

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## A Meditation for Whitsuntide

*"If by any means I may advance to the earlier resurrection which is from among the dead." - Phil 3:11 (Rotherham)*

WHITSUNTIDE has been observed for many centuries by many Christians as the memorial of the day of Pentecost, which occurred fifty days after the resurrection of our Lord.

On that day the Holy Spirit descended upon the early disciples in "tongues of fire," as a visible sign of their setting apart to the service of God, and of the beginning of a new life within them, wherein they should "walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Not since that day has the Spirit been visibly bestowed; yet every true child of God is aware that he has received the same begetting. "You have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye all know it." - (1 John 2:20).

What is the purpose of this begetting? What is the meaning of the gift, and what is the intent of Him who bestows it? Is it that the recipient might "speak with tongues," or that he should thenceforth have an access to an excess of emotional religious fervor? Nay; it is of far greater significance and consequences.

Jesus, in His patient effort to make clear to the Jewish ruler Nicodemus some of the things of the spirit world, told him that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This statement seems basic and clear. It may be logically expanded to say: "That which is begotten of the flesh will be born [if not stillborn] a being of flesh; that which is begotten of the Spirit will be born [if it comes to birth] a spirit-being." The birth follows the begetting, and partakes of its nature.

In the same conversation Jesus explained that those "born of the Spirit" have powers of action and of invisibility to human perception totally unknown to man. "The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with every one who has been born of the Spirit."

"God is a spirit"; "heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool. The nature, laws, and conditions of the spirit world are vastly different from those of the earth. In the one particular of temperature the

physicists and astronomers tell us that the universe has a range of tens of thousands of degrees Fahrenheit; our human life can endure a variation of 'barely' one hundred fifty degrees. We cannot conceive of life existing at four hundred degrees below zero, or at ten thousand degrees above; yet the spirit world has joyful existence under these and other inconceivable conditions,

If we were planning to move our residence to, say, Africa or Australia, we should try to learn all we could about life there-in fact to *go there in our minds* and so prepare ourselves for our new environment. We would commence our new life there *in anticipation*; and that is exactly what the pentecostal begetting of the Spirit is-the mental seed-planting of a new spirit-life; a "lively hope," or new hope of life. To this embryonic spirit-life such various Scriptures refer as: "a new creature"; "the renewing [literally, up-newing] of your mind"; "walking in newness of life"; "set your affections on things above"; etc.

"There is a physical body, and there is a spirit body." The change from one to the other, tremendous as it is, is a mere detail to the power with which the begotten one has to do. The actual operation is dismissed in the Scriptures in a few sentences. "He giveth it a body as it pleaseth Him." "He will change the body of our humiliation into the likeness of His own glorious body." Moreover, this change will be accomplished instantaneously, "in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye."

But the mental, moral, and emotional transformation from the human to the spirit nature is a far more complicated and lengthy process, and requires the candidate's full, continuous, and careful cooperation. Practically the whole of the New testament is devoted to describing, facilitating, and inspiring this process. It requires rigid self-abnegation, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice, that is, of the human self. "The flesh-desires oppose the spirit, and the spirit-desires oppose the flesh, for these are contrary to each other; that not whatsoever things ye may be *wishing*, these ye should be *doing*." Every sincere candidate for spirit-birth knows this to be true.

What does it mean to us? Are we carefully cherishing and cultivating that flame of life that we have received, or are we permitting "the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches" to "quench the Spirit"? Are we "putting to death the deeds of the body" that we may live; or are we "living after the flesh," which is mortal-"death-doomed"? Are we "giving ourselves wholly to these things, that our profit may be manifest to all," as the Apostle advised his "beloved son" Timothy? Are we cultivating and bringing forth in our lives the ripening "fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering," etc.; or are the "works of the flesh" still all too manifest in our relationships-family, church, business? Is our love like God's sunshine and rain, universal and impartial-"perfect," as Jesus admonished us it should be; or is it sectional (sectional) -- only for those who agree with us?

These are practical questions, of supreme importance. They should be addressed, in all seriousness, to ourselves. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be, in the faith"-not a creed, but the confidence and reliance in and upon the Lord, with reason on your part for Him to have faith in *you*. "Prove ye yourselves. Or do ye not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?"

For "if we examine ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are corrected, that we may not be condemned with the world."

"Quench not the Spirit."

- H. E. Hollister

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(Note: Scriptural quotations in the foregoing article follow the text of the three oldest Greek MSS., and the literal renderings of the Emphatic Diaglott, Rotherham, and Strong's Greek Dictionary.)



## **"Christ in You, the Hope of Glory"**

*"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my tone; for I stand in doubt of you." - Galatians 4:19, 20.*

THE wealth of God's wonderful favor to the Church. of Christ is briefly comprehended in that one expression of the Apostle Paul, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Christ in you is the only Scriptural foundation for that good hope of the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. If Christ be not formed in you, then indeed is your hope vain, no matter how much truth or how many advantages you may possess. The object of giving the truth is not to satisfy mere idle curiosity, but to sanctify us wholly; and if it does not accomplish this result, the knowledge of it is only the stronger condemnation against us.

In writing to the congregation of believers who had received the truth from Paul with gladness and all readiness of mind, the Apostle, as the above text indicates, was obliged to change his tone or manner of expression toward them, because their vacillating course since receiving the truth proved to him that the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the truth was not yet formed in them. And therefore he here represents his work among and for them as that of a mother in the first stages of gestation, travailling in painful and laborious effort until the new being is formed. When the "new creature" is once definitely formed, the process of development, as illustrated in the development of the natural fetus, is less laborious and distressing; yet there is labor and anxiety all the way to those whose care over the Church, like Paul's, is akin to that of motherhood, until the new creature is actually born at the resurrection. After the new creature is formed, if there be no mishap, no miscarriage, there will in due time be the birth of a glorious being, of the divine nature, in the likeness of our glorious head; and great will be the joy then of all such as have taken the motherly interest in the formation and development of the Christian character of these called and faithful and chosen.

### **THE TIME OF QUICKENING**

There comes a time during the period of natural gestation, shortly after the formation of the new creature, when life begins to manifest itself in activity. This manifestation of activity is called the quickening. If this quickening never takes place, the sure indication is that whatever of dormant life there may have been is becoming or has already become extinct, and the birth of the new living creature will therefore never take place unless the dying embryo can in some way be resuscitated and brought to the quickening stage.

This is precisely what Paul was endeavoring with much carefulness and painstaking to do for the Church. They had received the truth with gladness, and Paul was for a time greatly beloved among them as a messenger of the truth. But very soon after, they lost confidence in the truth and were speedily drifting into error-the: error of trusting to the law covenant of God for salvation instead of humbly depending on Christ alone, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" -- that trusteth in him.

