyed life in full measure, but not *inherent life* -- *not* immortality. His was a life *sustained by* "every tree of the garden" save the one tree forbidden; and so long as he continued in obedience and in harmony with his Maker, his life was secure - the sustaining elements would not be denied. Thus seen, Adam had life; and death was entirely *avoidable*; yet he was in such a condition that death was *possible* -- *he was mortal*.

## **(2) THE TERMS "IMMORTALITY" AND "EVERLASTING LIFE" DISTINGUISHED**

*Everlasting life* and *immortality* are not synonymous terms, although such a view is commonly held. The word *immortal* means more than power to live everlastingly; and, according to the scriptures, while millions may ultimately enjoy everlasting life, only a very few will be made possessors of immortality -- sharers of the *divine* nature.

This quality of immortality originally inhered in Jehovah alone, as it is written: "the Father *hath life in himself* (John 5:26); that is to say, his existence is not a derived one, nor a sustained one. Any being whose existence depends in any manner upon another, or upon conditions such as food, air, light, etc., is not immortal.

To any who suppose that the Bible abounds with such expressions as immortal soul, undying soul, never-dying soul, etc., no better advice could be offered than that they take a Bible concordance and look for these words and others of similar import. They will find *none*.

According to the scriptures the holy angels are enjoying life-everlasting, but are nevertheless only mortal; that is to say, the everlastingness of their angelic existence is not because they are immortal (or deathproof) and so could not be destroyed by their Creator; but because he desires that they shall live as long as they will use their lives in accord with his just and loving arrangements. Not only are they not now immortal, but there is no intimation that they ever will be. Proof that they are mortal may be seen from the fact that Satan, who was once a chief of their number, is to be destroyed (Heb. 2:14). The fact that he can be destroyed proves that angels, as a class of beings, are mortal.

### (3) WHAT IS MAN?

The answer to this question, if given from the so-called orthodox theological standpoint would be about as follows: Man is a composite being of three parts, body, spirit, and soul. The body is born after the usual manner of animal birth, except that at the time of birth God interposes, and in some inscrutable manner implants in the body a spirit and a soul which are parts of himself, and which, being parts of God, are indestructible, and therefore can never die. These two parts, spirit and soul, orthodoxy is unable to distinguish, and hence uses the terms interchangeably at convenience.

Both terms (spirit and soul) are understood to mean the *real man*, while the flesh is considered to be merely the outward clothing of the real man, in which he dwells for the years of his earthly life, as in a house. At death, orthodoxy says, the real man is let out of this prisonhouse of flesh, and finds himself in a condition much more congenial.

In other words, orthodoxy claims that the real man is not an earthly being, but a spirit being wholly unadapted to the earth, except through its experiences in the fleshly body. When set free from the body by death, it is argued that a great blessing has been experienced, although the man, while he lived, made every effort to continue to live in the fleshly house, using surgery, medicines, and every hygienic appliance and invention to prolong the life in the flesh which, it is claimed, is poorly adapted to his uses and enjoyment.

Nor is this view confined to people of civilized lands; in a general way all heathen people have practically the same thought respecting man; the viewpoint finds support in all their philosophies.

To the question, What is man? the scientific answer, stated in simple language, would be: Man is an animal of the highest type yet developed and known. He has a body which differs from the bodies of other animals, in that it is the highest and noblest development. His brain structure corresponds to that of the lower animals, but is of a better developed and more refined order, with added and larger capacities, which constitute man by nature the lord, the king of the lower creation. Man's breath or spirit of life is like that of other animals. Man's organism and spark of life are from his progenitors, in the same manner that the beasts receive their life and bodies from their progenitors.

Science recognizes every man as a sentient being; but as to the future, beyond the grave, science has no suggestion to offer, finding nothing whereon to base a conclusion, or even a reasonable hypothesis.

When we return to the Bible for an answer to our question we find that the scriptures, while agreeing with both the orthodox and the scientific viewpoints in some respects, contradict both along some of their most important lines.

King Solomon, it is well known, was famous for his wisdom and learning. When to him it was suggested that, whereas the life of the lower orders of creation ceased at death, that of human beings continued on the other side of the grave, his comment was: "Who can prove it?" While he knew that human beings were endowed with moral attributes not possessed by the lower animals, yet, so far as the *kind* of life they possessed, his observation was: "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one [the same] thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one [kind of] breath; so that a man [in this respect] hath no preeminence above a beast . . . all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccles. 3:19-20).

Nor was this conclusion which Solomon reached different from that of other scripture writers. The thought which he expressed in another place, namely, that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave" (Ecc. 9:10), is their united testimony. David, in the Psalms, declares that in the very day one dies, his thoughts perish (Ps. 146:4). Job, discussing the same question, says: The dead man's "sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not; they come to dishonor, but he perceiveth it not of them" (Job 14:21).

#### **(4) WHAT IS THE SOUL?**

What, then, is the soul? The Bible account of the creation of man reads as follows: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed [or blew] into his nostrils the breath [or wind] of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). From this account it appears that the body was formed first, but it was not a man, it was not a soul or being until animated. It had eyes, but saw nothing; a mouth, but no taste; nostrils, but no sense of smell; a heart, but it pulsated not; blood, but it was cold, lifeless; lungs, but they moved not. It was not a man, but an inanimate body.

The second step in the process of man's creation was to give vitality to the properly formed, and in every way prepared body, and this is described by the words: "blew into his nostrils the breath of life." As the vitalizing breath entered, the lungs expanded, the blood corpuscles were oxygenized and passed to the heart, which organ in turn propelled them to every part of the body, awakening all the prepared, but hitherto dormant, nerves to sensation and energy. In an instant the energy reached the brain, and thinking, perceiving, reasoning, looking, touching, smelling, feeling, and tasting commenced. That which was a lifeless human organism had become a man, a sentient being; the "living soul" condition mentioned in Genesis 2:7 had been reached.

