

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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Isaiah's Messianic Vision

"And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." - Matthew 1:21.

THE story of Jesus' birth is not new; it is "the old, old story of gracious heavenly love." We hear again in carol, hymn, and sacred song the glad tidings of great joy announced centuries ago by an angel of the Lord to shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock by night. Although more than nineteen hundred years have passed since the announcement of the Heavenly Message, the good news concerning the coming of the "Christ Child" continues to inspire hope in all who put their trust in God, and whose thankful hearts echo the praise of the heavenly host: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." - Luke 2:14.

The Prophet Isaiah, whose name signifies "the salvation of Jehovah," has been styled "the Evangelical Prophet," because his many and varied prophecies are replete in their graphic description of the various aspects of the work of Christ. It is a remarkable circumstance that the significance of the Prophet's name coincides so entirely with the mighty work of restoration to be wrought by the Messiah - the recovery of the human family from the blight of sin and death.

The great Prophet, seeing in a vision the coming Messiah, spoke as he was moved by the holy spirit, saying, "For 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" (Isa. 9:6). As the vision unfolded before Isaiah, he designated the character and work of the Messiah by revealing the appropriate names which he would bear. This great prophetic vision was one of changing scenes which like a panorama, passed before the gaze of the Seer and pictured progressively the birth, life, death, exaltation, and glorious Millennial reign of Christ, who, as Prophet, Priest, and King, was acclaimed "Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

With great joy must the Prophet have beheld the promised Seed of Abraham dispensing blessings of health, security, life, and peace to all the families of the earth. If we would share his joy, we must also share his vision; so let us turn the pages of the Sacred Word to discover there the past scenes narrated and the future ones pictured in language fair.

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

The opening scene of the prophetic vision was fulfilled in the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem; and so we find recorded that "Mary brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). This was the first step in God's great plan of redemption to restore mankind to the perfection of Eden's Paradise. For more than four thousand years the human family had been dying as a result of the just sentence of death passed upon Father Adam; for "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). But now a ray of hope was shining; the long awaited Messiah was born; for "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman," and "The Word was made flesh" (Gal. 4:4; John 1:14). The Logos, the Firstborn of every creature, the Beginning of the creation of God, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN

We turn next to the Consecration scene, in which Jesus came to John to be baptized by him in the Jordan. As we picture Jesus standing before John with head bowed in the attitude of complete submission to his Heavenly Father, the words of the Psalmist come to our mind: "Lo, I come ... I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps. 40:7, 8). "For the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Mark 10:45; John 3:16). Then Jesus symbolized his consecration by being baptized by John: "And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mark 1:10, 11). This was he of whom the Baptist spoke, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." - John 1:29.

Isaiah, in another of his matchless prophecies (Isa. 53:3-5), depicts Jesus as he faithfully carried out his covenant of sacrifice to "pour out his soul unto death": "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Thus the Logos "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7, 8). Then "bearing our sins in his own body on the tree," he cried, "It is finished," and "tasted death for every man."

AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER

This scene revealed the Messiah in the glory of his Kingdom, with all authority and power vested in him. Daniel the Beloved also saw this scene in his vision of the Messiah's dominion and kingdom, and set it down for our learning: "Behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And

there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:13, 14). The Psalmist also prophesied concerning Messiah's worldwide Kingdom, saying, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." - Ps. 72:8-11.

AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL

This word, wonderful, is derived from the verb *gala*, to separate, to distinguish, or to be great. "It is a word which expresses with surprising accuracy everything in relation to the Redeemer." Jesus was God's great Gift to man; the Light of the World. He was the Logos, or Word of God, because he revealed or manifested God. He was the Beginning of the creation of God; the Firstborn of every creature. All things were created by him, and for him. He left the glory which he had with the Father, and was made flesh and dwelt among us in order that he might redeem mankind. He was Wonderful in his birth, life, death, and resurrection. He will be Wonderful, too, in the office of Prophet, Priest, and King; for "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." - Phil. 2:9-11.

COUNSELOR

"The name Counselor here denotes one of honorable rank; one who is fitted to stand near princes and kings as their adviser. It is expressive of great wisdom, and of qualifications to guide and direct the human race." Thus during the great Reconstruction Period -- The Times of Restitution - - the Messiah will guide the redeemed over the highway of holiness, and "a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." Then directed by the wise Counselor, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"; for "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way." - Isa. 35:10; Ps. 25:9.

THE MIGHTY GOD

This scene of the vision will meet its fulfillment when the Messiah comes in the glory of his Kingdom to judge the earth; for "he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." Then "times of refreshing shall come out from the face of Jehovah"; and Christ, as Immanuel (God with us), shall be acclaimed "The Mighty God." The Apostle Paul also spoke of that day, saying, "He [God] hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). And to this may be added the testimony of Jesus: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." - John 5:22.

Again "the Evangelical Prophet" pictures for us another view of the Messiah; this time in the role of "The Mighty God"; "And in this mountain [kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts [through our Lord Jesus Christ] make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation," for "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm [Christ] in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." - Isa. 25:6-9; 52:10.

THE EVERLASTING FATHER

The Vulgate renders the expression, The Everlasting Father, "The Father of the future Age." Literally it is "The Father of eternity." Both renderings are correct, for the title, "The Everlasting Father," will be ascribed to Christ in his Millennial Kingdom; for then the blessing of everlasting life will be offered to all of the human family who will "heed that Prophet" and take of the water of life provided by the precious sacrifice of Jesus. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." - John 3:16.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

The closing scene of the vision revealed the Messiah as "The Prince of Peace." In this great role he shall make wars to cease unto the end of the earth and break in pieces the oppressor; then shall he usher in the era of eternal peace among men, and the desire of all nations shall come. For the God of Heaven shall set his King (Christ) on his holy hill (Kingdom) of Zion, "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it" (Mic. 4:3, 4). "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth." - Ps. 72:4-7.

We have come to the end of the vision; and have shared Isaiah's joy as we hearkened to inspired New Testament Prophets blend their voices with those of holy men of old to tell "The Message of Salvation from God's own holy Word."

It is particularly fitting at this season of the year that we steal away in the spirit from the world with its cares and distractions, and in the quietness of our own soul tune in again the Heavenly Message: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Then let us join with the heavenly host in praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

- *R. W. Godfrey*

CHRISTMAS

I heard the bells of Christmas ring,
"No-el, No-el, No-el,"
The choirs then began to sing,
"No-el, No-el, No-el,"
And o'er the air the grand old hymns
Came to my room -- and then
My thoughts harked back where once I stood
In far-off Bethlehem.