The cause of this instability and sudden turning' away from the truth on the part of the Church is clearly intimated in the above text. It was because Christ was not formed in them. Although they had been begotten by the word: of truth, the new germ of spiritual being had not yet progressed even to the definite formation of Christian character which manifests its existence and life in activity; they had not reached the quickening stage, although it was high time that such indication

of life should appear in them. Therefore said the Apostle, "I desire to be present with you now, and to change my tone; for I stand in doubt of you." Ah! instead of the joyful tone, proclaiming the good tidings of the grace of God to them, as formerly, it must now be the tone of reproof, of warning, and of exhortation.

### VALUE OF FIXED DETERMINATION

But let us inquire more particularly what it is to have Christ' formed in us. It is not merely to have a knowledge of Christ and of the Divine Plan which God is working out through him; it is not merely to have an admiration for his character and glory, or a desire to share his glory in the day of his manifestation; it is not merely to talk loudly of the truth, nor to make long prayers, nor to wear solemn faces and make loud professions of holiness. This is the negative answer to the question, but what is the affirmative? We answer, It is to have a Christlike character distinctly formed in us as a result of the begetting power of the truth and of the exceeding great and precious promises inspiring in us *love* to God and to all his creatures; *faith* in his sure word of promise and in his ability and willingness to accomplish all his purposes; *obedience*, or full consecration to the will of God at any cost to self, and a fixed determination ever to abide by his expressed will; and *zeal*, which makes manifest this disposition of heart in activity for the accomplishment of the purposes of God, in so far as the Scriptures inform us that human agency can affect them. These fundamental principles of Christian character -- love, faith, obedience, and zeal -- must be *established* before the new creature can be said to exist at all. And if they are thus established, God has provided the conditions necessary to their gradual growth and development until, in due time, the new creature is born into full perfection and glory of the divine nature.

If these principles of the Christian character are not definitely formed, or fixed in us, we will always be vacillating in our faith and obedience, and lacking in love and devotedness to God; and we can therefore have no good hope of the reward of the faithful. If we have merely a little love for God which appreciates but slightly his blessings and promises, and a little faith which indolently says: This good news seems to be true, but I do not exactly know; many smart men read the Bible quite differently and arrive at opposite conclusions; it is difficult to discover which is right and I shall not trouble myself trying to find out, so I have a general charity for all and am *no bigot*; and if we are willing to obey God only so far as it suits our convenience, to trust him as far as we can trace him, and to advance his truth only so far as our indolence will permit us to discover it, and as our temporal interests may be served by it if such be our condition of heart, then *the Christ character is not formed in us*. And though we may have been begotten by the exceeding great and precious promises to a good hope of life in Christ, the germ of the new life is in a dying condition and will never come to the birth unless it can be resuscitated and developed to the actual formation of the Christ character, which always manifests itself in loving zeal for the Lord's cause -- for the advancement of his truth and the upbuilding of his consecrated ones.

### EVIDENCES OF THE SHIPWRECKED FAITH

How important, then, that each of those who hope to have a share with Christ in his Kingdom sees to it that his hope is founded upon the fact that Christ is now actually formed in him, and that as evidence of this he has manifestly reached the quickening stage in the process of development, when love, faith, and obedience are all full of activity and zealous in seeking and improving every opportunity for the service of God. If we hear the truth and merely say that we consecrate ourselves to God, and then go on living just like the rest of the world, spending all or nearly all of our time and our means merely for our stomachs, our backs, and the temporal interests of our families and the business pursuits of the present life, what evidence have we that we are quickened, that the Christ character is formed in us, or that the hope of glory is ours? Many seem

to make this mistake, and the evidences of the shipwrecked faith of many such, lie all about us; but, thank God! the evidence of faithfulness -- of the actual formation and development of Christian character -- is also apparent in the quickened zeal of many. And it is a noteworthy fact that those whose mortal bodies are thus quickened in the service of the truth have the clearest perception and discernment of truth, and the evil one is unable to touch them with the shafts of error.

Let all who aspire to the inheritance of the saints make sure that they have the Christ character *formed* in them, that the principles so notable in Christ's character are established in them. Let us each see that we do not hinder the development of this character by giving our time, our vitality, our means, etc., to the pursuit of the things of this world. Have you *love*? Is it manifested in fervent zeal for the honor of God, the spread of his truth, and the blessing of his children? Are you seeking and finding opportunities for thus showing the Lord how much you love?

### **FAITH GIVETH THE VICTORY**

Have you *faith*? Is it unmistakably manifested, not merely in profession, but in bold and definite acts of faith? If a million dollars were promised to any man who would walk from Pittsburgh to Buffalo, and a dozen men professed faith in the promise, and yet only one actually started out and walked, the natural and correct inference would be that the other eleven did not have the faith. If they had the faith in such a promise, it would rouse them to activity. And just so, any man who appreciates fully and believes the exceeding great and precious promises of God to the Church, will make haste and run for them; and he will closely observe the directions, too, that he may not run in vain.

And if Christ be formed in him, those established principles of Christian character will hold him firm and steady in the midst of temptations and error, and he will not be easily moved either from the practice of righteousness or from sound Scriptural doctrine. He will demand a "Thus saith the Lord" for every doctrine, and on that sure Word he will dare depend. And the language of his heart as expressed in his daily life will be, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people." "Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever; for they are the rejoicing of my heart." "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."- Psalm 57:7, 9; Psa. 119:111; Jer. 15:16.

While such must be the personal condition of every heir of the Kingdom, the special work of every such one should be to help those begotten by the Word of truth to arrive at this condition of *fixed* and *quickened* Christian character. Be not satisfied, beloved fellow laborers, when those within the range of your influence are merely begotten by the Word of truth, but, by instruction, example, and assistance, labor diligently to have Christ formed in them, the hope of glory; and then, so far as possible, minister also to their further development, that they may eventually be born in the glorious, divine nature.

- C. T. Russell, Reprints R1273

## Resurrection Prospects

*"Our God is a God of salvation; and to God, the Lord, belongs escape from death." - Psa. 68:20, R.S.V.*

These examples (considered in our March-April issues) show how necessary it is to give heed to divine instruction by comparing spiritual things with spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:113), and to remember that "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." - 2 Pet. 1: 20.

This does not mean that no individual should interpret God's Word, but, as Rotherham translates the verse, "No prophecy of Scripture becometh self-solving." Those who have acquired a general knowledge of the Divine Plan of the Ages (Eph. 3:11, *Rotherham*), have a guide that enables them to understand many Scriptures that would otherwise be difficult of explanation, and so are not nearly so apt to stray from truth by some man-made divergent path.

Whereas the word "resurrection" does not occur in the Old Testament writings, yet the doctrine of a resurrection is clearly taught there. Job says:

"Man dieth and wasteth away: yea man giveth up the ghost [Hebrew, *gawvah*, to breathe out . . . expire] and where is he? ... O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave [*sheol*], that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."