This has been illustrated by the candle. For instance, the candle, unlighted, would correspond to an inanimate human body; the lighting of the candle would correspond to the spark of life originally implanted by the Creator; the flame, or light, corresponds to the sentient being, or intelligence; the oxygenized atmosphere which unites with the carbon of the candle in supporting the flame corresponds to the breath of life or spirit of life which unites with the physical organism in producing soul or intelligent existence.

If an accident should destroy the candle, the flame, of course, would cease; so, if the human body be destroyed, the soul, the life, the intelligence, ceases; or, if the supply of air were cut off from the candle flame, as by an extinguisher or snuffer, or by submerging the candle in water, the light would be extinguished, even though the candle remained unimpaired; so the soul, the life or existence of man would cease if the breath of life were cut off by drowning, or asphyxiation, while the body might be comparatively sound.

As the lighted candle might be used under favorable conditions to light other candles, but the flame, once extinguished could neither relight itself nor other candles, so the human body, while alive, as a living soul or being, can start or propagate other souls or beings -- offspring; but so soon as the spark of life is gone, soul or being has ceased, and all power to think, feel, or propagate, has ceased.

A candle might be relighted by any one having the ability; but the human body, bereft of the spark of life, wasteth away, returneth to the dust from which it was taken, and the spark of life cannot be rekindled except by a miracle.

## **(5) THE CHURCH DISTINGUISHED FROM THE REMAINDER OF MANKIND**

A fruitful source of confusion in the minds of Christian people, when attempting to obtain the scriptural views as to the nature of man, is their failure to distinguish between mankind in general and the church, the little flock, which during the Gospel Age (the past 2,000 years) God has been selecting from amongst men, fitting and preparing them for new and superhuman conditions -- spiritual conditions. Failing to "rightly divide the word of truth," they apply to all men the statements and promises of the scriptures, especially of the New Testament, which are addressed only to the church, and which have no bearing whatever upon the hopes of restitution to *human* perfection, held out to all others of mankind. These great and precious promises are proportionately as untrue of the world as they are true of the church.

There are literally scores of New Testament statements which are not applicable to mankind in general, but only to the church, begotten again by the holy spirit to a new spirit nature. To realize this it is only necessary to notice carefully the salutations by which the apostles introduce their various epistles. They are not addressed, as is supposed by many, to mankind in general, but to the church, "the saints," "the household of faith"; to those who will attain unto the "first resurrection" as distinguished from the general resurrection which is to follow theirs.

## **(6) ATHANASIA**

Scholars tell us that immortality is the correct translation of only one Greek word, the word *athanasia* (deathlessness). It appears only three times in the New Testament, as follows:

"This mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:53);

"When this mortal shall have put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:54);

"Who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16).

Evidently the first two of these scriptures relate to the individual members of the *glorified* church, and the third to our *glorified* Lord Jesus (the Father here, as elsewhere in the scriptures, being excepted from comparison; see 1 Cor. 15:27).

## **(7) THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH**

The *hope* of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be made "partaker of the *divine* nature" (immortality), and share his glory as his joint-heir (1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4).

The *present mission* of the church is the perfecting of its members for their *future* work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age (Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6).

## **(8) THE WORLD'S HOPE**

The hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom-the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church - when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed (Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35).

## **(9) SUMMARY**

To sum up then: The proper recognition of the meaning of the terms mortal and immortal, and their use in the scriptures, destroys the very foundation of the doctrine of eternal torment. That doctrine is based upon the unscriptural theory that God created man immortal, that he cannot cease to exist, and that God cannot destroy him; hence. the argument is that the incorrigible must live on somewhere, somehow, and the conclusion is that since they are out of harmony with God their eternity must be one of misery. But God's Word assures us that he has provided against such a perpetuation of sin and sinners; that man is mortal, and that the full penalty of willful sin against full light and knowledge will not be a life in torment, but a second death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

When incorrigible sinners have been destroyed (not continued alive in any sense of the word, anywhere, but destroyed, Ps. 145:20), both immortal and mortal beings will live forever in joy and happiness and love; the first class possessing a nature incapable of death, having inherent life-life in themselves (John 5:26); and the latter having a nature susceptible to death, yet, because of perfection of being, and knowledge of the evil and sinfulness of sin, giving no cause for death. They, being approved by God's law, will be everlastingly supplied with those elements necessary to sustain them in perfection, and will never die.

- P. L. Read

## **Notice of Annual Meeting**

As announced in our May-June and July-August issues, 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.

The seven brethren now serving as directors are candidates for reelection. Brothers Laurence Iannaccone, Wilbur Twelker, Jr., and J. B. Webster have also been nominated.

## A Glimpse of God's Plan

*"According to the eternal purpose which he [God] purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Eph. 3:11.*

THE Bible was given for man's benefit; therefore the Bible account of creation has to do with man and the place of man's habitation, the earth. The first words of the Bible tell us that *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* The "heavens" here mentioned is that great expanse in which God placed the sun, moon, and stars. The earth is the place of man's habitation. Before creating man, God created the birds, fish, cattle, and beasts of the field. Then he created man in his own image. He created them male and female and gave them power to bring forth children.

The account of man's creation is given in the second chapter of Genesis. There we read, *"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul"* (Gen. 2:7). Notice that God did not *give* man a soul. He made man's body out of the elements of the earth, and animated that body with the breath of life, in order that man might be a living being, to enjoy the blessings of life in that beautiful Eden home where God had placed him. Man was not given a soul, separate and distinct from himself, but when he was created he *"became* a living soul." In other words, no man *has* a soul, but every man *is* a soul. God designates the various animals as "souls." (See Gen. 1:20 margin and Num. 31:28.) Every living creature is a "soul."

God then gave man a law to govern his life. The keeping of God's law meant the continuance of life and the blessings of Eden. Disobedience meant death and the loss of all the blessings man enjoyed (Gen. 2:16, 17). God had previously created the angelic hosts. These are his heavenly sons, who shouted for joy when he began his work in connection with man by laying the foundations of the earth (Job 38:4, 7). They would watch the work in progress and when the highest earthly creatures, perfect man and woman, were created in the image of God, there would be great joy in heaven. All God's creation being perfect (Deut. 32:4), there would be nothing then to mar the happiness of every creature in heaven and earth.