And, standing on the hillside there
The Shepherd's field lay green
Before me in Judea's sun,
All rugged land between.
And, in my fancy, as I stood
I heard the angels sing,
And watched the fleecy, sleepy flocks
Follow their shepherds in:

[No better right had kings than they,
Symbols of God's own Son --
A Lamb slain e'er the world was made
For man by sin undone.]

And then a Cross before my eyes
Stood outlined on a hill,
A broken Heart before me cried,
A suffering form was still.

The heavy darkness gathered round,
An earthquake shook the ground,
"Tis finished" --Yea, upon that Cross
Man's substitute is found.

Two thousand years I saw roll on,
Sad is the story told
Of pestilence and storm and flood
And war from greed of gold.
The son of widowed mother feels
No hand upon his head,
His funeral cortege moves along
To burial of the dead.

Jairus' daughters slumber on
No voice to bid them rise,
A world in travail moans her pain
No help comes from the skies.

And now as Christmas bells ring out

"No-el, No-el, No-el,"
The bitterest hours of that race
Are here for Israel.
And blue stars on our banners
Change to gold of heart-break when
A message comes from out the din
Of battle -- and 'tis then
That anguished hearts look upward
"Lord, must these things always be?
The promise of Thy coming?
When, O, Lord, to set us free?"

To the Holy Book I turned then,
Saw upon the Gospel page
That all things had been as promised
Down the Jewish-Gospel Age;
That a King *shall* reign in justice,
Man, delivered from the fall
Will with one consent then serve Him,
King of kings, and Lord of all!

Yes, the great Time-clock is striking,
Never have its notes been wrong,
Ushering out life's night of weeping,
Bringing in earth's morning song.
Christians, *watch* - the Bridegroom cometh
Satan's power no more shall sway
Quarreling factions, warring nations,
It is coming, that glad day
When the Bride, joined to her Bridegroom
Sees his glory, shares his throne --
When all in their graves shall hear him,
"Lazarus, come forth, O come."
Where, cold grave, is then thy victory?
Where, O death, shall be thy sting?
Let the Christmas bells ring loudly
Welcome to earth's coming King!

- *Grace M. Harris*

Thanksgiving

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord." - Psalm 92:1.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord." - Psa. 92:1. So said one in olden times and truthfully, since it must be recognized that it is from our God that all our blessings flow.

God's typical people Israel were educated in this most important exercise, and to this end there was instituted a feast of celebration called the Feast of Tabernacles, as recorded in Lev. 23:34-43, during which time the children of Israel were to recall the events associated with their great deliverance out of Egypt.

Three thousand years later when the colonists had gained a foothold in what was to be known as New England, and after a grueling experience with disease, death and a rigorous climate, a bounteous harvest gave them renewed hope and courage to continue the work they had begun in the New World. They, therefore, felt constrained to express their gratitude to God. Subsequently a special day was appointed by the Governor of the State for this purpose. Later, by proclamation of the President of the United States, it was designated a national holiday, so that the nation might have opportunity to pause and reflect upon the many causes for gratitude so obvious on every hand.

Our thoughts, however, must transcend the gratitude only for temporal blessings, for these are but a small portion of the blessedness that comes to those who have tasted the Word of Life, and by it have found access to the presence of the great Creator, our Heavenly Father.

We will, therefore, examine some expressions of the Apostle Paul found in his letters to various ecclesias. They reveal what to Paul were the most important reasons for thanksgiving, and occupied a place at the beginning of his letters to the churches at Rome, Corinth, Philippi and Thessalonica. In each of these ecclesias Paul finds occasion for thanksgiving not for temporal things but rather for the evidences of Christian growth.

TO THE ECCLESIA AT ROME

In his message to the company of God's people at Rome, thanksgiving immediately follows the introduction in the epistle considered the most logical and profound summation of the Christian faith and practice. "First, *I thank my God* through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the world. . . without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." - Rom. 1:8, 9.

How fitting that the beloved Apostle should thus speak, he who is at this point laboring so effectively toward the strengthening of their faith, for in this very letter he is to add immeasurably to their comprehension of the most important aspect of a vital relationship to God. "For without faith it is impossible to please God." - Heb. 11:6.

Doubtless the Apostle realized that he had an effective point of contact in this his endeavor to enrich and stimulate their growth in this faith. Translating this into our own Christian experience we, like Paul, find a deep sense of gratitude for the faith which led us to accept the provision for salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, as is so well set forth by the Apostle in his letter to the Church at Rome.

How thankful we should be for *faith*, our great stabilizer in a dark and chaotic world; faith that can lay hold of the many precious promises given for our comfort in God's Word! "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psa. 46:1.) "All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8 :28.) "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." (Isa. 26:3.) "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20.) "My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest." (Ex. 33:14.) These, and many more too numerous to cite, are a continuing source of encouragement to the one who exercises faith in the inspired Word. No doubt the Apostle had such a faith in abundance and rejoiced with thanksgiving at the thought of God's saints in Rome enjoying the same blessed privilege.

Further benefits which are contingent upon faith are set forth by Paul in the fifth chapter of this epistle, and are listed in a logical sequence of Christian experience. He writes "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. " (Rom. 5:1, 2.) Coupled with this is a wonderful hope, a new and vitalizing experience, in which even tribulation is utilized as a stepping stone toward the realization of this hope. Who but our God and heavenly Father could institute such a program? Who but He could provide the means of grace by which it could be carried out and consummated in glory? As we think about it in its true perspective we are indeed thankful beyond expression.

TO THE ECCLESIA AT CORINTH

"Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. *I thank my God* always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance and all knowledge." - 1 Cor. 1:3-5.

What an appropriate salutation for the Church at Corinth beset as it was by strife and division! Here Paul found an evidence of carnality manifesting itself in following and exalting human leaders rather than the one true Leader, the One who had died for them, even Jesus Christ. In his prayer of thanksgiving, Paul reminds them of this grace which had been given them through Jesus Christ, as if to direct their minds away from their own petty differences and toward God the source of all their blessings, and also to the great sacrifice which Jesus had made on their behalf. The Apostle was thankful also that having come into this vital relationship with God and the Lord Jesus, they could experience an enrichment in their lives, such as they had never known -- "being enriched by Him in every word and in all knowledge."