What could this mean but the anticipation of a resurrection from the dead?

Again in chapter nineteen, verses twenty-five to twenty-seven, (Job 19:25-27) Job says:

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

If any one of Adam's posterity ever had cause to think there was nothing left in this world to live for, Job was that one. Tormented by his physical ailments-bereft of all worldly possessions -his family destroyed, except for his wife who advised him to curse God and die-and now, the last straw to his endurance -- falsely accused and condemned by friends from whom he had anticipated sympathy and consolation. When Job besought God to hide him in *sheol*, we may be sure he was not asking for additional torment (as many would have us believe is the fate of those who go down into *sheol*). He had experienced all the torment he could stand. What he now desired was rest; and the oblivion to pain and distress of mind that death and the grave insure. But Job knew that God would provide a Redeemer, and that a day would come when resurrection power would restore the willing and obedient of mankind: "Thou wilt call, and I will answer thee."

David likewise, in Psalm sixteen, verse ten, says (Psa. 16:10): "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (*sheol*); neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." In commenting on this, Peter tells us:

"The patriarch David . . . is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." - Acts 2:29-32.

This, therefore, was a prophecy concerning the resurrection of Christ. But Paul's argument in First Corinthians, chapter fifteen, assures us that the resurrection of Christ, is a guarantee that all will be raised. Also in Acts (Acts 24:15), in defending himself against the false accusations of the rulers of the Jews, Paul says, "I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."

All Christians are familiar with that beautiful twenty-third Psalm, wherein David says, "He restoreth my soul. . . . I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." There is a sense in which the souls of the righteous are being restored in this Age, as we shall presently note; but to live in the house of the Lord forever, David's own soul, his own being, will need to be restored from death, and from the power of the grave. That this is precisely what will occur, is proved by the Word of the Lord through Hosea, when he says, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. " - Hosea 13:14.

### **TIME OF THE RESURRECTION**

A point about which many have been confused, is the time of the resurrection. This has been due largely to erroneous beliefs concerning the soul, and what it is that will be resurrected. Obviously, if the soul is immortal -- indestructible, it would not need to be resurrected; for a thing that is already alive, can not be restored to life. Consequently, those who hold this view, if they are consistent, are forced to think of the resurrection as applying only to the body. This would mean that the identical elements or atoms, that once formed the body, would have to be brought together again, that the departed souls might reinhabit them. All will then stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, who will send them back to heaven or hell, but this time in their bodies.

There are of course many absurdities in connection with this view that cannot be harmonized with the Scriptures. To begin with, man is not possessed of or by a soul, but is a soul. God breathed into the nostrils of the body he had formed, the breath of life, and *man became a living soul*. And when man dies, there is nothing left to go anywhere. "The soul that sinneth, *it shall die*." (Ezek. 18:4.) "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23.) Speaking of man's state in death, the Psalmist says: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. " - Psa. 146:4.

The time of the resurrection is declared to be "*the last day*." Martha, when speaking to Jesus of her deceased brother, Lazarus, said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Her source of knowledge had probably been Jesus, for four times in chapter six of John's Gospel (verses 39, 40, 44, and 54), Jesus designates the time of the resurrection as being the "last day"

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."



"No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

The "last day," refers to the day of judgment, the seventh thousandyear period of earth's history since man's creation. Paul says:

"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.

"A day with the Lord is as a thousand years," Peter tells us; and so this would refer to the thousandyear judgment-day, the reign of Christ, "who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." - 2 Tim. 4:1.

Resurrection in the full and complete sense will take place during the second presence of Christ; the one exception to this being the resurrection of Christ himself. The examples, foreshowing the power of God to restore the dead, that are given us in the Old and New Testaments, were not complete resurrections, but merely the first step in the resurrection process; they returned to the death in Adam condition and went into their graves again; whereas, those who experience real resurrection, die no more. Concerning the resurrection of the Church, it is written: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." - Rev. 20:6.

This verse gives us to understand that there will be more than one resurrection, otherwise it would not speak of a first resurrection. It also identifies those who partake thereof as being kings and priests of God, and says they reign with Christ a thousand years. The first resurrection, therefore, pertains solely to the Little Flock Class who are declared to be "a first fruits" unto God of his creatures.

We find also that the time element enters into this first resurrection, that it started nearly two thousand years ago with the raising of Christ Jesus, the first of the first fruits, and will end with those "who are alive and remain" unto the coming of the Lord. Paul informs us in 1 Thess. 4:16, that the sleeping saints, who lived and died prior to the second coming of Christ, would be the first to be raised; then, following this, those who are still alive and remain, when he comes, will not need to sleep, but will be caught up at the time of death, and, together with those who preceded them, will meet the Lord in the air -- the spirit realm.

Following this, there are at least three additional resurrections that will occur: namely, that of the Great Company-the servant class whose position will be before the throne of God, where they will serve him day and night in his Temple (note the way this class is contrasted with the Little Flock class) (Rev. 2:26, 27 3:12, 21; 7:14, 15); that of the Ancient Worthy class which is promised a better resurrection in reward for their faithfulness; and that of the world of mankind who will be raised up and perfected by the judgments of the Lord.

Those classified as "they that have done good," mentioned by Jesus in John 5:28, 29, will include the "Little Flock," the "Great Company," and the "Ancient Worthies"; they will have perfect

organisms and powers of life restored to them instantly; but the world will be raised up gradually, and will be restored in all the component parts of their beings simultaneously.

### **PRESENT RESURRECTION EXPERIENCE**

We have purposely left to the last, the consideration of that phase of our resurrection, about which we should feel the deepest concern; for on it depends the kind of resurrection we will eventually attain. In all probability, most of us rarely think of ourselves as undergoing the process of a resurrection; but in the perfecting of the new mind, the new creature, we are being raised just as truly, as will the willing and obedient of mankind under the judgments of Christ in the coming Age.

A more than casual consideration will cause us to note that there are a number of ways in which our resurrection process parallels that of the world. First, there must be the release from the legal sentence of death, imposed by Divine justice because of the disobedience of Adam. The basis upon which this release can be granted, is that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.) We, the Church, experience this release *through faith* in the blood of Christ, and in consequence of the fact that "Christ hath appeared in the presence of God for us." "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." - 1 John 2:1.

The world of mankind is still under the sentence of death. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36.) Therefore the world in general does not experience release until the great High Priest enters within the veil a second time; as pictured in the Tabernacle types, he will then lift up his hands (symbol of the exercise of power) and bless the people. In contrast to the Church, mankind will be subject to the authority of the Mediator, without choice, and will come forth from the grave at his call, to experience the judgments by which they will learn righteousness, and be gradually perfected in being. "The soul that will not heed that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." - Acts 3:23.

