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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 rendered "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.

Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." - Romans 8:18.

As noted on the second page of our last issue, just as we were going to press, the news reached us that Brother Alec L. Muir ended his earthly pilgrimage March 27, 1972, in his seventy-seventh year.

Brother Alec had served the brethren, as a full-time Pilgrim for the previous twelve years, not only in the United States and Canada, but also in the British Isles. Additionally he was an occasional contributor to our Herald. One of his best known contributions was an article, published in four installments, under the caption "Lights and Shadows in Christian Experience." Commencing with this issue, we are republishing that series as a special tribute to his memory. --Directors and Editors

THE Christian life is light and shadow, cloud and sunshine; tears in the evening, joy in the morning. In sickness of body we have sanctification of heart; in pain in the outer man, we have great peace in the inner man. Thus our sufferings in the present life, even when greatest, have interwoven in their texture, and intermingled with their current, and ever bubbling up from their depth, constant compensatory joys; but in the life to come, our joy will have nothing to interfere with it. It will be undiluted, unmingled ecstasy, perpetual happiness, unclouded joy. Moreover our present sufferings, even the worst, never exceed the strength of our powers of endurance. In the glory of the Kingdom our capacities will be infinitely enlarged, our susceptibilities of bliss made infinitely sensitive, and the joy that we shall experience will rise to the measure of the great capacities that our Father will give us. And in that wonderful Kingdom what delight it will afford to renew the sweet counsel we have taken together, to recount the toils of the combat, the labor of the way, and to approach, not the house, but the throne of God, in company, there to join in the symphonies of heavenly voices in the hallelujah chorus.

BETHANY

One of the most beautiful and touching scenes in the Bible on this subject is to be found in Bethany, the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. There are many sacred memories associated with our dear Redeemer in his earthly sojourn: Bethlehem, the scene of the nativity; Nazareth, where Jesus grew to manhood; the river Jordan, where he was baptized; Tiberias, an area he frequented much; the Mount on which he uttered the beatitudes and announced the principles of his Kingdom, -- the place where he spent whole nights in prayer; Calvary, where he poured out his soul in death for us. However, wonderful and blessed though these and many other associations may be to us, there is yet one other place where love fondly dwells in sanctified thought -- the home and village of Bethany.

It is only a memory now, and yet the place is fragrant with his presence, the echoes of his voice, the kindness of his manner, his sharing of the burdens and anxieties of others for their encouragement. If the story of Joseph and his brethren in the Old Testament is invested with surpassing interest, here is a Gospel home scene in the New, of still deeper and tenderer pathos, a sweet oasis in the toil-worn pilgrimage of the Master. We follow him to Bethany from the courts of the Temple -- the busy crowd, the lengthened journey, the miracles of mercy, the hours of vain and ineffectual pleading with obdurate hearts, and see him in the midst of a peaceful family, spirit blending with spirit in sanctified communion.

Doubtless many incidents of the Lord's sojournings at Bethany have been left unrecorded, because more than once the inspired narrative makes the simple statement that Jesus retired to the village of his friend Lazarus. We certainly can be grateful for what is recorded, giving a comprehensive intermingling of doctrine, consolation, comfort, and instruction in righteousness. At first glance it may seem strange that the story of Bethany and the resurrection of Lazarus, forming so noble and important a phase in our Lord's life, should have been recorded only by the Evangelist John. Two reasons have been suggested: (1) that John narrates the work of Christ in Judea and especially in Jerusalem, while the other evangelists restrict themselves to his Galilean ministry; and (2) that John was the best qualified to do justice to this matchless picture. Baptized himself with the spirit of love, his inspired pen could best portray the lights and shadows in this lovely household. Here for a brief moment he lifts the veil which enshrouds the private life of our Lord to exhibit him in the character of a true and loving friend.