What a privilege to have every word enriched by One who himself spoke as never man spake, who spoke with authority and not as the scribes, who spoke only the words he received from the Father. "The words that I speak, they are spirit and they are life." (John 6:63.) Applying these lessons to ourselves, we would do well to heed the admonitions in the Word on this most important part of Christian living, e. g., "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." (Col. 4:6.) "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." - Col. 3:16.

Usefulness in the Lord's service can be greatly enhanced if our words being enriched by him conform to the pattern seen in the Master himself. For it was said of him that "men wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." (Luke 4:22.) Thus indeed is this a cause for thanksgiving, and the more so when the knowledge too has this same mark of Divine favor.

For to be enriched by him in all knowledge indicates a close and abiding union with him "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3.) How thankful we are that the one who penned these words had this blessing in his own life! His rich and fruitful ministry bears the unmistakable stamp of an enrichment which could come from none other than the Lord he so ardently served.

TO THE ECCLESIA AT PHILIPPI

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, thankful for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." - Phil. 1:35.

Paul's thankfulness and rejoicing was not only because some at Philippi had received the gospel and had been converted, but that they were giving unmistakable evidence of it in their willingness to share in the responsibility of proclaiming it. There was a fellowship of participation in the cost, be what it may.

These brethren at Philippi wanted others to hear- the "Good News" that had brightened their own lives and were generous in their support of the Apostle in his mission of proclaiming it. They were willing to share in the sacrifices entailed in this most noble work. This, to the Apostle, was an evidence that they were also participating in the blessings of a personal fellowship with the Master, the story of whose love and life had wrought the change in them.

Memories of his experiences at Philippi were occasions for joyfulness despite the sufferings he endured during his brief stay in that city. The friends at Philippi occupied a special place in the affections of Paul. The love and hospitality extended to him while in their midst doubtless helped to mitigate the sufferings which befell him during the early days of his ministry there. Their loving interest in Paul and his missionary work followed him to other places and came to be a source of encouragement and strength in his efforts elsewhere, and particularly in Rome from where this epistle was written while he was a prisoner in that city.

Memories of these brethren were cause for thanksgiving, and drew from the Apostle a singular compliment. "My brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." (Phil. 4:1.) No criticism or rebuke for these loyal co-workers; just a message of love, encouragement, and a prayer to God on their behalf laden with thankfulness.

TO THE ECCLESIA AT THESSALONICA

"We are bound to give thanks to God always concerning you brethren as it is proper, because your faith is growing exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all is abounding towards each other." - 2 Thess. 1:3.

Evidence of Christian growth was such among these brethren that Paul not only gave thanks to God for it, but also boasted about it among the other congregations of God. Persecutions and afflictions were besetting the pathway of these at Thessalonica; nevertheless, they were by patience and faith making the best use of such experiences. Hardship caused them to draw closer to each other in an abounding love. Their faith too was growing exceedingly and this was a source of joy to the one who in abundant faith had labored among- them, bringing them hope which they had never known before, and an experience in joyful living that no heathen religion could ever bring. This Christian growth was to Paul a cause for thanksgiving.

The passing centuries have not altered these principles as they touch the lives of those privileged to hear and to receive the gospel message, and who heed the invitation to follow in the footsteps of our blessed Lord. Growth in these points as well as in others is still an occasion for joy and thankfulness, even as it was to the Apostle Paul.

Some may say, What is there to be thankful for since these are dark and foreboding days for the poor groaning creation? The events of each day offer little for encouragement and thankfulness. The spirit of anarchy continues to increase on every hand, standards of morality are breaking down, ominous clouds of war hang on the horizon.

Nevertheless, this year as in the past, a day will be set aside by proclamation of the President of our country, to give thanks to Almighty God for the blessings in temporal things which abound on every hand, for in this respect we are indeed blessed. However, our gratitude will indeed be incomplete if we confine it to the things which are seen and temporal. We who know the Lord, who love him, and are called according to his purpose, find an ever expanding reason for gratitude, especially for the knowledge and appreciation of the unseen things, the spiritual things, which are eternal. We, therefore, can join our hearts in thanksgiving for those same things which so moved the beloved Apostle Paul, in his epistles to the people of God in his day.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness.; come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name; For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and 'his truth endureth to all generations." - Psa. 100.

- *J. B. Webster.*

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 was noted in our last issue, Brother Alec L. Muir ended his earthly journey March 27, 1972. As a special tribute to his memory, we are publishing, in four installments, an article of his which previously appeared in this journal. The first two were published in recent issues. Here we continue with the third.

- Directors and Editors

AT THE close of our previous study we were considering the words of our Lord spoken to Martha at the tomb of her brother Lazarus:

"I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

To the Master's searching inquiry she replied: "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." - John 11:27.

Following this noble confession, we read: "And when she had so said, she went her way." The record does not indicate, but it is probable that Jesus himself had directed her to go, for she said to Mary: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." - John 11:28.

This message she delivered "secretly." The secrecy, too, may have been part of our Lord's instructions; but likely as not it resulted from Martha's own wise and loving thoughtfulness -- first, to avoid unnecessarily alerting our Lord's enemies to the fact of his return; and second, to provide her sister with the opportunity for a private talk with Jesus.

MARTHA AND MARY

It is instructive to observe the characteristic differences in temperament between Martha and Mary, as they are portrayed by the Apostle John. These differences we previously noted, when studying the Bethany family, in the July-August *Herald*. There, indeed, in the familiar passage (Luke 10:38-42), where Martha appears as the practical, bustling housewife, and Mary as the devout, contemplative disciple who chooses "the one thing needful," -- the contrast, which is summarized in one brief incident, is direct, and with the evident intent on the part of the writer, that we should regard Mary as the one possessing those traits of character most worthy of emulating.

Here, in the eleventh chapter of John, this contrast is also to be noted. But instead of it being direct, it is developed gradually. As the beloved Apostle John unfolds his story, the distinctive characters of the sisters are seen, not so much in contrast, as blending into each other. He does not forget to mention that both are loved by our Lord (John 11:5); that they each show deep sorrow for the loss of their brother; that they both send to the Lord for help, and both alike express their faith in him. And yet, notwithstanding this, "the difference of character," as the eminent scholar, Lightfoot, has observed, "is perceptible throughout the narrative. It is Martha who, with her restless activity, goes out to meet Jesus, while Mary remains in the house weeping. It is Martha who holds a conversation with Jesus, questions him, remonstrates with him, and in the very crisis of their grief shows her practical commonsense in deprecating the removal of the stone. It is Mary who goes forth silently to meet him, silently and tearfully, so that the bystanders suppose her to

be going to weep at her brother's tomb; who, when she sees Jesus, falls down at his feet; who, uttering the same words of faith in his power as Martha, does not qualify them with the reservation. In all this narrative the evangelist does not once direct attention to the contrast between the two sisters. He simply relates the events of which he was an eyewitness, without a comment. But the two were real, living persons, and therefore the difference of character between them develops itself in action."