### THE BEGINNING OF SIN

From the time of creation there was perfect peace and harmony amongst all creatures in heaven and earth. Not a stain of sin, nor mark of evil, marred the happiness of the sons of God, angelic or human.

One of the brightest and most beautiful of the angelic hosts was Lucifer. Like all of God's creatures, he was perfect from the day that he was created, but iniquity began to creep into him (Ezek. 28:15). He was "lifted up because of his beauty" (Ezek. 28:17). He became proud and selfishly ambitious, seeking to live like Jehovah himself (Isa. 14:12-14). By this we could understand that he sought the worship of man, which rightly belongs only to God. Thus he became rebellious against God, and planned how he might divert man's worship to himself. From that time Lucifer became "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan" (Rev. 20:2).

By deception Lucifer induced Eve to break God's command, by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree and passing it on to her husband. Knowing this was against the command of God, he ate also, and God's law was broken in a simple act of disobedience (Gen. 3:1-6; 1 Tim. 2:14). Under the



test, man had failed, and the justice of God must now bring the penalty upon him. They were turned out of Eden into a condition which was far from being perfect, there to gain their food by sweat of face, until they should return to the dust (Gen. 3:17-19). This is what Adam did for nine hundred and thirty years before he died (returned to the dust). Thus the wages of Adam's sin was his death, by gradual process lasting nine hundred and thirty years. Dying, he surely died, according to the command (Gen. 2:17).

His children were born after he was turned out of Eden and while he was in an imperfect condition, hence they were born imperfect, inheriting sin and imperfection from their father. This imperfection has passed to all of Adam's posterity; therefore all die (Rom. 5:12; 6:23).

Be it noted that the wages of sin is *death*, and not eternal torment. God does not eternally torment any; such a thing is contrary to his nature,- and never entered his mind (Jer. 19:5). Sin began in Lucifer by his rebellion. Sin entered the world of mankind by Adam's disobedience, and has passed upon all his children. Because of this all die. But God has made a loving provision for every man through the death of his only begotten Son. All who die in Adam will in due time have a full, fair opportunity to gain life for ever in perfect happiness, free from death and all it implies -- aches, pains, sickness, infirmity, and the ills which man is now experiencing (John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22; 1 Tim. 2:4-6).

### **THE PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE**

After a considerable lapse of time from the creation and fall of man God called Abraham and promised him that in his offspring all mankind should be blessed (Gen. 12:13; Gen. 22:15-18). God had previously stated that the offspring of the woman should bruise the head of "that old serpent the devil." This was when the first man and woman were about to be turned out of Eden, with the curse of death upon them (Gen. 3:15). This statement was God's promise of a coming deliverance for man from the power of the Devil. It meant that a deliverer should come from the offspring of the woman, who would destroy the Devil and bring blessing to man. The promise made to Abraham showed that the long-looked-for Deliverer was to be of Abraham's children. Perhaps Abraham thought his son Isaac would be the one; but not so. Isaac and his son Jacob were greatly blessed by God, but they did not fulfill the promise. Neither became the blesser or Deliverer of mankind.

At Jacob's death his twelve sons and their families, known as the Children of Israel (Jacob's name was changed to Israel), became a special people to God above all others (Ex. 19:5). They were the descendants of Abraham, and so long as obedient to their God, received many favors, but did not, as a people, become the great Deliverer of the world of mankind, as they may have hoped. Moses, their leader and lawgiver, prophesied that the great Deliverer should be one of their brethren (Deut. 18:15). Many great men arose in Israel after Moses, such as Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, and others, but none of these proved to be the Deliverer.

From time to time the prophets of Israel kept the hopes of the faithful alive, that God would send a mighty One who would fulfill the promise made to Abraham. In time this promise was limited to the house of David; the statement being that God would set David's children upon his throne for ever (Psa. 132:11, 12). This would give the thought that the coming Deliverer would be a great King, one who would sit upon David's throne -- the throne of the Lord (1 Chron. 28:23). The Prophet Jeremiah prophesied concerning the Deliverer, the great Messiah, that he would be a branch (offspring) of David, and that as a king he would reign and prosper, and execute justice and judgment in the earth (Jer. 23:5, 6). Thus the faithful in Israel would be looking for their long promised Messiah as a great Prophet and a great King.

When the great Deliverer came, the faithful recognized him, but the majority rejected him even though all were in expectation of him (Luke 3:15). *The great Deliverer, the seed of Abraham, is Christ* (Gal. 3:16).

## **THE BIRTH OF JESUS**

The promise made to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), and often repeated to others, would thoroughly impress upon all true Israelites that at some future time there would be born of a woman of the Jewish people a holy child, who would in some way (which they could not then understand) become a great King and bring blessing to all peoples of the earth.

Words such as those of the Prophet Isaiah given to us in chapter 9, verses 6 and 7, would lead them to this expectation. The words of the Prophet are *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish with judgment and with justice . . . for ever."*

Christians realize that these words are fulfilled in Jesus Christ, though only partially fulfilled as *yet*. The greater fulfillment is yet future. The birth of Jesus is *one* of the greatest events in human history. The place of Jesus' birth, as all know, was Bethlehem. This was according, to the words of the Prophet long before the event took place (Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:5, 6).

There was no great pomp and show surrounding the birth of the Great One. Each one whom God chose to take part in this great act was humble, meek, and possessed of great faith in God's promises. Both Mary and her husband were poor, as no doubt were the shepherds to whom the angels brought their message of joy.

In heaven there would be great rejoicing and a host of angels were ready to take their part in this great event. While others slept, Jesus was born, and the angels, led by the angel of the Lord, brought their message of joy and song of happiness to the shepherds -- keeping sheep. The angel of the Lord brought glad tidings which shall be unto all people. All have not heard these glad tidings yet, but we look by faith to the time when all shall have heard, and all shall bow to the name of Jesus (Phil. 2:7-11).