MARTHA, MARY, AND LAZARUS

Let us visit the home in Bethany and be introduced to the members of the family that we may better understand the lessons as they unfold. It is thought by some that the head of the family was Simon the leper, the husband of Martha, and now deceased (Matt. 26:6). Martha has been accurately represented as a type of activity; bustling, energetic, impulsive, well-qualified to be the head of the household, and to grapple with the stern realities and routine of actual life; quick in apprehension, strong and vigorous in intellect, anxious to give a reason for all she did, and requiring a reason for the conduct of others; one who combined diligence in business with fervency in spirit.

Mary was a type of reflection; calm, meek, devotional, contemplative, sensitive in feeling, ill-suited to battle with the cares and sorrows, the strifes and griefs of an engrossing and encumbering world. Her position was at her Lord's feet, drinking in those living waters which came welling up fresh from the Fountain of life; asking no questions, declining all arguments, gentle and submissive, the picture of a childlike faith which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things."

Of Lazarus we have fewer details to guide us in giving individuality to his character. Some think he was the rich young ruler who came to Jesus to inquire what he should do to inherit everlasting life. However, while he did not then possess the spirit of sacrifice necessary to, enable him to carry out the instructions of Jesus, the Lord nevertheless loved him for his many excellent qualities. Whether or not he was that young ruler, we may think of Lazarus as being gentle, retiring, amiable, forgiving -- a very fine member of a closely knit family.

And then, most wonderful of all, we find Jesus personifying true friendship. While he loved the world and gave himself a ransom for all, yet he had sinless partialities for individuals whose spirits and minds were more congenial and kindred with his own. Thus he had an ardent affection for all of his disciples, but even among them there was an inner circle of holier attachments -- Peter, James, and John. And even of these three, there was one preeminently beloved (John 13:23). Do we not find it true that there are some heart sanctuaries where we can more readily rush to bury the tale of our sorrows or unburden our perplexities, that in communion together there might be found peace! What was it but a noble and touching tribute to the longings and susceptibilities of his own heart for human friendship that, on entering Gethsemane, he thus sought strength in his hour of need -- "Tarry ye here and watch with me!" (Matt. 26:38).

JESUS IN THE MIDST

But to return. Such was the home and its members about whom we love to think. Perhaps the Lord had Bethany in mind when he said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). We can fancy, but no more, these oft happy meetings, when the Lord, weary and worn, was seen descending the rocky footpath of Olivet --Lazarus, or his sisters, from the flat roof of their dwelling, or under the spreading fig tree, eager to catch the first glimpse of his approach. Standing back in the shadows we watch and listen with deep interest to the conversation, unchronicled by the inspired penmen, dealing, we may be sure, not with the sordid details of Jewish enmity toward the Savior, but with sublime and heavenly truths which sank deep into the hearts of his listeners, preparing them for a time of unexpected sorrow. If we find pleasure and comfort in fellowship one with another, what must it have been to be seated in his presence drinking in the wonderful words of life!

May we pause here to ask ourselves the nature of our own fellowship when we meet together. Do we ourselves come together conscious of the need to get away from the bustling affairs of the world that we might refresh our spirits with the sublime promises of the Kingdom? Alas, are not our meetings spoiled sometimes by the introduction of the things of the world, the things that we have done or said; sometimes, indeed, by an argumentative spirit which turns the searching for truth into a debating society?

Not so at Bethany. There would be no interruption of the Savior there as he discoursed on his Father's plans and purposes; as he explained the need for the Ransomer and Redeemer; as he underlined the certainty of Messiah's Kingdom with its wealth of blessing for the Jew and also for all men everywhere. That we cannot all grasp the truth to the same extent or depth is shown as the story unfolds. The principle enunciated by Jesus still holds good: "According to your faith be it unto you." It is, therefore, as we grow in grace and understanding, and as the ripened character of the Christian develops, that the depths of the Lord's teachings become understood and we "lean not unto our own understanding, but in all our ways acknowledge him" trusting him to direct our paths (Prov. 3:5, 6). In this modern, materialistic day, we need the more to "enter our closets" (Matt. 6:6) and "open our window toward Jerusalem," as did Daniel (Dan. 2:10), and commune more and more with our Father and our dear Redeemer. From such communion we derive strength and grace to fit us for the burdens of life, and to enable us to do what St. Paul urges us to do: "having done all, to stand" -- (Eph. 6:13). Let us remember that the Lord can be served in the lowliest as well as in the most exalted stations, and we can become a center of holy influences to all around us.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET

One of these hallowed seasons of the Lord's presence is referred to in Luke 10:38-42, where Martha and Mary are first brought to our attention. It was natural that the presence of the Lord would cause some stir in the little household, and Martha, the busy, eager-hearted hostess, hurried to and fro with excited energy to prepare for his proper entertainment. Mary, likewise, intent on welcoming the Lord, and knowing that her sister was only too happy in attending to his material comforts, sat at his feet and listened to his words. Martha enjoyed the task which she had chosen and was quite able, without any assistance, to do everything required. She was not to blame for her active service, but a little touch of jealousy disturbed her peace of mind, when she saw Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus. It seemed to her that there was a certain amount of injustice in the situation, although we can be sure that if Martha had appealed to Mary for help, the help would have been forthcoming immediately. Being vexed in spirit, Martha, somewhat impatiently and not quite reverently, hurried in to ask Jesus if he really thought it all right for Mary to sit before him while she, herself, was taking care of all the work, and would he please tell Mary to give some help with the evening meal. How true is this picture of the Lord's people down through the Gospel Age even to our own times! The little petty jealousies which have plagued the household of faith and brought discouragement to so many! Yet, as we more nearly attain the

measure of the stature of the perfect man in Christ, there grows a calmer and gentler view of these weaknesses and more patience and understanding in reproving them.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The answer of Jesus -- "Martha, Martha" -- makes us imagine the half-sad, half-playful, but wholly kind and healing smile which lightened his face -- "Thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." In saying this, Jesus did not mean to exalt the contemplative life over the active life. Either may be necessary--both must be combined. Jesus was reproving the spirit of fret and fuss--the lack of repose and calm in his follower, and he wanted Martha to understand that at the time of his visits to their home she should provide only for their simplest needs, so that the remaining time could be devoted to higher things. In this sense Mary had "chosen" the better part. It was the decision she made in putting first things first that brought the Lord's approval. Martha, on the other hand, while properly filled with the true spirit of hospitality, was nevertheless overdoing the part, and thus her mind was troubled and she would be unable to enjoy the evening's fellowship.

Has not this same thing been true in our experiences? Can we not think back over the years to the occasions when greater preparations seem to have been made for the "natural" man to the detriment of the "spiritual" man? In our meetings from week to week we are but reproducing the Bethany scene over and over again. Do we find Christ drawing us to the meeting? Is he the center of our thoughts, the object of our devotions, the altogether lovely One? And when we leave our "upper rooms," do we carry with us the fragrance of the Lord's presence and the blessings he has left with us? Are we growing in that gentler, kindlier spirit, and thus increasingly becoming what St. Paul once said - "fellow-helpers" of the truth? Here is the measuring rod to indicate our progress in the way of the Lord, an activity working from within and reaching outward into the everyday affairs of life. As St. Peter would say: "If ye do these things ye shall never fall." This is the true test of character and something we each can watch and pray about day by day.

"OUR FRIEND LAZARUS SLEEPETH"

Our next scene is to be found in John, chapter 11. In verse one we are told of the sickness of Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and Martha. It is instructive to note, in verse 5, that although Jesus had previously approved of Mary sitting at his feet, John here records that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." Thus does the noble Apostle beautifully show the impartiality of Jesus; his appreciation of the sincerity, of those who serve him and seek to please him.