IF THOU HADST BEEN HERE

Under the impulse of her devotion, Mary, as soon as she had heard the message, arose quickly and left the house. The formal sympathizers, who were gathered there, watched her departure, but not knowing the reason, assumed that she was going to the grave to weep there, and decided to follow her. Such, however, was not Mary's intention. The music of her Master's name and the word that he was near, and wished to see her, brought joy to her heart, and she sought his presence, there to obtain the strength and comfort which only he could give.

When she reached Jesus, she fell down at his feet, saying, in the identical words used by Martha, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." But, as already noted, there was no attempt on her part to discuss her grief. Her action, in falling at his feet, itself expressed the urgency of her prayer.* Moreover, in the few moments that elapsed before the professional mourners arrived, she was apparently so overcome by emotion, that conversation was impossible.

* See Mark 5:22, 23 for a parallel case, in proof of this.

Jesus, who loved both Martha and Mary, was well aware of their differences in temperament, and adapted himself to them. With the one, he was able to enter into a discussion - to lead Martha's lively, but not too enlightened, faith in the *doctrine* of the resurrection, to faith in *himself*, as the one in whom was life, and through whom resurrection and life should come; to the sensitive spirit of Mary, on the other hand, he responds with silence, joining his tears with hers. Scholars tell us that the word translated "wept" in "Jesus wept" (John 11:35), is not the same as the word twice translated "weeping" in John 11:33. There the meaning is "sobs," but here "tears" are to be understood; it is the expression for a calm and gentle sorrow.

THE SYMPATHIZING JESUS

This text, which shows our Lord to be the "Sympathizing Jesus," is held by some critics to furnish proof that the entire narrative of the raising of Lazarus is spurious. Such maintain that since Jesus knew he was soon to bring Lazarus back to life, he could not have shed genuine tears, or experienced sincere sorrow. Certain it is that if John's Gospel, instead of being the inspired Word of God, were merely the result of speculative thought, as some claim, it would not have contained John 11:35. Jesus, as the true Logos, with nothing human except the outward appearance, would have raised his friend with triumphant looks and unmoistened eyes. But those who hold such views fail to appreciate the significance of John's earlier statement that "the Word was made *flesh*" (John 1:14). As one able writer has remarked: "It is not with a heart of stone that the dead are raised." To us there is real significance in the fact that the very Gospel in which the divine Sonship of Jesus is most clearly asserted, is also the one which makes us best acquainted with the profoundly human side of his life.

Jesus' tears were occasioned, first, out of sympathy for the bereaved -- not merely for those then present, but for the suffering borne by the entire human family, since the reign of sin and death

began. Reflect, if you will, on the number of breaking hearts there are, throughout the wide world, and on how loud the wail of suffering humanity, could we but hear it! Bethany processions, pacing with slow and measured step, to deposit their earthly all, in the cold custody of the tomb. Then, too, his tears would flow, as he thought of the triumphs effected by the enemy, death. The body of man, pronounced "very good" in the case of Adam, father of the race, is now ruined, and resolved into a mass of humiliating dust. What must have been his reflections, as he thought of men as they had now become - devastated wrecks, moldering in dissolution and decay, with Satan sitting, as it were, in regal state, holding high holiday over a vassal world! Again, he was about to perform his greatest miracle, and yet knew that while some of its witnesses would believe, many then and later would despise him, and discount his work -- yea, would even connive with others to put him to death. It should not surprise us to read that "Jesus wept."

TAKE YE AWAY THE STONE

To the tears of Jesus, the reaction of those present was twofold. There were those who said feelingly, "Behold, how he loved him"; while others said cynically, "If he loved him so much, why did he let him die?"

They have now reached the grave. It was a rocky sepulcher. A flat stone lay upon the mouth of it. "Jesus said, Take ye away the stone." - John 11:39.

Here Martha voices an objection: "Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days." It seems clear from these words that Martha was not anticipating the miracle the Master purposed. Evidently she supposed that our Lord's only reason for opening the tomb was to look one last time on Lazarus. This, however, will be no consolation to her, now. Moreover, as the dead man's sister, she would quite naturally shrink from seeing the ravages of death upon one so dear to her. Nor would it assuage her sister's grief, or that of Jesus. Both for his sake, therefore, and for Mary's as well as for her own, and for the sake of others present, Martha recoils from the thought of such a painful exposure.

However, in response to her objection, Jesus gently recalls his earlier promise: "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" - John 11:40.

Many expositors understand our Lord to be referring to the conversation he had with Martha, recorded in John 11:21-27. And, indeed, his words "if thou wouldest believe" (John 11:40), do remind us of expressions to be found in that passage. But the expression, "the glory of God," prominent in John 11:40, is absent from John 11:21-27, whereas it forms the salient feature of John 11:4. Evidently, then, it was the promise in John 11:4, of which Jesus now reminds Martha. He well knew that it had been reported to the two sisters by their messenger, Hence the expression: "Said I not unto thee," stands for: "Did I not send thee word?"

This Bethany utterance has a voice reaching down through the Age, to our own day. Ofttimes the Lord lets our need attain its extremity, that his intervention may appear the more signal. He permits his own promises to apparently fail, that he may test the faith of his waiting people; tutor them to "hope against hope," and to find in unanswered prayers and baffled expectations only a fresh reason for clinging to his all-powerful arm and frequenting his mercy seat.

FATHER, I THANK THEE THAT THOU HAST HEARD ME

The stone being removed from the grave, "Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always" (John 11:41, 42). At first glance these words may seem strange, yet when we recall that the two previous days had been spent by our Lord in seclusion, in the wilderness of Perea, it is not difficult to realize that he had there received assurance from his Father that the great moment was at hand for him to manifest the power of God in resurrection life. Having this assurance, and being full of faith and of the holy spirit, Jesus now offers thanks to his Father in advance of the miracle.