## **A RANSOM FOR ALL**

When Jesus grew to manhood and was heralded by John the Baptist as the Messiah, the Jews were disappointed in him. They were looking for a leader greater than Moses, a general greater than Joshua, a king far greater than David or Solomon, who would deliver them from the subjection of the Romans, and make of them a great and mighty nation. The meek and lowly Nazarene was rejected by them, and thus Jesus became "despised and rejected of men" as the Prophet had said the Messiah would be (Isa. 53:3). They had set their minds upon the prophecies which spoke of the might and power and glory of their Messiah, but overlooked those which spoke of his humiliation and sufferings. They forgot that God's Prophet had said that he should be "led as a lamb to the slaughter," that he should "pour out his soul unto death," and "make his soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:3-12). These prophecies and many others were fulfilled in Jesus when he came to earth, but those which speak of his glory and power are yet to be fulfilled. Then the hopes of the Jews respecting the Messiah and the expectations of Christians respecting Christ's second coming will be more than fulfilled.

Why should Jesus pour out his soul unto death? Why should he make himself an offering for sin?

Briefly the answer is this: Man, because of sin, dies. "*The wages of sin is death* (Rom. 6:23). Sin entered the world by one man's disobedience -- the disobedience of Adam (Rom. 5:12) -and has passed upon all men, for the offspring of Adam are all born imperfect, he having fallen from his perfect condition before any children were born to him. Thus "all in Adam die" (1 Cor. 15:21, 22). Before man can have hope of everlasting life a ransom must be found for him, a "corresponding price" for the first man whose sin brought death. If such could be provided, then all who die because of Adam's transgression could be given hope of life. God had promised to ransom man from the power of death (Hos. 13:14). Where was the ransom to be found? Not amongst fallen man. None of these can redeem his brother nor give to God a ransom for him (Ps. 49:7). They are all imperfect, therefore cannot provide the ransom for man. Jesus was a perfect man, because he was "the only begotten Son of God." God was his Father (Luke 1:30-35). Jesus said that he came to give himself a ransom (Matt. 20:28), and the Apostle says that the man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). Jesus further said, "I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus by reason of his great sacrifice provided the ransom price, which "in due time" (1 Tim. 2:6) will bring to every man (*He died for all*; Heb. 2:9) a release from the death in Adam, and give to all, one full, fair opportunity of salvation and life everlasting. Thus "all the families of the earth" are to be blessed in him, according to God's promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). Jesus' teaching and example are the finest ever given to man, and have done much to make the world better, but his death was the all important matter. From the Cross there radiates the only real hope for humanity.

Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day, highly exalted (Phil. 2:7-11) and given "all power" (Matt. 28:18). As the risen, exalted Lord, he has power to bring to mankind the benefits of his sacrifice, but that work will not be completed until other features of God's plan and purpose are fulfilled.

## **THE TRUE CHURCH**

The blessing and deliverance of mankind by the Lord Jesus Christ is the purpose of his Second Coming. All the prophecies relating to his power and glory will then be fulfilled, as those relating to his suffering and death were fulfilled at his First Advent. Meanwhile, another work has been in progress-the development of the Church of Christ. The true Church is not composed of one nor all of the church organizations or denominations. It is made up of the faithful followers of Jesus, whether they have been inside or outside of church denominations.

Those who are truly followers of Jesus are given many precious promises (2 Pet. 1:4). They will be with Christ in his Kingdom (Luke 12:32; 2 Pet. 1:5-11). They will share his throne and his glory (Rev. 3:21; Rev. 20:4; Col. 3:4). Theirs is a heavenly inheritance (1 Pet. 1:3, 4). As the Gospel has been preached amongst the nations, those with an ear to hear have responded to its invitation, and conformed to the conditions of discipleship. These have not been a great number, but few, "a little flock." These have lived and died, and slept in death, awaiting the return of the Lord for their reward. At the Lord's return they rise from the dead first and are made partakers of the First Resurrection to share the honor and glory of Christ. Those of the true Church living at the Lord's return, do not sleep in death; but death to them is a change from a human to a heavenly condition. See 1 Cor. 15:20, 38, 50-52; 1 Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:4-6; Phil. 3:7-11.

This class is spoken of under different figures of speech. In 1 Cor. 12:12, 27 they are spoken of as the body of Christ, Jesus being the head. As a class they are spoken of as the "bride" of Christ.

The union of the members of the Church with Jesus their Head is the marriage of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7). When this has taken place, then the true Church of Christ, with him in power and glory, sharing his great Kingdom, will share his work, and with him invite "whosoever will" to come and "drink of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

### **"THY KINGDOM COME"**

For nineteen hundred years the hope of the Christian has been the Second Coming of the Lord, and the establishment of his Father's Kingdom on earth. These have prayed from the heart: *"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."* This is the kingdom which will bring deliverance to mankind, and which will bless all the families of the earth with the opportunity of life, liberty, and happiness eternal. The Revelator saw in symbolic vision the present order of things passed away and all things made new. After seeing the Devil, the adversary of God and oppressor of man (Rev. 20:1-3), bound, he saw a new heaven and a new earth, a new order of things, and the present order of things passed away. He saw the time when death will be no more, when sorrow and suffering and pain will be ended.

He saw One on the throne (Christ, the new King of all mankind) saying: *"He that overcometh shall inherit these things"* -- the blessings of life, and freedom from sorrows and suffering, and the oppression of the Devil (Rev. 21:1-7). These blessings are for all, even those in the grave. To this end God has provided a resurrection of the dead through Christ his Son. Jesus said that the time was coming when those in the graves would hear his voice and come forth (John 5:28). The Revelator further saw a river of life proceeding to man from the throne of God and the Lamb, and Christ and his Bride, the Church, glorified, inviting whosoever will to come and drink of the water of life freely (Rev. 22:1-3, 17). The Apostle Peter spoke of "times of restitution of all things" when Christ should return. Restitution means a restoration of something lost. Through sin, man lost life and his Eden home. Jesus said that he came to "seek and to save that which was lost." In his Kingdom, the earth is to be made beautiful and fruitful. (See Isa. 35:1-10 and Ezek. 36:35 for proof that earth will be like Eden.) Man will then be given a full opportunity to live for ever (Ezek. 18:19-23), but those who are disobedient will be destroyed from amongst the people (Acts 3:19-23).