This experience with sickness and sorrow was evidently anticipated by the Lord and in an effort to strengthen the members of the family, he had visited them as discussed previously, lifting their thoughts to the true and eternal verities. And is not this always the way of the Lord toward his people? As we look back over our Christian experience, do we not find that the Lord prepared us for each heavy trial, by first bringing us a great blessing. Sometimes this came through the medium of a gathering of his people. Perhaps at other times as the result of a personal visit in our home by a fellow-saint, or some other rich Christian experience was sent us which buoyed us up and gave the silver lining to the clouds of trouble. Hence the couplet:

"The inner side of every cloud
Is bright and shining;
I therefore turn my clouds about,
And always wear them inside out,
To show the silver lining."

(Continued in next issue)

The Typical Significance of Pentecost*

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, . . . " - Acts 2:1.

Here we conclude our consideration of The Typical Significance of Pentecost (begun in our last issue).

It will be recalled that, according to Leviticus 23:15-18, the offering at Pentecost consisted of two wave loaves, and we examined two explanations of the *duplicate character* of the emblems.

*For many of the thoughts and suggestions presented in this article, we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to David Baron. His able work, "Types, Psalms, and Prophecies," has been at our elbow throughout its preparation.

"THEY SHALL BE BAKED WITH LEAVEN"

The second peculiarity we wish to notice in connection with the presentation of the loaves at Pentecost is that expressed in the words, "They shall be baked with leaven." This is remarkable, especially in the light of the express injunction given to Israel to exclude leaven from their sacrifices (Ex. 34:25), but it only supplies us with another instance of the minuteness with which these types are regulated, because of their rich symbolic significance.

Leaven, as we have already observed, signifies sin, or corruption. From every sacrifice, therefore, which set forth the perfect Servant of Jehovah, the true Lamb of God, leaven was rigidly excluded. Thus with the Omer, or Sheaf offered on the 16th of Nisan, which represented Christ Jesus in resurrection, the true firstfruits and meal offering, there was no leaven, for nothing even suggestive of corruption could be associated with the only sinless One, in whom was no guile, or deceit. But it is otherwise with his people. The Church is indeed "elect through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." We are, as consecrated believers, possessed of a new life, are now washed and sanctified and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God, and are "clean every whit" in his sight. Yet well aware are we that "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," and the more we seek by his grace to follow him wholly, and in the power of his spirit to keep our hearts pure and our hands clean, the more conscious we become of our daily need of cleansing (1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Cor. 6:11; John 13:10; 1 John 1:8).

For the same reason also there is no sin offering connected with the Sheaf which prefigured our Lord Jesus (Nisan 16); but with the two loaves there is the express command that apart from the other accompanying offerings there should be one he-goat for a sin offering (Lev. 23:19, 20), which again teaches us that the Church, though called and qualified by the power of the holy spirit to serve, does, nevertheless, need at every moment of its service, the protection of the "precious blood," even of that one sacrifice in which the virtue and efficacy of all the offerings here enumerated, were combined, and under the shelter of which, the Church, presented as the new meal offering in the earth, abides. In the one sacrifice of the Cross, the Savior provided for his Church a fragrance and acceptableness, which it could never find in its own leavened self.

That which is typified by the Feast of Pentecost, looked at from one aspect, is spread over the whole of this Gospel Age, though a striking fulfillment took place at the inauguration of the Christian dispensation fifty days after our Lord's resurrection, when the Pentecostal season for

that year "was fully come;" But perhaps that which is specially set forth by the actual presentation and waving of the loaves is yet to be fulfilled at the close of this dispensation, when all the first-fruits from among men being gathered, and the number of the elect being completed, Christ Jesus shall present to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:26, 27); but even then it will be so, not because he found her so, or because of her absolute purity while on earth, but because, having first bought her with his own precious blood, he sanctified and cleansed her with the washing of water by the Word, and made her perfect in the beauty and comeliness which he did put upon her (Eph. 5:26; Isa. 61:3).