This is the ideal set before us in our prayers at the throne of grace. May it be ours, truthfully to take upon our lips these words of the Master, and speak them in the ears of God: "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." It is most *difficult* for us to emulate the Lord in this way, for well we know that our faith, at times, is weak and faltering. Yet the lesson surely is that we should strive to reach that condition of "the perfect man in Christ Jesus" whereby we pray with full assurance of faith and hope, and in believing prayer, give thanks to our Father in advance of the desired blessing.

LAZARUS, COME FORTH

Now the great moment has arrived. Every eye is fixed on Jesus. What will he do? Eyes are strained; necks craned; every one is watching in silence. Then comes his authoritative voice: "Lazarus, come forth." At the word of command, "he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes; and his face bound about with a napkin." Again comes the calm voice of Jesus: "Loose him, and let him go." Thus, in simplicity and yet with wondrous grace, Jesus performed his greatest miracle, to the glory of God, and as an illustration of the power which he will exercise, when he comes in the power and glory of his Kingdom.

How beautiful is this illustration! Lazarus, it is very apparent, had been really dead for four days. Now he is awakened from the sleep of death. (Not brought back from heaven, purgatory, or hell, but from the unconscious, death condition, in which, he had known nothing. - Eccl. 9:5.) "Marvel not at this," said our Lord in another place, "for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his [Jesus'] voice, and shall come forth" (John 5:28). In that day, the Word of the Lord will not be obscure, or corrupted by false teachers, or by Satan's counterfeits. Instead, no evil shall be there; no dangerous errors to fall over, no sickness, sorrow, pain, or death, and, as Isaiah puts it: "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Isa. 32:17). "Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

(To be concluded in next issue)

The Question Box

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." - Isaiah 7:14.

Question:

What is the lesson to be drawn from Isaiah 7:14?

Answer:

The lesson, as I see it, is in reference to the birth of Jesus -- a lesson concerning the great Messiah; a lesson for all times and for all people.

DUAL FULFILMENTS

Some prophecies, however, have more than one fulfilment. Isaiah 7:14 is one such. Failure to recognize this constitutes one of the main difficulties confronting the student of prophecy. One school of thought notes an early application, but is not able to see a later (usually higher) fulfilment. This is particularly true of orthodox Jews-and perhaps especially in their understanding of Isaiah 7:14. Another school of thought, Christian in concept, sees the higher fulfilment, but is not always able to recognize any earlier application.

In the study of any prophecy having, or which appears to possess, a predictive* character, it is important to obtain first an understanding of its immediate application; in other words, it is necessary to ascertain what it meant to the writer and those to whom he wrote. What was its meaning to *them*? Only after *this* question has been satisfactorily answered are we in a position to properly grasp the later application (or applications).

* While all prophecies "tell forth," not all "foretell."

Let us look at a few illustrations of this. Consider, for example, Hosea 11:1. There we read: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Quite obviously, this has reference to the infant nation of Israel and its deliverance from the hand of Pharaoh. No orthodox Jew could fail to recognize this. Yet Christians, under the guidance of the New Testament, see that it has reference not only to the coming of Israel out of Egypt, but also to the coming of Jesus out of Egypt centuries later. (Matt. 2:15, 19, 20.) Moreover, guided by the holy spirit, the passage is seen by Christians to have yet another significance -the coming of spiritual Israel (the Gospel-Age Church) out of that which Egypt typifies, namely, the world (its aims, ambitions, associations, spirit).

Again, when David, in Psalm 22, wrote: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he was without doubt writing concerning himself. Most people, unacquainted with the New Testament, could come to no other conclusion. Yet *we* know that the Lord was overruling David's choice of words so as to make him speak prophetically of the Messiah who was to come. - Matt. 27:46.

Take the words of Isaiah 61:1:

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings." Here Isaiah, of course, could have reference only to himself and his ministry. But he was a prophet through whom God spoke. (2 Pet. 1:21.) Consequently his words were such that they

could be predictive. Jesus himself shows that they were, when in Luke 4:21, he applied them to himself and his ministry: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." While, therefore, we know that there was *a measure* of fulfilment in Isaiah and his ministry, it is not difficult for us to recognize that only in Jesus are the words filled to the full.

JESUS BORN OF A VIRGIN

Returning now to Isaiah 7:14: As already noted, this prophecy appears to have had a dual fulfilment. It foretold an event shortly to occur, namely the birth of a son to a woman who was then a virgin, and the birth of whose son, therefore, could be known only to God; hence an event which could be recognized by King Ahaz as a sign that God would be with him and with the nation. The words employed in the prophecy, however, were such that they described also a future glorious event, even the birth of Jesus of a woman who should appropriately be called *the* virgin, and who should remain so at the time of his birth. If the name Immanuel (God with us) was appropriately given to the boy in Isaiah's day, how much more fittingly might it be given to Jesus! He filled the prediction full. At the time of his birth, Mary, his mother, was a virgin, and he had no earthly father -- Joseph being his foster father. As the angel Gabriel, in answer to Mary's question as to how it could be that she should have a son in view of the fact that she was a virgin, replied (RSV): "The holy spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God." - Luke 1:35.

CORROBORATIVE SCRIPTURE

When we meditate for a moment on the virgin birth of Jesus, many corroborative Scriptures come rushing to mind. We recall, for example, the Baptist's testimony recorded in John 3:31: "He that cometh, from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all." Here the Baptist is contrasting himself with Jesus. How shall he find appropriate words! "After the flesh" he was his cousin, yet it is evident that he regards Jesus as a being of another order, as standing on quite a different platform from his own. He can find no words strong enough to mark the difference between himself and Jesus. Jesus is "from above" -- "from heaven." I am "of the earth," and "speak of the earth." Jesus said of him that he was a burning and a shining light; John, however, knew himself to be unworthy to loose the Lord's shoe-latchet. While the Baptist is not discussing the "virgin birth," his words certainly do not conflict with that doctrine.

Let us look next at the disciples' words found in John 16:19, 30: "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb [parable] . . . now we are sure that thou camest forth from God."

These words were the response of the disciples to a very clear utterance of our Lord, to which he had given expression in the immediately preceding verse: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father." Of what other member of the human race could these words be truthfully spoken?

But "the time would fail me" to list all the Scriptures which come to mind. Peter's reference to "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19) -- surely this would require a virgin birth! Job's inquiry: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" (Job 14: 4)-a question which had only a negative answer in his day. The description of our Lord given by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners"; the Apostle John's reference to Jesus as the "only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14); as the "Word of God" (John 1:1); the "Word made flesh" (John 1:14); St. Paul telling us of one who "though being in God's form yet did not meditate a usurpation to be like God" (Phil. 2:6); who "was rich, but for

our sakes became poor" (2 Cor. 8:9) these all mark Jesus as one apart, who though he took our human nature, and though he was in all points tempted as we (his brethren) are tempted, was "yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15).