When Christ's work on behalf of man is complete, every knee shall bow to Jesus' name; all living creatures in heaven and earth will praise God (Rev. 5:13; Phil. 2:7-11). Every follower of Jesus desires his kingdom to come. The disciples asked him when it would come and for signs of his return and kingdom (Matt. 24:3). The Lord's reply (verses 7 and 8) tells us plainly that world wars and events following are the signs that his Kingdom is near. Before man gets the blessings of this kingdom he is to pass through a great wave of trouble which will completely destroy the present order, upon the ruins of which Christ's Kingdom -- the new heaven and earth -- will be established. The Bible message for today is *"The Kingdom of God is at hand,"* which should be a message of joy and hope to all who desire better things for mankind.

- Fred Musk, England

## Discipline

*"Thou shalt consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son,  
so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." - Deut. 8:5.*

What experiences in life serve as disciplinary in our Christian walk! Our first step in response to the call involves a degree of discipline that is at once apparent, and suggested by the words of Jesus: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Discipleship means discipline; the two words have a common root. The disciple is that one who has been taught or trained by the Master, having heeded his call, "Come unto me." Discipleship requires the discipline of conversion. Recognizing our lost estate because of rebellion against God, we come in repentance to our Lord Jesus, assenting with our hearts to the facts that "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6); that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23); that "the Scripture hath concluded all under sin" (Gal. 3:22); and that we "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3, 12.) Such an admission requires a measure of discipline, for it is difficult for the natural heart to humble itself to admit of its sin and shame, and the need for the provision made for us in Christ Jesus.

Discipline comes also in the consideration of the cost of discipleship. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me-, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10:37.) This is further exemplified in Luke 14:26, where the Master says, "If any man come after me and hate not his father and mother, wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." This is strong language. What can be the meaning of it? We know that love is the very essence of the character of our God and of our Lord Jesus whom we are endeavoring to follow. How then can we interpret such instruction in connection with discipleship? Does it not mean that we are to make our Lord Jesus supreme, permanent, and preeminent in our heart, so that no person, no thing, shares that place in our life? No person, no possession, nor life itself is too great to surrender for his sake.

This is doubtless the reason why Jesus advised each one considering discipleship to sit down first and count the cost. (Luke 14:28.) This denial of all, including ourselves, is the greatest of all disciplines. There are those who are dearer to us than life itself, but they should not be dearer than the Savior. For him and his cause we have died to these and to every other earthly creature or pleasure. It is "Jesus only!" And the step should not be taken lightly or thoughtlessly, as is illustrated in Luke 14:28-33: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it*? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Discipleship also requires the discipline of cross-bearing, one of the three things considered a daily necessity: our daily bread, our daily work, our daily cross. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23.) "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27.) This cross is not

that which our Savior bore to Calvary. We are, however, privileged to join with him insofar as self-denial is concerned, as seen in his ministry from Jordan to Calvary. It was the Son's chief delight to do the Father's will, and should it not therefore be ours also? The attainment of this standard will mean self-denial in the deepest sense of the word.

In Hebrews 12 the question of discipline comes up for consideration. Here the Apostle advises all to consider the great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, and to lay aside every encumbrance and the close girding sin, to run with patience the course marked out for us, looking not at self, but away from self to the Leader or Perfecter of our faith. His great motive was the *joy* that was set before him, enabling him to endure the cross and to disregard the shame. His chief delight was the doing of the Father's will. As he expressed it: "My meat and my drink is to do the will of him that sent me." I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. "

The writer urges us to consider Him attentively, and to note the opposition that he endured from his own people in order that we may not be wearied, nor discouraged, when brought face to face with the same difficulties, pointing out at the same time that we have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin.

We are then reminded of an Old Testament Scripture which carries an obvious truth: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. " (Prov. 3 11, 12.) And "Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord chasteneth thee." - Deut. 8:5.

The Diaglott rendering of this Old Testament Scripture, as quoted in Hebrews 12:5, 6, uses the word discipline as follows: "My son, slight not the discipline of the Lord, neither be discouraged when reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure discipline, God deals with you as with sons. For is there any son whom a father does not discipline? "

### **DISCIPLINE A SIGN OF THE FATHER'S LOVE**

These Scriptures are suggestive of a close and remarkable relationship which exists between the believer and his God and Heavenly Father, pointing out the fact that discipline is based on love. This makes it more educational than punitive. In other words, it is for our Christian development and not merely for punishment. If there is no discipline in the Christian life, then we may have reason to feel concerned about our being true sons. "But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then are ye spurious and not sons." All of us have been subject to parental discipline in our early years, some of which, administered with the aid of "the rod," doubtless left a lasting impression, and very likely caused us to hold the parent in high regard, since we doubtless knew that the discipline was deserved, although it may not have been administered in the proper spirit. How much more satisfactory, then, to submit ourselves to the Father of spirits and live. Our earthly parents disciplined us in the way that seemed right to them, but the Heavenly Father disciplines for our advantage, in order that we may partake of his holiness. No discipline as it relates to the present seems to be joyous, but rather grievous, "yet afterwards it returns the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

### **LESSONS FROM THE DISCIPLINING OF MOSES**

We may gain some helpful lessons on this subject by considering the experiences of Moses and the children of Israel in their deliverance from Egypt, and in their wilderness wanderings. The

story of Moses reveals divine oversight and protection in the preparation of one destined to play a most important role in the affairs of Israel. Educated in the palace of Pharaoh in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Moses came to a time of life when it became necessary to make a most important decision, and "He chose to suffer the reproaches of his own people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Did this require discipline? It is obvious that for the advantage of the flesh, the thing for Moses to have done would have been to remain where he was and perhaps one day be a Pharaoh himself, and then by reason of his high position and mighty authority be able to emancipate the entire host of Israel. Is it not possible that some such thought occurred to him? His decision to abandon any hope of promotion in Pharaoh's court in favor of a less prominent position, and even one of reproach, shows a strength of character that would lend itself very easily to divine leading. He here displays a meekness that is precious in the sight of the Lord. "The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way." In this attitude Moses was teachable as subsequent events proved well.