All who make good use of that thousand years of judgment in learning to obey from the heart, will thereby become fixed in the character image of God, and will acquire an immunity to temptation that will forever guard them from the possibility of sin. Those whose conformity to Kingdom regulations does not spring from the love of God, will not be able to resist Satan's wiles when he is loosed at the end of the thousand years; and so, along with Satan, will be annihilated in the second death.

The resurrection process in the development of God-likeness -- the most essential part of the resurrection in so far as the award of eternal life is concerned, is a matter that takes time, and requires both willing and active cooperation on the part of the Church and the world. We, in contrast to the world, have had to exercise faith in order to come under the influence of resurrection power. With us, that power has operated through God's spirit, "working in us both to will and to do his good pleasure." And when God's workmanship in us this side the veil is finished, our new bodies, like unto Christ's, will be given us in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. - 1 Cor. 15:35-58.

Both phases of our resurrection are set forth by Paul in his letter to the Philippian Church, chapter three, verses 10 and 11 (Phil. 3:10-11). Therein is revealed Paul's whole-souled sanctification in his endeavor to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings in being made conformable unto his death, that "if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Paul's desire to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, had to do with his day-by-day development, for he couples it with having fellowship in the sufferings and

death of Christ experiences confined to the present life; and this was all to the end that he might attain unto "*the* [first] resurrection of the dead."

Paul's experience in sanctification must needs be the experience of each one who will share in the first resurrection. But how it should rejoice our hearts to know that our perfecting in the character-likeness of God, is God's own work in us; and if we will continue to be wholly sanctified unto him-if we sanctify him in our hearts-he is both able and willing to finish the work he has begun in us, and will do so to the end that he may establish our hearts in righteousness, and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

- *John T. Read.*

## **The Prophet Who Disobeyed**

*"He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." - 1 John 2:17.*

THOUGH our subject would seem to refer to Jonah, it is not of the son of Amittai that we write. Instead, it is of one who remains nameless to this day -- one whose tragic fate illustrates the terrible exactness of obedience demanded by Divine commands. Let us ponder well the moral of this strange story, for we also have to do with Him "with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and who has said, "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." - James 1:17; Hebrews 10:38.

It all happened twenty-eight centuries ago as recorded in 1 Kings 13. On this memorable day, Jeroboam, king of the ten tribes recently separated from the house of David, was present in Bethel, the southern border town of his new domain. With him were gathered the chiefs of the families and the elders of the tribes. It was an important occasion, for Jeroboam was about to inaugurate a new national worship. If by that day's *successful* ceremonial he could engraft the new ritual upon the religious feelings of the people, his throne would be safe for himself and his dynasty. Thus, so soon after attaining to the throne, had he set himself to keep it by his own subtlety, in utter disregard for the injunctions of the God of Israel. Forgotten now were the words of Ahijah the Shilonite who, when Jeroboam was still but Solomon's servant, had met him with the startling message that God would rend from the house of David in the days of the king's son, ten of the twelve tribes and give them as a kingdom to him. What a clear reading of all his secret thoughts had been the words "Thou shalt reign according to *all thy soul desireth*, and shalt be king over Israel." - 1 Kings 11:37.

Long had he conspired and long had he dreamed. Now here was unexpected higher sanction for his dark ambition. Into what a flame must such an announcement have stirred up his spirit. Perhaps its very turbulence dimmed the warning in the prophet's succeeding words: -- "It shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel unto thee." - 1 Kings 11:38.

Once ascended to the throne, the heart of the successful conspirator had darkened with fear that if God's altar at Jerusalem continued to be the focus of national worship, and the yearly gathering place for the great feasts by all the males of his kingdom, the throne of Judah would supplant

their unnatural affections for the throne of Samaria. He brooded: "Then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their Lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again unto Rehoboam" (1 Kings 12:27). He resolved upon a remedy learned in his Egyptian sojourn, while a fugitive from the suspicious Solomon. The great impersonal Deity could, he reasoned, be worshiped acceptably not at one altar alone, or only under one form. Discerning the sensuous tendency of his people, he boldly resolved to reproduce among them the sacred emblems of the invisible God which he had seen so deeply revered in Egypt, and he therefore set up at Dan and at Bethel, two golden calves. Tenderness for his people's need was the great motive he assigned for this spiritual revolution: "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (1 Kings 12:28). He further made a house of High places, multiplied beyond precedent the crowd of sacrificing priests from amongst the basest people, and then appointed two great festival days to rival those which were kept in the old capital.

On the fifteenth day of the eighth month, "the day which he had devised out of his own heart," all the magnificent ritual of the new temple was complete, and the great national worship was to be commenced. The King had come down from his distant capital to attend the festival and to take part with his own royal hand in the service -to offer upon the altar and to burn incense. This was no doubt to add to the magnificent impressiveness of the scene, and to remove from his people's minds any lingering recollections of the great Solomon's dedication festival of the temple on Mount Moriah.

What a scene must have been presented on this momentous occasion! The king arrayed in all his finery; the band of servile courtiers eager to show their approval; the new priesthood fiercely zealous in the assertion of their spiritual preeminence; and in the background the assenting crowd, pleased with their monarch's care, and rejoicing in the promise of an external worship which met the longings of their carnal hearts.

### **THE UNBIDDEN PRESENCE**

Was there no voice to protest this dishonoring of their fathers' jealous God-none to recall the holy associations which hung around Bethel and made it so preeminently a hallowed spot? Here 'and there, perhaps, a saddened countenance spoke of the inward struggle of conflicting emotions, but none dared to oppose that fierce and strong-willed monarch.

None? Hold -- for even as the king raises his arm to burn incense on the altar, an unbidden presence presumptuously intrudes itself within the inmost circle of attendants! His garb, still dust laden from his hasty and long journey, bespeaks him a prophet of Judah. The dark heart of the anxious king must have throbbed as this unlooked-for figure broke upon its consciousness. Thus suddenly, long ago, had such a one stood beside him as he walked the highway of Jerusalem, had taken up the thread of his inmost thoughts, and forecast for him the strange future of his life. With what message had this stranger come today -for good or for evil; to bless or to curse? Let his message be what it might, would he be so angry as to dare the monarch to his face? The eyes of the two men met, and we almost sense the deep hush which must have spread itself as a silence of hearts over the multitude around. Who was the stranger; why had he come; what was he about to do? The moment was charged with expectancy!

There was no sign of fear upon the Prophet's brow. Slowly, deliberately, and as one speaking in the ears of all - a sentence terrible to hear-the denunciation was spoken. To the king, as though he were unworthy to receive it, no word was uttered. To the altar alone he addressed his words: "O altar, upon thee shall a prince of the house of Judah offer the priests of the high places which burn

incense upon thee. This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken: Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out."