"THE AFTER-FRUITS"

There is another feature of this "Feast of Pentecost" too important to escape mention even in so brief a space as remains to us. It is this Just as the Omer presented on the morrow after the Passover; setting forth Christ Jesus as "the firstfruits of them that slept," was a pledge and earnest of the two loaves presented on Pentecost, which prefigured the Church in its elective character as the firstfruits from among men, so also the second firstfruits are themselves a prophecy and pledge of the fuller harvest yet to be gathered in the coming Age, of which in the Scriptures, all God's holy Prophets have spoken since the world began (Acts 3:19). The blessing which came to the world at the first advent of our Redeemer, wonderful though it was, has thus far been only partial in degree and extent.

Indeed, unbelieving men sometimes taunt us with the little that the Gospel has accomplished, and maintain that Christianity has been a failure, and truly if, as is supposed by some, God had purposed the conversion of the world during this Gospel Age, it must be admitted that his plans have thus far been frustrated. For when we contemplate the condition of the world after more than nineteen centuries of Gospel witnessing, what do we see? How far are we from seeing a believing world! Consider how small a proportion of the human race are even professedly believers in Jesus. And of these who mentally assent to the truth as it is in Jesus, how few are governed by it!

But a better acquaintance with our Father's Word reveals the fact that the conversion of the world in the present Age was not expected of the Church. Indeed the very fact that the world has not yet been converted, far from confirming the unbeliever's view that God's plans have failed, is merely a convincing proof to the consecrated child of God that God has not even attempted the world's conversion yet. The Scriptures declare that all God's purposes shall be accomplished, that his Word shall not return unto him void, but shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sends it (Isa. 55:11). And as we look into the Scriptures and then around us at the condition of the world in which we live, we see that the Gospel has accomplished just that which God said it would accomplish in this Age now closing. First, a remnant according to the election of grace was to be saved out of Israel (Isa. 10:22; Rom. 9:27; 11:5). And the Gentiles, we read, God hath visited, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15:14). These two, reconciled in one body unto God, through the Cross of Christ, were to unitedly form his Ecclesia, his Church, the Bride or Body of Christ, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And as the Scriptures foretold, so it is: Israel as a nation still rejects Christ, but have there not been thousands who received him and became sons of God thereby? The other nations of the earth, the Gentiles, still, for the most part sit in darkness, and under the shadow of death, but wherever the Gospel has been preached as a witness, some have heard the call, and have joined the company of *taken out* ones, "called out" ones, as the very word "ecclesia" means.

But an election is never an end in itself; it is rather a means and preparation for some vastly larger accomplishment. And the very fact that the Church is spoken of as a kind of "*first-fruits*" implies

"after-fruits." The Gospel of the Kingdom must first be preached as a witness unto all nations, for the gathering in of the first ripe ears, to constitute a glorious firstfruits, and then:

"After this I will return,
And I will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen
And I will build again the ruins thereof,
And I will set it up;
That the residue of men may seek after the Lord,
And all the Gentiles upon whom my Name is called, saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:16-18).

REVIEW

Let us now review the ground covered foregoing. First, we noted that Israel had seven "feasts" or "appointed seasons" or "holy convocations," three of them occurring in the month Nisan, the first month of their ecclesiastical year, the fourth, that of Pentecost, sometimes called the "Feast of Conclusion," came in the third month, and marked the conclusion of the Passover Season. The remaining three feasts did not take place until later, all three occurring in the seventh month.

The four we have considered have received their fulfillment already, in this Gospel Age; Christ our Passover, to whom the paschal lamb had so long pointed, has already been slain for us; the Omer Sheaf, which was both a type and a prophecy, that he should be the first that should rise from the dead (Acts 26:23), received its glorious fulfillment when on the third day he rose again, and became the firstfruits of them that slept; and with the day of Pentecost there commenced the gathering out of the firstfruits from among men of all nations, who by one spirit are formed into one new body in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, and who, in the power of a new life, are called into fellowship with God, and to keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

TIME FEATURES

It is also interesting to observe that insofar as this series of prophetic types has run its course, not only do type and antitype answer to one another in a most striking manner and in a variety of ways which preclude the possibility of their fulfillment being brought about by anything but design, but they also synchronize in point of time. Was it mere chance that when the hour was at last come for the Lamb of God to be offered for the sin of the world that it should have fallen on the Jewish Passover? And when he whom the pains of death could not hold was raised from the grave, victorious over death, to be the beginning of a new, spiritual harvest unto God from among men, was it a mere coincidence that it should have been at the time that the priests and leaders of Israel were busying themselves in preparing and presenting in their Temple the Omer of Firstfruits?