First, however, he must learn the lesson of dependence on God, and waiting on him for instruction. This was very soon forthcoming when Moses, with very grave consequences, essayed to settle the personal quarrels and strivings of one of his own people with an Egyptian. The second attempt along this line resulted in Moses fleeing from Egypt to the land of Midian, where he almost drops from sight for forty years, during which time he tended the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro. We should not assume either that they were wasted years even though spent at such a menial task as being a shepherd. Some of the world's great men have been those who were privileged to learn the lessons of discipline, amid the scenes of pasturelands, while caring for such submissive creatures as sheep.

Forty years seems to be a very long time, and how interesting that its end coincided with the end of the prophesied period of Israel's bondage, which meant that Moses' preparation for the divinely appointed task was completed. This was signaled by a very remarkable event. There in the quietness of the desert a bush broke into flame, but, wonder of wonders, the bush was not consumed. Still more awful was the voice that came from the midst of the burning bush, "Moses, Moses." Moses replied, "Here am I," and the voice said, "Remove thy shoes from off thy feet for the place where thou standest is holy ground." This dialogue evidently illustrates the need for discipline in reverence.

Thus begins a new chapter in the life of one who in the years to come was to learn more and more concerning the disciplines of the Lord and the inestimable privileges of communion and fellowship that were necessary in order to fit and sustain him for the tremendous tasks that lay ahead.

Now the entire history of these great events presents a most interesting picture or type of the deliverance of the Church from the powers of Satan and the world as represented by Pharaoh and Egypt. Instructions divinely given were followed out to the last detail in the preparations for departure, so that when the final blow was struck and the "first born" of the land of Egypt fell under the power of the "angel of death," their taskmasters and rulers, including hard-hearted Pharaoh himself, were only too glad to let them go. So they came out, 600,000 men, besides women and children, with great substance because the Egyptians loaded them with jewels and gold and silver, so much so that they spoiled the Egyptians.

It is here that their discipline as a nation began, and very soon we find them confronted with a most distressing situation, and one in which their faith was sorely tried. With the Red Sea before them, hemmed in on both sides by mountains, and with Pharaoh's hosts in hot pursuit coming up on their rear, things looked very grim indeed, so much so that the people lost heart and began to

murmur against Moses. "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us? . . . It had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." Surely there is here a deep lesson for all who have come under the blood and taken up the cross to follow in the footsteps of the Master.

In Numbers 11:1 we are told "And when the people complained it displeased the Lord." Is it any less displeasing to him for us to fail in the same way? "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Discontentment disregards the divine presence promised to the Lord's own. In their wilderness journey the children of Israel had the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to go before them in the way, to defend them from their foes, to show them where they should pitch their tents and when and where they should journey. These were the outward, visible assurances of divine presence. By day or night they had only to look to the pillar above the Tabernacle to receive that assurance. To Moses had been given the encouraging promise: "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

In the New Testament times since the days of the Apostles, we have no visible indications of his presence with his people, but we have the strong and sure promises by the Savior, "All power in heaven and earth is given unto me," and "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." This is effected by the holy spirit and its work in the hearts of his people. So when we become discontented, we give evidence of a lack of that spirit. Discontent is an outward evidence of lack of faith in the promises of God. The children of Israel had been led out of the iron furnace of Egypt by the strong hand of God to go to the land promised unto their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When dissatisfaction gripped their spirit, they "despised the pleasant land," and remembered only "the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and garlic." Complaint caused them to prefer these in Egypt's hard bondage, to freedom in a land flowing with milk and honey. Discontentment discounts the provision God makes for us. For the children of Israel there was the daily bread day by day in the form of manna, enough for everybody. To the hungry, grateful people to whom it came, it was like the coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. When they became disgruntled they could say, "But now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, besides this manna before our eyes." By that time the taste of it was like the taste of fresh oil -- the taste of honey when they were delighted, and the taste of fresh oil when they were discontented.

Does this alteration of taste caused by a change of attitude seem altogether far-fetched, or do we remember seasons when the Word of God was exceedingly sweet to our taste, and then, when under a cloud of complaint we found it tasteless and commonplace? Discontentment displeases God, and our relationship to him can be so marred by it that our progress is greatly retarded and our pilgrimage made much more difficult. This, of course, is a lack of faith. Of Israel it is said, "they believed not his word, but murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord."

Discontentment may be a part of our disposition, but contentment can become a major characteristic of our Christian life. The Apostle Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The discipline of discontentment is to turn from a complaining spirit, from criticism that corrodes and the dissatisfaction that displeases God, to a thankful attitude, to faith and praise, that will be pleasing to him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." We may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."



If we have to any degree succumbed to the spirit of the times, which is restlessness and discontent, the need for discipline is very urgent; and much good may result from mentally retracing our steps from the time we first enrolled in the school of discipleship to the present moment. Perhaps our sense of values has changed since first we sat down and counted the cost. If this be true, the cross will have become heavier as time has gone on, and the tendency to lay it down more marked. Let us then consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest we be weary and faint in our minds; and in addition let us note the sense of values expressed by the great Apostle Paul in the words: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

The true disciple is the one who sees in all of life's affairs the supervisory and overruling hand of the One who has enrolled him in the School of Christ, even our Heavenly Father; and if the lessons in that school be disciplinary even to the point of scourging, the response should be:

"Content whatever lot I see,  
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

*- J. B. Webster.*

## **Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel\***

ERETZ-ISRAEL was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious, and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to reestablish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, *ma'pilim*, and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community, controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodor Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and reaffirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people—the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe—was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by reestablishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the comity of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions, and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom, and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

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\* Reprinted at this time by request

ACCORDINGLY WE, MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF ERETZ-ISRAEL AND OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT, ARE HERE ASSEMBLED ON THE DAY OF THE TERMINATION OF THE BRITISH MANDATE OVER ERETZ-ISRAEL AND, BY VIRTUE OF OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC RIGHT AND ON THE STRENGTH OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HEREBY DECLARE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JEWISH STATE IN ERETZ-ISRAEL, TO BE KNOWN AS THE STATE' OF ISRAEL.