The stunning message! How crushing to the usurper's scheme at the very moment of its perfecting! Here, a prince of the enemy house of Judah to stand and burn the bodies of the priests of his new institution, to the power of whom he looked as the prolongers of the majesty of his royal race! Here, on the very altar whereon he would consecrate his line, here should be the uttermost abomination of Hinnom, even the burning of the bones of the dead!

The king's fury rose in his face and his wrath broke forth sharp and sudden: "Lay hold on him!"

It was the action of a moment; but even as it was wrought, it was avenged. His hand which he had put forth against God's messenger withered instantly; while the altar of incense -that too quivered beneath the word of power, so that it rent asunder and the ashes on it were poured forth. The strong man of the earth had dared lift himself against the Power above, and it had shivered him to powder.

The trembling king directs a plea for mercy to the calm serene Prophet still standing beside the altar. The prayer of God's servant restores the hand, and it becomes as it was before. Humbled by the judgment, the monarch importunes him to share his hospitality and to receive of his bounty, but "the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place; for so was it charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, Eat no bread nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that, thou camest." He turns away, the awe-stricken beholders part before him, and the dramatic scene ends.

How our admiration and respect go out to this nameless prophet, so fearless, so courageous, so zealous for the Lord! What calmness and fortitude; what a magnificent triumph-spurning reward as he had ignored threatening. Loyal in his obedience, even in the face of death, his Lord had stood by him and delivered him. What a noble example of fidelity to all who would serve the Lord. We are drawn to him in the bonds of fellowship, recognizing in him a kindred spirit. If only our story could end on this scene! But alas, there is a sequel to be told, and the mere reading of the account leaves one's heart heavy.

### **NE'ER THINK THE VICTORY WON**

We know not the Prophet's thoughts as he left the evil town. Were they all thankfulness and gratitude for Divine deliverance? Or was there that sinking of the spirit, that reaction which sometimes follows a victorious struggle? Was there a feeling of human triumph? Conflicting emotions were probably struggling within him, struggling dangerously, and could he but have read them aright, they would have foreboded to him the sadness of the future. Into the bright web of his noble daring and high-souled triumph were being woven in colors of blood, lessons of self-distrust, of the need of continual watchfulness and of the need of perseverance.

We trace his subsequent course. Having left the city, instead of pressing forward at any cost from the idol's home, he sits down beneath a wayside tree; the first dangerous sign of yielding to temptation. The great burden which had been laid upon his soul having been lifted, his wearied body and spirit seek rest. And what is wrong in that? Ah -- but for that rest he might have triumphed to the end. But for that lingering by the way, the tempter, the old prophet of Bethel, might not have overtaken him and plied him with the falsehood which led to his tragic downfall.

What strange characters are found in this story! This old prophet had once been visited by the visions of the Most High, but something within had arisen to dull the receptive ear and dumb the prophetic voice. Further compliance with evil was manifested by his refraining from protesting, and his continuing to reside in Bethel, now that it had become the House of Idols instead of the House of God. It is not difficult to trace the inducement which led to the utterance of that lie. Painfully conscious of the fading away of his prophetic power, what might it not effect in raising his reputation among his townsmen if the nameless prophet whose fame was ringing in the town, should be known to have been his guest. This condescension by a brother in the great company of prophets would still his own uneasy conscience and restore his waned influence. So his scheme was laid and he set out to overtake his victim and bring him back. That halt under the wayside oak enabled him to fulfill his purpose. Feigning, as such men learn to feign, what once had been real to him, and utterly careless of the sin and shame and ruin that might result, he appeals with strong entreaty to the young prophet's lower nature. The man of God is weary and faint, the midday sun hot and scorching, Judea is distant, and present rest and refreshment are needful. And furthermore, the Lord has reversed his command!

In the unguardedness of spirit which is so often bred of recent success, and with something of the dangerous triumph of a great temptation mastered, and therefore of the right to some self-allowance earned, the young prophet falters and falls. He who had received his command direct from God, suffered it to be overborne by the word of a man. Returning, he ate of the forbidden bread and drank of the forbidden water. How often thus have "old" prophets counseling ease, destroyed the self-denying zeal of "younger" spirits. And how doubly strange that such are sometimes used of God to speak forth his wrath. For the voice of condemnation awakes the dormant power, the old prophet speaks, and the sentencer is sentenced, and the judge is judged.

Once again the man of God sets out. Perhaps the voice of judgment had awakened his slumbering conscience. His re-departure from Bethel bespoke an awakened faithfulness. Bowed, humbled, penitent, ashamed, he tracked the new path appointed for him. He was in God's hands -- let him do as seemeth him good. The path leads by the mouth of a woody defile. From it comes a terrible roar, followed by the whirlwind spring of the avenger of disobedience. Stamping unmistakably the character of judgment upon the whole act, the lion spares the ass, his natural prey, and as though witnessing against the man of Judah, crouches beside his lifeless form, to the amazement and fear of all who pass by.

### **MY SOUL, BE ON THY GUARD**

We turn sadly from the further details in the holy record to consider the lesson of this strange experience. But first and above all, let us take heed lest in our finite judgment we mistakenly react to this incident as did David in the death of Uzzah. (See 2 Samuel 6:6-8.) The lesson of the nameless prophet teaches the glory and risk of being the servant of the Lord. How terrible the risk of even the slightest deviation from his expressed commands! Think of Moses, of Balaam, of Saul -- one misstep and its inevitable consequence. Moses lost his heart's desire, Balaam his life, Saul his kingdom. Their previous faithfulness availed not to stem the judgment. "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. . . . Neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. . . . If he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it" (Ezek. 33:12, 13). Here we have plainly shown the Divine immutability.

But if God be a strict exactor of obedience and swift to punish, he is also wonderfully bountiful in his reward for faithfulness. There is goodness as well as severity in his dealings. Behold, for his

perfect obedience, the exaltation of our Master who, "being found in fashion as a man, emptied himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore 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. 2:8-11). The way of the cross was hard and the cup overflowed but "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Therefore he "endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). We rejoice in his wonderful obedience, and with all God's holy ones proclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb."

Brethren, how stands the matter with us; we who have made a "covenant by sacrifice" to do his will who has said: "I am Jehovah, I change not"? Are we always mindful of the wise man's admonition: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God... Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. . . . When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay" (Eccl. 5:1-5). "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Having put our hands to the plow, shall we turn back? Herein lies our test -- the test of complete obedience to the Divine will. Thus only can we "*keep* ourselves in the love of God." And though the way be hard and our infirmities many, he has graciously made all provision through the precious merit in Christ. We have his promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul assures us: "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." And again: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Therefore heed well the lessons of this sad story in 1 Kings 13. The broken life, the dishonored end, the strange sepulcher, the place among the catalogue of heroes, but the hero's name withheld, the escutcheon taken down, and the banner removed--all speak alike the undying lesson of not fainting in the battle, of not coming short in the trial; all echo the mingled threat and promise of the grand apocalyptic words, "Be thou faithful *unto death*, and I will give thee the crown of life!"