And again, was it mere chance that it was not until the day of Pentecost was fully come (Acts 2:1) that there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind to inaugurate the new dispensation and the spirit of God was poured out in such abundance that about three thousand souls were added to the company of apostles and disciples to form a new meal. offering unto Jehovah, a kind of firstfruits of his creatures? The Christian cannot but perceive in all this not only the prophetic character of Israel's types and ceremonies, and therefore that they could not have been designed by man, but must have originated in the mind of God; the Christian cannot but perceive also, that Christ is all, and that the very election and call of Israel was typical, and

that all their divinely ordained ritual and services had Christ and the great redemption which he was to accomplish, for their center and goal.

CONCLUSION

Finally, brethren, let us not conclude our meditation without making a very personal and practical application of the lesson of Pentecost. When the Sheaf of Barley representing our Lord Jesus, was waved before the altar by the officiating priest, it was composed of the very finest ears they could find. So also, at the Feast of Pentecost, fifty days later, the wheat harvest having now been gathered in, the two loaves which were waved before the altar were made of the new flour which, in turn, had come from the very finest of the wheat. That is to say, such should have been the case. But in the case of natural Israel the Prophet Malachi reminds us that instead of coming to the Lord with their best, they were inclined to perform the letter of the law and to avoid its spirit; apparently they were ready to bring sacrifices and offerings, but the selfishness of their hearts and their lack of true appreciation of the Lord led them to proffer him the weak and the lame and the poor, while they kept the better for their own use. Through the Prophet Malachi the Lord urged them that they test him, prove him, and see whether or not he would grant them great blessings if they would but enter into the spirit of their consecration and offer unto the Lord the best of what they possessed.

We, as spiritual Israelites, may gain a profitable lesson from these sharp criticisms of natural Israel. How is it with us? We have vowed unto the Lord the firstfruits, the very best, the very finest, the most valuable of all that we have and all that we are -- of time, influence, talents, money, all. To what extent are we rendering unto the Lord our offerings and sacrifices in harmony with this our covenant? It will not be long before our trials will be over, but until that little while is past, we are in the trial time, and it is proving us either worthy or unworthy of the glorious favor which we seek -- the chief blessing, joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer. If we really appreciate this favor, we shall seek to what extent there are yet other opportunities of spending and being spent in his service. Of natural Israel the Lord required a tenth -- a tithe. Of spiritual Israelites he makes no specific requirement, but leaves it to us each, that by the degree of our sacrifices, according to our abilities, we may demonstrate the measure of our love.

The Lord's words to natural Israel come to us spiritual Israelites with still greater force: "Prove me now herewith," saith the Lord. If any feel themselves poor, spiritually, if any feel that they are spiritually lean, that they are not enjoying such fellowship with the Lord as they would desire, that they are unable to draw as closely to him as they would like, to all such the Lord says: Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, fulfill your vow of consecration and thus prove me now herewith, and see if I will not do my part; I will do for you exceeding abundantly above all that you have asked or thought. Those who accept the Lord's proposition heartily, without reservations, find their spiritual leanness departing, their joy of heart increasing more and more.

Thus may it be with each one of us, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

- P. L. Read

The Servant's Path in a Day of Rejection

SERVANT of Christ, stand fast amid the scorn
Of men who little know or love thy Lord;
Turn not aside from toil: cease not to warn,
Comfort and teach, trust Him for thy reward;
A few more moments' suffering, and then
Cometh sweet rest from all thy heart's deep pain.