WE DECLARE that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate, being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October, 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administration, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel."

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice, and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race, or sex it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education, and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

THE STATE OF ISRAEL is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

WE APPEAL to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the comity of nations.

WE APPEAL -- in the *very* midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months -to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream-the redemption of Israel.

PLACING OUR TRUST IN THE ALMIGHTY, WE AFFIX OUR SIGNATURES TO THIS PROCLAMATION AT THIS SESSION OF THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL OF STATE, ON THE SOIL OF THE HOMELAND, IN THE CITY OF TEL-AVIV, ON THIS SABBATH EVE, THE 5TH DAY OF IYAR, 5708 (14th MAY, 1948).

David Ben-Gurion

Daniel Auster	Eliyahu Dobkin	Zvi Luria
Mordekhai Bentov	Meir Wilner-Kovner	Golda Myerson
Yitzchak Ben Zvi	Zerach Wahrhaftig	Nachum Nir Zvi Segal
Eliyahu Berligné	Herzl Vardi	

## Not Understood

Not understood, we move along asunder,  
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep  
Along the years; we marvel and we wonder  
Why life is life, and then we fall asleep --  
Not understood.

Not understood, we gather false impressions,  
And hug them closer as the years go by,  
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions,  
And thus men rise and fall and live and die --  
Not understood.

Not understood, poor souls with stunted vision,  
Oft measure giants by their narrow gauge.  
The poisoned shafts of falsehood and derision  
Are oft impelled 'gainst those who mould the age --  
Not understood.

Not understood, the secret springs of action,  
Which lie beneath the surface and the show  
Are disregarded, with self-satisfaction  
We judge our neighbors, and they often go --  
Not understood.

Not understood, how trifles often change us,  
The thoughtless sentence or the fancied slight  
Destroys long years of friendship and estrange us,  
And on our souls there falls a freezing blight --  
Not understood.

Not understood, how many breasts are aching  
For lack of sympathy. Ah! day by day,  
How many cheerless, lonely hearts are breaking,  
How many noble spirits pass away --  
Not understood.

Oh, God! that men would see a little clearer,  
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see;  
Oh, God! that men would draw a little nearer  
To one another! They'd be nearer Thee --  
And understood.

- *Anonymous*

## The Question Box

*"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." - Luke 16:9.*

### *Question:*

In this verse, instead of the words given in the Authorized Version, "when ye fail," some translations read: "when it fails." Has this difference any significance and, further, which translation is correct?

### *Answer:*

There is good manuscript authority for either translation. Moreover, while on the surface they may appear to be mutually exclusive, they need not be so understood. In this connection it is interesting to compare the two given in the Diaglott. There the word for word translation reads: "when you may fail," while in the right-hand column, the emphatic version reads: "when it fails." Other translations supporting the emphatic version include:

*Rotherham*, "as soon as it shall fail." *Revised*, "when it shall fail." *Fenton*, "when it departs." *Trench*, "when it fails." No matter which translation is preferred, most scholars understand the passage to apply at the time of death.

*Moffatt*, indeed, translates: "when ye die."

Most of us, no doubt, understand that the good we do with our "goods" will receive an appropriate reward *after death*. But this understanding does not exhaust the meaning of the passage. For, while it is true that our Lord promises us an "eternal" reward, *on the other side the grave*, the word eternity covers the past and present, as well as the future. And while it is true that when *we* fail (in death) *it* (mammon) will fail (us), is it not also true that mammon may fail us *before* we die? May we not, even while we remain in this life, lose our money, or find that there are other losses for which no money can compensate us? We know very well that we may; some of us know it only too sadly. Riches have wings *for use*; not merely for ornaments. It is not only the grim face of Death that scares them to flight; they flee before a thousand other alarms. The changes and accidents in which they fail us are innumerable; there are countless wounds which gold will not heal, endless cravings which it will not satisfy. And perhaps *the* point of our Lord's words may be this: "*Whenever* mammon fails us, *in life* and its changes and sorrows, *no less than in death*, if we have previously made friends by our wise use of it, these friends will open their tabernacles to us, tabernacles in which our stricken spirits may find refuge and consolation. It is this present, this constant, this eternal reward, of the Christian use of our temporal possessions, on which we need most of all to fix our thoughts.

Not only our Lord, but St. Paul has much to say on this matter. Perhaps his fullest expression is to be found in his first letter to Timothy, chapter 6. There he affirms that godliness with contentment is the true gain; that then only are we rich, when we want nothing and long for nothing we do not possess, when our minds and hearts are settled in a sacred content, undisturbed by lusts and cravings for things beyond our reach. The *love* of money, he affirms, is a root, from which all forms of evil spring. Impelled by this base lust, many have wandered from the Faith, he tells us, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. The desire to be rich, he warns, is a snare in which many feet have been caught; those who cherish it plunge into many foolish and

hurtful lusts. Timothy, the man of God, will flee this love, this craving, this desire. Having food and raiment, he will therewith be content. Discarding the pursuit of riches, he *will* follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, -- meekness. He knows that as he brought nothing into the world, so neither can he carry anything out.

Why, then, should he neglect that in himself which is spiritual, in order to amass a burden which is only too likely to make his life anxious and painful to him, and of which death will certainly relieve him. The gains that *can* be carried into the next world, these, and these alone, should engage his heart. In short, St. Paul, in this chapter, speaks of wealth and of those who pursue it, in a large tone of contempt and moral reproof.