In writing a biography, it is customary to trace a man's career "from the cradle to the grave." In the case of Jesus one must go back further than the cradle and continue on beyond the grave. One must go back "to the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14) to find the origin of the "Only Begotten One," (John 1:14) the "Firstborn of all creation." (Col. 1:15.) Only from *that* beginning may we trace the circumstances whereby a clean thing was brought out of an unclean -- a root out of a dry ground; a perfect man out of the imperfect, contaminate race. This was accomplished by a miracle. The mighty Logos became flesh -- being born of a virgin.

WHY IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH IMPORTANT?

The doctrine that Jesus was born of a virgin, rightly understood, is of great importance to both the Church and the world. Had Jesus derived his life from an earthly father, the quality of that life would have been no different from ours. Ours was contaminated at the fountainhead, *in* Father Adam. So also would have been the life of Jesus. It would have been a dying one, just as ours. Receiving only such a life, he would have been on his way, willy-nilly, to the grave -- just as we are. His death would not have been a voluntary one, but one from which he could not escape. He would thus have been without power to save us; he would not have had the wherewithal to save even himself.

But when, in the fulness of the time, God sent forth his Son made of a woman (Gal. 4:4), it was not a case of an earthly father passing on to him a spark of a dying life. No, indeed! It was as Jesus himself declared: "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." - John 8:42.

An inspired writer puts the matter succinctly: "Such an high priest *became us*"; that is to say, such an high priest was appropriate to the necessities of our case; namely, one who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). Only such an one as he could have saved us. Praise God that he and his Father had the heart to do so.

EMMANUEL - GOD WITH US

This is the great message of the New Testament to the Church, and eventually to the world: Emmanuel, God with us. God was with his ancient people, and spoke to them often and unmistakably by the mouth of his Prophets. He was there in the burning bush, in the Shekinah of the tabernacle, and in the pillar of cloud and of fire, as well as in the Angel of Jehovah, whom many believe was the pre-human Logos. But he came into new and closer relationship when he sent his Son, and when he, the mighty Logos, became flesh. Jesus Christ was "God made manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16); he was so true and adequate a manifestation of God; so at one with the Father (in purpose and in spirit-not in person) that he could truthfully say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9.) This was a fulfilment of the prophecy, "God with us," indeed -- nay, it was *the* fulfilment, before which the earlier one fades into relative insignificance.

"God is with us" in the life of the Church, for Jesus laid its foundations in his blood, and became himself its cornerstone and the bishop of our souls. "God is with us" in our personal experiences, for Christ Jesus is our Brother and Savior, our refuge under the consciousness of sin, our strength in temptations, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, with the Psalmist we say "We will not

fear," whatever may be our present lot, and whatever may befall us. "God is with us" under our present burden, and in the unknown events of the future. "God is with us" *in* life, in death, in time, and in eternity. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me." "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." - Psalms 23, 46, 73.

- P. L. Read.

The Evidence Concerning a Disputed Text

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."
- Revelation 20:5.

(Omitted by the Sinaitic Ms.)

THERE is considerable difference of opinion regarding the above text. Some writers who deal with Bible prophecy consider the clause an important one, and cite it as proof that the world of mankind will be called from the tomb a thousand years after the saints are raised from the dead at our Lord's second coming. The noted writer, H. Grattan Guinness, says emphatically: "This passage then teaches that the resurrection of the dead will take place in two stages, with a thousand years between. Taken in its apparent, most natural, and consistent meaning, nothing else can be made of it." (*The Approaching End of the Age*, Horne's edition, page 63.)

The view just stated denies that the masses of mankind, condemned in Adam but redeemed by Christ, will be awakened from the sleep of death *during* the thousand years of our Lord's reign on earth with his saints; it denies that those thousand years will be the world's time of probation (judgment) and restoration of all the obedient (Acts 3:19-21). On the other hand, many students of the Bible who hold this "larger hope," question the right of the text at the head of this article to be considered a part of the inspired record, because of its omission by certain ancient manuscripts.

THE BASIS OF TEXTUAL REVISION

Students of the Bible are aware that the original (Greek) text of the New Testament has undergone revision due to the discovery of several important manuscripts which are much older than any known in the year 1611, when the King James Version of the Bible was made. Topping the list of these venerable witnesses are three -- the Sinaitic, the Vatican #1209, and the Alexandrine Manuscripts. By those competent to judge, the Sinaitic and Vatican are assigned to the fourth century, and the Alexandrine to the fifth. Some students possess the so-called *Tischendorf New Testament*, which gives, as footnotes, the most important readings of these three manuscripts, where they differ from the King James Version. Many other important Greek mss. are also available for use by textual critics of the New Testament, some of them being almost as old as the three named above, and some papyri which are deemed as old as the Sinaitic or the Vatican, and even a century or two older. Second in importance to these Greek mss. are some in other languages into which the Scriptures were translated in the early Christian centuries, e.g., Latin, Syriac, and Coptic (Egyptian).

These ancient mss., preserved by Providence and made available through the learning and industry of many scholars, are in the main the tools of the textual critic as he endeavors to choose correctly between various readings in the mss., in order to determine (as nearly as possible) the true text of the sacred writings. While there are thousands of variations in the Greek mss., it has been estimated that not more than fifty of them are of any real importance, the vast majority being merely differences in spelling, the order of words, or other trifles. Of the fifty variations only a few can have any bearing on doctrine, and instances in which there is evidence of willful corruption of the text are rare indeed, the most notable of these being the interpolated "three heavenly witnesses" in 1 John 5:7, 8 (cf. the King James and Revised Versions on this passage).

USING THE HELPS PROVIDED

While we recognize that the text of the Bible has suffered somewhat through errors of transcription as the manuscripts have been laboriously copied by scribes (some more careful than others) over the long period before the invention of printing, we realize that in the ancient manuscripts which have been preserved to our time, God has provided the means for detecting and correcting every error of transcription that can affect our faith. How thankful we are for this, and how willing to make use of what the Lord has provided!