- *W. J. Siekman*

## Lord, Teach Us to Pray

*"After this manner therefore pray ye." - .Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:1.*

THERE IS perhaps no other passage of Scripture with which we are more familiar than that of the "Lord's Prayer," recorded, as all are aware, in the sixth chapter of Matthew and the eleventh of Luke. Yet like all the inspired Word, this portion grows richer and more precious through study and reflection. Moreover, the nearer we come to entering into its full meaning, that much nearer will our lives be drawn to the heart of "Our Father" and to that of His Son, our great Elder Brother. Let us then take up these old, familiar words-this prayer we learned in childhood to "say"; this prayer which, please God, we shall continue to the end to *pray*, and as we do so, may the Lord grant us fresh inspiration and encouragement for the days that may lie ahead.

According to St. Luke's account, it was following a season of prayer in which our Lord had been personally engaged that this matchless prayer pattern was given to His disciples. Some of these disciples of Jesus had previously been disciples of John the Baptist, and had learned to pray as he had taught them. And that fearless preacher of righteousness and repentance had doubtless taught them well, according to his understanding and mission. But they were daily learning the surpassing excellence of our Lord, and on this rare occasion it would seem that they had been privileged to overhear Him praying. And what a privilege it must have been! He who spake as never man spake surely prayed as never man prayed. What energy of spirit the disciples must have witnessed! What ardent desire! Then, too, what a combination of filial reverence with courageous boldness, as, with no earth-born cloud to come between, He gained immediate access into the presence of His Father, conscious of the fact, as in another place He said, that the Father would hear Him "always." And again, what largeness of petition! What self-abnegation and occupation with the plans, with the honor and glory of His Father! And what humility! What tenderness! What conviction and earnestness! Small wonder that when He ceased, one of His disciples, doubtless expressing the desire of them all, made request, "Lord, teach us to pray."

This request must have greatly pleased our Lord, for He at once proceeded to grant it. Beginning with the words: "After this manner therefore pray ye," He gave them this precious pattern of prayer which is ours today. It was, of course, intended only as a pattern. Not for a moment are we to suppose that He intended His disciples then or since to use these specific words only, with never a variation in them. Nevertheless, it is doubtful if a true prayer has ever been breathed that would not come within the embrace of one or other of these brief petitions. And what petitions they are!-so simple that they fit the lips and hearts of little children, yet so profound that it is a question if the mightiest intellects have fathomed their depths.

### OUR FATHER

To address the great Jehovah as Father came easily and naturally to Jesus; and we, too, into whose heart God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son crying Abba, Father, have learned the blessedness of this relationship, but it was a new experience for our Lord's followers then -- one with which they were totally unacquainted. While God had, in sundry time and in divers manners, spoken unto the fathers the Prophets, He had not been revealed except in the dimmest way as their Father. Only a few times in the Old Testament is He mentioned as Father, and then from the national, not from the individual viewpoint. We speak of George Washington as being the Father of his country, meaning that he holds the relationship with respect to the country as a nation with respect to its government, institutions, etc. In the same sort of sense, only of course very mud



higher and grander, was Jehovah regarded as the Father of Israel. But Jesus revealed God as the Father of the individual. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath *declared* Him, or made Him known. Our Lord scarcely ever spoke of God by any other name. In the Sermon on the Mount alone He mentions Him by that name seventeen times. In the first recorded utterance of His, Jesus as a boy, thus speaks of God: "Wist ye not that I must be about My *Father's* business?" And at the close of His earthly life His last utterance was: "*Father*, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." The first word following His resurrection was "I am not yet ascended to My *Father*: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." And then, as He was about to take His final leave of them, once more He reminded them of the Father, and instructed them to wait at Jerusalem, until they were endued with power from on high-until they had received the promise of the *Father*, the Holy Spirit, of which He had told them.

We may well pause a moment at this word, "Father." The rest of the prayer has been likened to a rich treasure house or vault, and the words "Our Father" to the golden hinges on which the door to this treasure swings open. If our hearts respond, if we can enter into an experimental realization of the meaning of *this* word, we may proceed with the rest of the prayer; otherwise, it would hardly be worth while. For the entire mission of Christ, including even His death on the cross, was for just this purpose—to reveal the Father to the hearts of men.

### **FATHERHOOD OF GOD AND BROTHERHOOD OF MAN**

But the world has developed some rather "free and easy" ideas of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. They overlook, or ignore, the fact, that to call God our Father, we must ourselves be sons, and that it is they who are led by the Spirit of God, and they only, who are sons of God. Since our first parent, Adam, was created a son of God, sin has entered the world, and it is only through Christ, and by partaking of His Spirit, that men can recover this lost estate of sonship. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not, but to as many as received Him to *them* gave He the privilege of becoming sons of God." "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him."

And how the Son did indeed reveal the Father during the days of His flesh! By every expression of *righteous indignation* against sin *wherever found*; by every *loving* word; by every *gracious* act He declared Him. And since His glorious resurrection and ascension He, by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and lives, has continued to reveal to us the Father. Yes, thank God, Jesus *has* shown us the Father, and it sufficeth us. God pity the man who knows nothing of our gracious heavenly Father. God be thanked for those who do. Happy the man, who having entered the secret place, and shut the door, is able to look up into the face of God, and with deep conviction say: Father. Such a man has his feet standing on solid ground, and is in a condition to pray.

### **A FILIAL AND A FRATERNAL SPIRIT**

The prayer which follows this opening address divides easily and naturally into two parts consisting of three petitions each. The first three, "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," are quite evidently concerned with the honor and glory, with the plans and purposes of our Father, and are therefore to be offered in a *filial* spirit, the spirit of *sonship*. The last three concern themselves with our Father's family, His sons and daughters, our own dear brothers and sisters in the Lord. For them we are to pray that they may be fed, forgiven, and guided. "Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive *our* debtors, and abandon us not in trial, but deliver us from the evil one." These three petitions, while still to be offered in a filial spirit, are to be characterized additionally by a *fraternal* spirit, a spirit of

*brotherly interest.* Nowhere in this prayer is there a word of self, except, indeed, that though least and last of our Father's dear family, we are yet included therein, and may thus find our needs embraced in the petitions we offer for them.

### **HALLOWED BE THY NAME**

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name." In this sentence there is both praise and petition -- praise, in that we here and now do hallow His name, with a deep sense of satisfaction in so doing; petition, in that we express a longing desire that His name may be everywhere held in highest esteem and veneration.