For grace pray much, for much thou needest grace.
If men thy work deride--what can they more?
Christ's weary foot thy path on earth doth trace;
If thorns wound thee, they pierced Him before;
Press on, look, tho' clouds may gather round,
Thy place of service He makes hallowed ground.

Have friends forsaken thee, and cast thy name
Out as a worthless thing? Take courage then:
Go tell thy Master, for they did the same
To Him, who once in patience toiled for them;
Yet He was perfect in all service here;
Thou oft hast failed: this maketh Him more dear.

Self-vindication shun; if in the right
What gainest thou by taking from God's hand
Thy cause? If wrong, what dost thou but invite
Satan himself thy friend in need to stand?
Leave all with God; if right, He'll prove thee so;
If not, He'll pardon; therefore to Him go.

Be not men's servant: think what costly price
Was paid that thou might'st His own bondsman be,
Whose service perfect freedom is. Let this
Hold fast thy heart. His claim is great to thee.
None should thy soul enthrall to whom 'tis given
To serve on earth, with liberty of Heaven.

All His are thine to serve: Christ's brethren here
Are needing aid, in them thou servest Him.
The least of all is still His member dear,
The weakest cost His life-blood to redeem.
Yield to no "party" what He rightly claims,
Who on His heart bears all His people's names.

Be wise, be watchful, wily men surround
Thy path. Be careful, for they seek with care
To trip thee up; see that no plea be found
In thee thy Master to reproach. The snare
They set for thee will then themselves enclose
And God His righteous judgment thus disclose.

Cleave to the poor, Christ's image in them is;
Count it great honor if they love thee well;
Nought can repay thee after losing this,
Tho' with the wise and wealthy thou shouldst dwell.
Thy Master oftentimes would pass thy door
To hold communion with His much-loved poor.

The time is short, seek little here below:
Earth's goods would cumber thee and drag thee down.
Let daily food suffice; care not to know
Thought for tomorrow: it may never come.
Thou canst not perish, for Thy Lord is nigh,
And His own care will all thy need supply.

- *Poems of Dawn*

Notes on Immortality

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

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

The Question Box

"Whosoever abideth in him [Christ] sinneth not." - 1 John 3:6.

Question

Will you please harmonize 1 John 3:6 with the position taken by the same Apostle in chapter 1, verses 8-10 (1 John 1:8-10), and in chapter 2, verses 1, 2 (1 John 2:1-2)? In these two passages he repudiates the idea that anyone, in this life, may truthfully claim to be sinless, and shows how, when Christians do sin, a remedy has been provided. This being the case, how are we to understand his apparently conflicting statement in chapter 3, verse 6 (1 John 3:6), that whosoever abideth in him *sinneth not*?

Answer:

Scholars have pointed out that the difficulty is removed by observing a distinction of tenses in the Greek. In 1 John 2:1 the verb twice translated "sin" is in the aorist, and indicates a single act, or occasional acts, of sin. In 1 John 3:6 the corresponding word is from a Greek imperfect participle. This expression, therefore, refers, not to a single or an occasional act, but to habitual sin, or a continuous sinful state.

The apparently conflicting passages may be seen to be in harmony if we understand the Apostle to be affirming, not that the Christian cannot possibly commit a sin, but to be saying that it is impossible to conceive of a child of God being habitually sinful (1 John 3:6); while it remains possible for him to fall, once and again, into a single act of sin (1 John 2:1), although, of course, he ought not to do so, and should earnestly strive not to. In other words, the renewal of our minds (Rom. 12:1, 2) consequent upon our acceptance of the Gospel and consecration to God, has the effect of turning our entire subsequent lives away from sin. Thenceforth our *normal* condition should be one of sinlessness. However, it may happen that, under stress of temptation, we commit a sinful act. In that case we need not despair (although we should be grieved). Instead, we should lose no time in having the dark stain removed, by fleeing at once to God, who, by virtue of the sacrifice and intercession of our great Advocate, will cleanse us, restoring us to our *normal* condition of sinlessness. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Question:

In Revelation 14:14-16 we read of the "harvest of the earth," which many of us believe has been in progress for years. Does the work of harvest mean the separation of true Christians from one or more sects and gathering them into another sect or organization?