Having pointed out in the preceding remarks the nature and purpose of verbal criticism of the Scriptures, the writer proposes to examine the evidence regarding the authenticity of the disputed clause in Revelation 20:5. Having access to some of the more complete works on the Greek text of the Apocalypse (and manuscripts in general) he expects to deal more fully with the subject in hand than is usual. Also, it may be advisable to clarify some expressions used in the past by other writers. Doubtless some students of the Bible, when studying the text, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished, have noted this comment on it in the "Berean Bible Teachers' Manual": "This sentence is not found in the oldest and most reliable mss." Any thoughtful student will ask: "If the clause in question is not found in the oldest and most reliable manuscripts, why is it retained in all modern English versions -- all of them professing to follow a Greek text corrected according to the oldest manuscripts?" To answer that question is one purpose of this article.

The statement quoted from the "Manual is open to question, for the Alexandrine ms. must certainly be included among the oldest and most reliable mss. of the New Testament, and it contains the disputed clause. As has been pointed out, the Sinaitic ms. omits the words, and is the only one of the three famous Mss. that can be said to omit them. For the statement sometimes made that the questionable clause is omitted by the Vatican ms. #1209 is misleading, since that very ancient and valuable witness does not now contain any part of the Book of Revelation. It is a mistake, also, to include the Vatican ms. #1160 among "the oldest and most reliable Greek mss." since it is not one of the old uncials but a late cursive ms. of no special value, assigned by experts to the thirteenth or fourteenth century (Scrivener, Swete, Alford).

It should be pointed out that in seeking to make a right estimate of the value of any manuscript, textual critics consider other things besides the apparent age of the document, e.g., the *care* with which the copyist did his work. Eminent critics rate the Sinaitic Ms. below the Alexandrine in the Apocalypse, because of its many errors and omissions in that Book. Scholars explain many omissions in manuscripts as cases of *homoeoteleuton* -- a Greek word meaning "like ending." This means that "when two lines or sentences end with the same word, the intervening words were often unconsciously overlooked and omitted." A good example of the omission of a clause due to "like ending" may be seen in 1 John 2:23, where the omitted clause has been supplied from the oldest manuscripts. There is an apparent omission of a clause due to "like ending" in the

Sinaitic Ms. in Revelation 18:22. The last clause of the verse was inadvertently omitted by the scribe because the preceding clause ended with the same words. Here the Sinaiticus is not supported by any uncial manuscript, but the clause is lacking in a few cursives, including the Vatican X1160.

TWO KINDS OF TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

Scholars who edit the text of the Scriptures in the original languages weigh two kinds of evidence in seeking to determine the true reading in passages where various readings exist. The first and more important of the two is that known as the *external* evidence. In the case of the New Testament this term takes in such documentary evidence as is found in (1) the older Greek mss. including a few very ancient papyri; (2) the translations made in the early Christian centuries into the Latin, Syriac, Coptic, and other languages, manuscripts of which still exist; and (3) quotations of the Scriptures in early-Christian writers known as Greek or Latin Fathers. Of these three sources of evidence the first is by far the most important to the textual critic. We ask, Where do the old Greek manuscripts stand with respect to the clause "But the rest of the dead lived not again," etc.? The answer is, Their evidence is neither unanimous nor decisive on one side or the other. To sum up briefly, only seven of the oldest (i.e., uncial) Mss. contain the Apocalypse complete or in part, and of that number only three have Revelation 20:5 and can be legitimately cited as either exhibiting or omitting the disputed clause.

Of the three uncials upon which chiefly our present knowledge must rest, the clause in question is omitted by the Sinaitic of the fourth century, but is found in the Alexandrine of the fifth century and in the uncial 046 of the eighth century. From this it appears that the evidence of the old Greek mss. regarding the clause is inconclusive, the words being omitted by the oldest of those three, but being found in the Alexandrine which (in the Apocalypse) competent textual critics rate above the Sinaitic Ms. Due to this latter circumstance and the context of Revelation 20:5, which admittedly is favorable to a transcriptional error of omission on account of "like ending," all modern editors of the Greek New Testament (with one notable exception) have retained the questionable clause in the text, believing it to be genuine. Among them, Tischendorf who discovered the Sinaitic ms. and considered it the oldest and most reliable of all the Greek mss., called its omission of the clause "a mere error" of the scribe. The foregoing explains, we trust, why the disputed clause is retained by almost all editors and is found in all English Versions in general use. It is retained on the grounds of *external* evidence, as that is evaluated by most textual critics.

THE USE OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE

In resolving some problems respecting the original text, particularly in those instances in which the manuscript evidence is about evenly divided between certain variant readings, another and a different kind of evidence may be used effectively. This is known as the *internal* evidence of the text. Considering the claims of two or more variant readings to the right to a place in the text, each about equally attested in the best manuscripts, the editor inquires, Which one of these readings best suits the context? Obviously this method involves some degree of subjectivism and the decision will tend to vary according to the thinking of the individual critic. Nevertheless, it is generally admitted that the judicious use of internal evidence can bring sound results, and is an important tool of the textual critic. However, this method is not to be confused with mere conjectural emendation, which has little regard for external evidence.

As indicated above, the writer knows of only one editor of the Greek text of the Revelation who does not admit the disputed clause into the text. It is a case of one scholar dissenting from the

prevailing opinion, and justifying his position by the internal evidence of the text. We refer to the two-volume work on *"The Revelation of St. John"* by Dr. R. H. Charles, in the ICC series of commentaries. In editing the Greek text of the Apocalypse this scholar omits the disputed clause of 20:5, considering it an interpolation. In his textual notes the author shows that there is important manuscript evidence both for the omission of the clause and for its retention in the sacred text, but he also cites the internal evidence as being strongly against the genuineness of the clause. He points out that this clause does not fit naturally into the context, but it breaks up the order of thought, and that it lacks a connective word which would be expected in the Greek (the word "but" is not in the mss.). . The scholar further argues that the clause, "This is the first resurrection" would more naturally follow a positive statement than the negative one which precedes it in the ordinary text. We will concede that the arguments advanced by Dr. Charles from the internal evidence are weighty, and justify the omission of the questionable clause from the text, seeing that the manuscript evidence is about evenly divided for and against it.

This is clearly another case where some one's comment, written on the margin of a manuscript, was inadvertently written into the text by a copyist. This must have happened no later than the fifth century, the spurious clause being found in the Alexandrine Ms., as well as in many of later date. It appears reasonably certain that the absence of the clause from the Sinaitic Ms., from over twenty later Greek manuscripts, and from the Syriac Version, was not due to a copyist's error on account of "like ending"-as the majority of editors appear to have too readily assumed.