What are we to understand by the name of our heavenly Father? Names stand for character or attributes. Thus the name of Nero is synonymous with cruelty, because the record of his life was such. Similarly the name of Napoleon stands for military genius; that of Daniel fearless faithfulness. The name of Ford suggests the automobile industry; that of Rockefeller, oil or wealth. We speak of some who have good names, of others who have bad; of some who have honored, of others who have dishonored names. And there is probably no way in which one can harm another more than by injuring his name. Now there is no doubt but that the name of God can become much holier than it is in the minds of men and women. What unworthy conceptions of God and His character are still held by mankind! This petition, then, is the expression of a desire that only worthy thoughts and feelings should be entertained in reference to God. "Whenever Thou art thought of, whenever Thy name is mentioned, may it be with becoming reverence and veneration," - such is the heart's desire here. Brethren, we are living in a day when there is little reverence for anything, and we should be all the more watchful that we ourselves do not lose the spirit. It is easily possible to do so. Permit us to quote from a passage written by Brother Russell nearly thirty years ago on this subject. He wrote:

"Perhaps no quality of heart is in greater danger of being blotted out amongst professing Christians today than this thought of reverence for God. However much we may have grown in knowledge, and however much we have gotten free from superstitions and errors, and however advanced in some respects is the Christian's position of today over that of a century ago, we fear that reverence has been losing ground, not only in the nominal church, but with many of the members of the one 'Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven.' Every loss of reverence is a distinct disadvantage, both to the Church and to the world, paving the way to various evils, and ultimately to anarchy."

### **"SO LET OUR DAILY LIVES EXPRESS"**

How may we hallow His name? We answer: First of all in our hearts. Graciously our heavenly Father speaks to us, "My son, give Me thine heart." Yes, it is in the recesses of the heart that all true reverence must begin. And how rich is His promise to such as do thus reverence Him: "A book of remembrance was written before Him for them that *reverenced* the Lord and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine saith the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up My jewels"; and again, in that same Malachi passage: "Unto you that *reverence My* name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in His beams."

Then, too, we may hallow His name by our words. How much we may honor or dishonor, elevate or depress, a name, by our words, not only by what we say about the name, but by how we say it; by the manner in which we use it, by the tone of voice and general expression which may be ours at the time we utter it! May it always be ours to speak our Father's name reverently, in the spirit of adoration and devotion.

And then, we may hallow His name by our lives. In what way can children honor an earthly father's name better than by the characters they develop? What sheds such luster on a parent's name as the virtuous character and life of his child? What so dishonors that name as unworthy conduct on the part of his children?

"So let our daily lives express  
The beauties of true holiness;  
So let the Christian graces shine  
That all may know the power Divine."

### **THY KINGDOM COME**

Once the name of God is hallowed, revered, within the depths of the heart, the Kingdom of God can be established there. For our Father needs only to be well known, in order not only to reign, but to be implored to do so. We are not surprised, therefore, to find the next petition being for the Kingdom of God to come. To the disciples who listened to this instruction of our Lord, the Kingdom of God could have meant but one thing, namely, the Kingdom of Messiah; that is to say, the Age to come; that Age, at the threshold of which we believe we stand today, as we sometimes sing:

"Within this century's swinging portal  
Breaks the new dawn -- the thousand years."

Yes, it is this same Kingdom about which they inquired when He took His last leave of them, just before the cloud received Him out of their sight. "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Ah! no! -- it was not to be just then. But when it did come, it would shine with such a splendor as they had not dreamed. No, the Kingdom was not to be then. The vision was for an appointed time. It might seem to tarry, but not so in reality. But though it seem to *tarry*, wait for it. Yes, and not only wait and labor for it, but, as our Lord here explicitly teaches, *pray* for it.

Glorious Kingdom, when it shall come! To it there shall be no end. So said the angel Gabriel to *Mary*, when he announced the coming of the Babe from heaven. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end." Scholars tell us that in an old Moravian version of the Scriptures this text is rendered: "And His Kingdom shall have no frontier." Some years ago we heard an aged Federal Judge deliver a Lincoln's Birthday address. As a boy he had passed a Civil Service examination, and finally the time came for him to leave his home in Michigan and report for duty in Washington, D. C., and he spoke of meeting Lincoln then. And we remember, how, in the course of his address he remarked upon the fact that the Mississippi was then practically the western frontier of the United States. Think of it! The Mississippi the western frontier of the United States!

How that frontier has receded since! First it moved to the Rockies, then to the Pacific, then to the Hawaiian Islands, and now to the Philippines, which makes the western frontier of this great country stretch away round to the East! But of Christ's Kingdom there shall be *no* end-His Kingdom shall have *no* frontier.

It was His faithful witness concerning this Kingdom, His good confession before Pontius Pilate regarding it, that cost our Lord His life. The Jews had accused Him of endangering Caesar's throne. What perfidy! As a matter of fact, had they thought it possible for Him to successfully

endanger Caesar's throne, they would have rejoiced and crowned Him King. But Jesus assured Pilate that Caesar had nothing to fear from Him. "My Kingdom is not of this Age, else would My servants fight." The strength of Caesar lay in his armies and navies, but the strength of Jesus lay elsewhere. He was a King, indeed, but a King of Truth, of sentiment, of light, and love, of ennobling ideas, of principles. And slowly, steadily, Messiah's Kingdom is advancing. Oh! no! we cannot *see* it. It cometh not with observation. But slowly His Kingdom has advanced from that day to this, diffusing light and love, taking full control, as yet, of only "just one here, one there." But now the "Kingdom class" is all but complete. Soon thereafter, the Kingdom will advance more rapidly, until at length:

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
Does his successive journeys run;  
His Kingdom spread from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

Meanwhile the language of our hearts has been well expressed by the poet:

"Lord, we would fain some little palm branch lay  
Upon Thy way.  
If but the foldings of Thy garment's hem  
Shall shadow them,  
These worthless leaves, which we have brought and strewed  
Along Thy road  
Shall be raised up and made divinely sweet,  
And fit to lie beneath Thy feet."