That wealth should never stand first with us and that it should be *valued* only for the good uses to which it may be put - these are not only Christian principles to which our attention is drawn by our Lord in Luke 16 and by St. Paul in 1 Tim. 6, but they are principles which commend themselves to every man's reason and conscience in the sight of God. And therefore, we shall be condemned by reason and conscience, as well as by Christ, if gain is more to us than godliness; if we dread poverty more than we dread sin, or sorrow more over a bad debt than over a bad action, over a loss of money than over a loss of temper; or if we do not seek to make a wise and generous use of our money, rather than to secure a selfish enjoyment of it.

Consider: Here is a man, let us suppose, sincerely anxious to take the right course and to make the best use he can of his life. All around him he sees neighbors who are pushing on with the utmost eagerness in the pursuit of fortune, who are sacrificing ease, culture, pleasure, health, and at times conscience itself, in their love for that, the love of which St. Paul pronounces' to be a root of all evil, a temptation and a snare, and which our Lord himself says makes it very hard for a man to enter the Kingdom of God. He has to determine whether or not he will join in this headlong pursuit-whether he, too, will risk health of body, culture of mind, and sensitive *purity* of conscience, in the endeavor to grow rich, or richer than he is. He sees that the dignity and comfort and peace of human life depend largely on his being able to earn a sufficient income to supply a large circle of wants, without being in constant anxiety and care; but he also feels that he has many wants, and these the deepest, which mere wealth cannot supply. Accordingly, he resolves to work diligently and as wisely as he can, in order to secure an adequate provision for his physical necessities, and to guard his independence; to provide things honest and decent in the sight of all men; but he resolves also that he will not sacrifice himself, or all that is best and purest and most refined in himself, to the pursuit of money and what it will buy. Hence, so far as he can, he limits his wants; he keeps his tastes simple and pure; and by labors that do not absorb his whole time and energies he provides for the due gratification of these tastes and wants. Hence also he gives a good deal of his time and energy to reading good books, let us say, or to mastering some natural science, or to developing a taste for music and acquiring skill in it. He expects his neighbor, who had no better start nor opportunities than he, to grow far richer than he himself has done, if his neighbor think only of getting and investing money. And, therefore, he does not grudge him his greater wealth, nor look on it with envious eye; he rather rejoices that he himself has given up some wealth in order to acquire a higher culture, and to develop his literary or artistic tastes.

Here, then, we have two men, two neighbors before us. The one has grown very rich, has far more money than he can enjoy, more even, perhaps, than he quite knows how to spend or invest, but *he has hardly anything except what his money will procure for him*. The other has only a modest provision for his wants, but he has a mind stored with the best thoughts of ancient and modern wisdom, an eye which finds a thousand, miracles of beauty in every scene of nature, and an ear that trembles under the ecstasy of sweet harmonious sounds. By some sudden turn of fortune, *mammon fails them both*;

they are both reduced to poverty; both, so soon as they recover from the shock, have to make a fresh start in life. Which of the two is better off now? *Which of them has made real friends for himself* out of the mammon while he had it? Not the wealthier of the two, certainly; for, now that he has lost his wealth, he has lost all that he had; he has lived only to get rich; when his riches went, all went. But the other man, the man who read and thought and cultivated his mental faculties, *he* has not lost all. His money has gone, but it has not taken from him the wise thoughts he had gathered from books, or his insight into the secrets and beauties of nature, or the power to charm from the concord of sweet sounds. He is simply thrown more absolutely on these inward and inseparable possessions for occupation and enjoyment. While he had it, he made friends for himself out of the mammon of unrighteousness; and, now that it has failed him, these friends receive him into tabernacles which are always open, and in which he has long learned to find pleasure and to take rest.

The foregoing illustration may suffice to make our Lord's words clear. And it is one that the writer does not fail to use when young people seek his vocational counsel and guidance, even though they do not profess to be followers of the Master. But it is not a perfect illustration, for there are losses in which even science and art, even nature and culture, can give us but cold comfort. It does, however, point to a still better way -the way of wholehearted consecration to God. For, obviously, if a man give a good part of the time he might otherwise devote to the acquisition of wealth, to the cultivation of godliness, instead of to merely *intellectual culture*; if he take thought and spend time in acquiring habits of prayer and worship and obedience and trust; in acquainting himself with the will of God and doing it; if he expend money, and time which is worth money to him, in helping to further the glorious Gospel, and in ministering comfort in the ecclesia in which he is a member, and to his other associates in Christ, throughout the country in which he lives, and indeed throughout the world; he, too, has made to himself friends out of the mammon of unrighteousness, friends that will not fail him when mammon fails him, but will receive him into tabernacles of rest. However poor he may be, he may still pray, and read the Bible, and put his trust in God, and comfort all that mourn in Zion who may come his way; he may continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God and of his Son our Lord; and, by his cheerful contentment, and unswerving confidence in the goodness of God, and in the *ultimate* triumph of that goodness over evil (notwithstanding all surface indications to the contrary), he may now bear witness, with an eloquence far beyond that of mere words, to the reality and grandeur of a truly consecrated life. Faith, hope, and love, righteousness and godliness, patience and meekness, *these will* not close their doors against him, because mammon has slammed *his* door in his face. *These* are eternal friends, who pitch their tabernacles beside us wherever our path may lead, and who welcome us to the rest and shelter they afford when the cold north winds of adversity blow upon us, as well as when the south warm winds of prosperity come (Song of Solomon 4:16).

In short, it is not merely *a future* reward which Christ promises to as many as make a wise use of money and money's worth (although it includes that), but it is a *present*, a constant, an eternal reward. Virtually he says to us: Use your money for wise ends, whether you have little of it or much; make it your servant rather than your master; compel it to minister to your spiritual as well as to your temporal wants; expend thought and time and labor in the effort to become wise and good and kind-to become, indeed, like the Master himself. And then, *whenever* mammon fails you, your wisdom and goodness and kindness will abide with you; and these will fit you, far more than any wealth, for a noble and happy life, whether in this age or in that which is to come.

- P. L. Read

## **Entered Into Rest**

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