- *W. A. Eliason*

Hitherto and Henceforth

A brief report from our Directors

USUALLY the Annual Report of Directors is presented to the Institute members at their Annual Meeting, before being published in the *Herald*. However, in 1972, circumstances were such as to make it difficult to hold the Institute's Annual Meeting on June 3, the date scheduled. As a result, the Meeting was postponed until 1973. Meantime, in order that the Institute's members, and indeed all *Herald* readers, may be informed, we submit, in the following paragraphs, a brief report of the Institute's ministry for the past year, together with our plans for its future, if the Lord will.

HITHERTO

In some respects the year now ending was one of the most difficult experienced during the 54 years of the Institute's ministry. This was due, largely, to the declining health, and in one instance, to the passing, of brethren who had hitherto served full time in the Institute's ministry. Yet if there is one word that could be selected, that would best describe the sentiment of all our staff, it would be the word "Ebenezer" -- *"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."* - 1 Sam. 7:12.

Each year, as we report the Institute's activities of the past twelve months, it is with an increased realization of the evidences, both in the world and in the Church, that the Kingdom for which we pray is near at hand. How apropos then, our Master's exhortation to lift up our heads (Luke 21:28). In this realization, too, the words of the Apostle take on a deeper significance: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." - Rom. 13:12.

THE INSTITUTE'S POLICY

In view of the fact that a number of our readers have only recently become acquainted with us, it may not be amiss to restate here the principles for which the Institute has consistently stood from its inception in 1918. According to its charter, it was organized for "the dissemination of Bible truths by means of the publication of tracts, pamphlets, papers, and other lawful means which its Board of Directors, duly constituted, shall deem expedient for the furtherance of the purposes stated." In emphasizing the principles of liberty, fellowship, and unity of all consecrated believers in Christ, we believe that we are not only conforming to the teaching of the Lord Jesus and his Apostles, but are also adhering to the spirit of our late Pastor's ministry. He, too, emphasized that to walk in the footsteps of the Master to the extent of one's ability constituted the one requirement for Christian fellowship (not the many ramifications of doctrine which mistaken human wisdom holds should be applied as tests of fellowship).

Our Institute is not a church organization. Moreover, it does not now exercise, nor has it ever exercised, supervision over any Bible Class. It is, however, pleased with every privilege of service granted it, rejoicing to be the servant of the Lord's brethren in any detail, however minor it may be. Furthermore, it rejoices to report that it remains today what it was originally formed to be -- a group of brethren voluntarily associated for mutual comfort and assistance, brought together by a unity of spirit, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." - Eph. 4:3.

THE HERALD

Encouraging reports reach us that the *Herald* continues to be used of the Lord for the spiritual comfort and strength of many. It has been especially encouraging to receive testimonials from distant lands, and to mark the hunger for the light of God's Word. Who but the Lord can measure the spiritual benefits resulting from this expansion of *The Herald's* testimony?

At the close of the Fiscal Year the total number of *Herald* subscribers' was 10,856 (slightly less than at the end of the previous year).

THE PILGRIM MINISTRY

Last year, in writing our report on this branch of our ministry, we said, amongst other things:

"Just what the future holds for us, in this branch of the Institute's ministry, we are not presently able to say. For the last couple of years the number of brethren serving full time in the Pilgrim service has been reduced to three, namely, Brothers Essler, Muir, and John T. Read. It seems clear that, for reasons of health, their own and/or their immediate relatives, it will become mandatory for each of these three brethren to substantially reduce their labors in this direction."

This forecast, written in October 1971, proved only too true.

On March 27, 1972, it pleased the Lord to permit Brother Muir's earthly pilgrimage to come to an end.

More than a year ago, Brother John T. Read, owing to physical disabilities, was compelled to withdraw from the Pilgrim Ministry in which, for so long, he had been engaged.

More recently, Brother Essler, also for reasons of health, has found it necessary to decline appointments very far from his home base.

Obviously our Pilgrim Ministry the past year was necessarily greatly curtailed from what it had been in previous years.

HENCEFORTH

So much for the year just ending. Now a word as to future plans.

Our Directors are unanimous in the belief that the course which would be most pleasing to the Lord, would be for us to "henceforth" continue the same ministries in which we have "hitherto" been engaged. He would have us, we think, expand those ministries, or contract them, depending on the resources, personnel, financial, etc., he was pleased to send us.

Ours continues to be a walk by faith and not by sight. This being true, we shall, as hitherto, be much in prayer for the Lord's guidance -- watching thereunto; -- and we earnestly solicit our readers to continue to join their prayers with ours, that the Lord's leadings may be clearly discerned.

Your brethren in the Master's service,
Board of Directors
By: *J. B. Webster*, Chairman

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1972

(1) Balance Sheet as of April 30, 1972

Assets

Cash in Bank		\$ 4,417.92
Accounts Receivable		292.37
Prepaid Expense		650.00
Inventory of Books, etc.:		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan	(1,395)	\$1,395.00
Revelation Exposition-Vol. 2	(139)	208.00
Miscellaneous Items		<u>535.60</u>
Total Inventory		<u>2,139.10</u>
Total Assets		\$7,499.39
Liabilities		<u>None .</u>
Net Worth (as per Analysis below)		\$7,499.39

(2) Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth
Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1972

Income

Contributions		\$18,376.54
Herald Subscriptions		10,856.00
Legacies		<u>3,697.82</u>
Total Income		\$32,930.36

Operating Expense

Pilgrim Expense	\$ 9,873.69	
Herald Expense Including Printing, Mailing and Clerical	18,401.80	
Free Literature	4,951.53	
Administrative and Office Expense	<u>1,265.61</u>	
Total Operating Expense		<u>34,492.63</u>
Net Expense for Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1972		\$ 1,562.27
Net Worth, May 1, 1971		<u>9,061.66</u>
Net Worth, April 30, 1972 (as per Balance Sheet above)		\$ 7,499.39

Entered Into Rest

Alfred Banas, Scoffs Valley, Cal.
Ann Brooks, Philadelphia, Pa.
Rilla Ferge, Wausau, Wis.
Roxana Glass, Elmer, N.J.
Nicholas Leoliodis, Milwaukee, Wis.
John McCauley, Regina, Sask., Can.
Ethel Nosby, Minneapolis, Minn.
Drury R. Roper, Corpus Christi, Tex.
Ben J. Sammons, Kettering, Ohio
Katherine C. Schumaker, Paradise, Cal.
Henry W. Schwarek, Saginaw, Mich.
Rose Spinnato, New London, Conn.
Pearl Vining, Chanute, Kan.