Answer:

No! -- although many have thought so, and still do. The harvest is a separation of the Lord's people *from* sectarianism *unto* the Lord; *first*, in the spirit of their minds, while they are still on this side the veil; and *secondly*, into the heavenly garner, on the other side the veil. In this life, it means coming, not into another place, but into another *condition* -- a condition in which true Christian liberty is enjoyed. In such a condition, one Christian requires nothing more, and nothing less, of another Christian, *for admission into full fellowship*, than adherence to those truths that alone are necessary to constitute them true Christians, members of the Body of Christ; members of the one true Church. Writing on this subject in his exposition of the Revelation, Brother Streeter, in Vol. II, pages 216, 217 observes: "Such was the Church Christ established, in which all were accounted free to study his Word, and obtain a knowledge of the same according to their mental ability to grasp; and thus to grow in both knowledge and grace. Such a liberty enjoyed will of necessity willingly consent that other Christians may hold and express opinions with which we disagree, until they are convinced by reason and Scripture that these opinions are untrue."

Question:

In Romans 3:28 St. Paul says that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the Law. St. James, in chapter 2, verse 24 (James 2:24) of his Epistle, tells us that by works a man is justified and not by faith only. How are these apparently inconsistent statements to be reconciled?

Answer:

We are glad the statements are referred to as only "apparently" inconsistent, for we are persuaded and will endeavor to show that no real inconsistency exists.

First we inquire: When St. Paul says we are justified by faith without deeds or works, to what works does he refer? The answer, as all will agree, is: Works of or done under the Law, the Law of Moses. St. James, however, in speaking of works, refers to works of faith, to good and acceptable works. Now St. Paul never calls the works which he says do not justify, *good* works, but he calls them simply "works" - works of *the Law* - deeds of *the Law* - *dead* works. These have nothing to do with the works of faith. Of these St. Paul elsewhere speaks, and by a remarkable contrast he calls them again and again "good works." For instance: "By grace are ye saved through faith . . . not of *works*, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *good works*" (Eph. 2:8-10).

Here surely is a most pointed intimation that the works which do not justify, are not good, or in other words, are works *before* justification. As to whether works after, which *are* good, whether they justify or not, he does not decide so expressly as St. James, the error he had to resist leading his argument in another direction. Against the Judaizing teachers who were opposing his ministry, he says only, that our works must begin, continue, and end in faith.

Again, elsewhere St. Paul speaks of abounding in every *good* work, of being adorned with *good* works, of being well reported of for *good* works, diligently following every *good* work, of the *good* works of some being manifest beforehand, of being rich in *good* works, of being prepared unto every *good* work, of being thoroughly furnished unto all *good* works, of being a pattern of *good* works, of being zealous of *good* works, of being ready to every *good* work, of being careful to maintain *good* works, of provoking unto love and *good* works, of being made perfect in every *good* work (2 Cor. 9:8; 1 Tim. 2:10; 5:10; 5:25; 6:18; 2 Tim. 2:21; 3:17; Titus 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14; Heb. 10:24; 13:21).

When St. James tells us that a man is justified by works, he means, of course, *good* works, but he says only "works." Why does not St. Paul do the same? Why is he also careful to add the word "good"? We answer: It is because, in his discussions, St. Paul had also to do with a sort of works with which St. James had not to do - because in those discussions the word "works" had already been appropriated by him to those of the Law, and therefore the epithet "good" was necessary, lest works of faith should be confused with works of Law.

We see, then, that St. Paul, while conclusively showing that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the Law, is far from asserting thereby that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the Gospel, and that he does not deny what St. James affirms, that by works (the good works by which faith is made perfect) a man is justified, and not by faith only.

- P. L. Read

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