*-P. L. Read.*

*(To be continued)*

## The Completeness of the Body

*"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." - 1 Corinthians 12:27*

THE Church is the "one body" of Christ, and all Christians are individual members of that body. No one liveth to himself, no one dieth to himself; when one member suffers all members suffer with him. It is one of the sins of a self-sufficient age to deny the unity and completeness of Christ's body, and to set up tests of unity other than those which he has appointed. In the natural body each member united with the head has vital union with every other member connected with the same head. The basis of true Christian unity is union with Jesus Christ who is the head of the body. Men lay down as the basis of their unity, union with some human leader through the doctrines which he has proclaimed or the forms which he has instituted. They are united by external observances, by laws, forms, rites, and hands. Their union is the union of staves in a barrel; Christ's union is the union of branches in a vine. Their union is that of bones in a skeleton, joined and wired together, but destitute of vital energy; the union of Christ and his people is the union of the members of a body, joined together by those ligaments which every joint supplieth, and pervaded by the energy of a common life. The unity which Christ inaugurated embraces the whole family of God. It includes every man who has vital connection with the great head of the Church. Men's schemes are too narrow for this, and include only those persons who coincide in opinions, who agree in forms, who are trimmed according to a certain pattern, or shaped in conformity to certain human standards. Christ bids us to receive one another as he has received us. The fact that we have passed from death unto life, and we are united to Christ the living head, is proof that we are united to his people. If our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ, it is also with one another. Men, however, restrict their fellowship; and hence, while Christ's Church is inclusive and wide-reaching, their churches are narrow, and shut out more Christians than they shut in. The results of this are grievous to God's people who are thus excluded from union with saints, but still more grievous to those who exclude them. How often we see churches crippled and helpless for lack of the labor and sympathy of Christian brethren who stand by their side ready and willing to be helpers in their toils, but are excluded by some party Shibboleth, or by some unscriptural name or form. How often we see men shut away from their proper field of Christian effort, simply because they cannot accept the unscriptural statements and arrangements, which men presume to impose before they receive them to their fellowship. Men toil in weariness, and bring themselves to the borders of the grave, that they may do work which others would willingly and wisely do, who are not permitted to participate in the labor. Thus men virtually say to God's children: "You may be members of Christ's body, but we have no need of you or your services."

The Apostle has taught us that no member of the body can be spared from its place and its proper work, without serious injury. No man can separate himself from the body of Christ without harm; nor can any portion of Christians separate themselves from others who love the Lord, or exclude other Christians from their fellowship, without doing themselves great injury.

The union of true Christians springs from a higher than human source; and their adaption to each other for mutual helpfulness is so complete and perfect that any separation must work harm both to those who cause it and to those who endure it. The feet may say, We are strong, we have no need of the eyes, we carry the body, and the eyes are mere useless gazers. But when the eyes are gone, and the feet are groping and floundering in the ditch, the folly of this decision is most manifest. So whenever any of the Lord's children in their inexperience and self-sufficiency think themselves able to dispense with the presence, the service, and the loving fellowship of others of

the children of the Lord, they may find sooner or later, by their weakness, inefficiency, and a thousand calamities and troubles that may come upon them, they have overestimated their own powers, and have put away from them those members which God hath set in the body, that they might abide together in the unity of love and in mutual helpfulness. Our Savior's parting prayer for his disciples, that "they all may be one," and the hearts of the truly regenerate yearn and long for this unity. Deeper than the names and forms and creeds of men, throbs that inward, divine and universal life which Christ imparted, and which makes his children one.

*- Selected*

## **Notice of Annual Meeting**

As announced in our March-April issue, the Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., is scheduled to be held (D.V.) on Saturday, June 2, at 10:00 a.m., in the Christian Assn. Bldg., North Carolina and Pacific Avenues, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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

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

The seven brethren now serving as directors are candidates for reelection. Brother Lester L. Kynion has also been nominated.

## The Question Box

*"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." - Isaiah 35:8.*

### Question:

After saying that the unclean shall not pass over The Way of Holiness, the Prophet proceeds to state that "it shall be for those." Please explain these apparently conflicting statements.

### Answer:

If, by the word "those," we were to understand the Prophet to mean "the unclean" he had just mentioned, we would be bound to admit that his statements were not merely apparently, but actually, in conflict. However, according to the scholars, the phrase *it shall be for those* "is an extremely doubtful rendering of a very obscure original" (*The Century Bible*). In agreement with this view, *The Variorum*, in a footnote, comments: "Text probably corrupt." According to *The Interpreter's Bible*, "the second part of verse 8 has been mutilated in transmission, as is obvious from the attempt of the King James Version to translate it literally."

Two suggestions have been offered to resolve the difficulty. One is that the word "those" be replaced by the word "redeemed."\*

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\* Scholars who adopt this suggestion do so on the grounds that the Prophet is employing the figure of speech known as prolepsis, or anticipation. Here, since the word "those" does not refer to any persons previously mentioned, it must refer, by anticipation, to some who are about to be mentioned, and who actually are mentioned, in the next verse.

This is the translation of the *American Standard Version*, which reads: "But it shall be for the redeemed." This certainly harmonizes with the context, for in verse 9 we read: "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; *but the redeemed shall walk there.*"

However, an alternative suggestion, one which all scholars consulted admit is permissible, and which most of them prefer, not only harmonizes with the thought that this highway is for the redeemed, but includes an additional thought, namely, that the reason this is to be, is because God himself is to be walking with these pilgrims on their way to Zion.\*\* Furthermore, by adopting this suggestion, as *Ferrar Fenton* has shown, the Hebrew metre of the Prophet is retained; the beauty of his poetry is not reduced to prose. Note how *Rotherham*, while rejecting the conflicting statements of the King James Version, retains the Hebrew metre, and includes the thoughts mentioned foregoing in his fine translation:

"And there shall be there a raised way -- even a high road,  
And the Highroad of Holiness shall it be called,  
There shall not pass over it one who is unclean;  
But He Himself shall be one of them traveling the road,  
And the perverse shall not stray thereinto."

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\*\* In the margin of the *Newberry Bible* this thought is expressed as follows; "And He, Himself, shall be with them walking in the way; and fools shall not err. Heb. *Ve hu lahmo holeec derec ve evilim lo yithhu.*"

Moreover, this highway is called the Way of Holiness, not only because "the unclean *shall not* pass over it," but also because it is the way to the sanctuary. He, to whose sanctuary the pilgrims on this road will be traveling; He, the Holy One, the author of the Way; He, it is, who will be their guide. When they are tempted to turn aside to the right hand or to the left (Deut. 5:32; Josh. 1:7), they will hear a voice behind them, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it (Isa. 30:31). Walking in that way, with such a guide, how shall they go astray? It was thus, in an earlier day, that He who had redeemed Israel out of Egypt, Himself guided them - by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire. - Exodus 13:20, 21.

A second question has been asked in reference to this verse. It reads: "An highway shall be there, and a way." How is the highway to be distinguished from the way? We answer: The Prophet is employing another figure of speech-that of hendiadys (from the Greek *hen dia dyoin* signifying one by means of two.) The *two* nouns "highway" and "way" are to be understood as expressing *one* idea, namely, a high way. \*\*\*

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\*\*\* This figure of speech is the expression of *one* idea by the use of *two* nouns joined together by the conjunction "and," one of which, generally the latter, is to be understood as an adjective qualifying the other. Instances of the use of this figure of speech may be seen in a number of Scriptures. (See *The Herald* for August-September, 1958, page 122).

The comparison suggested by the Prophet is between an almost, if not quite, undiscernible pathway in the sandy desert, with a solid, artificial causeway. Job speaks of "a wilderness where there is no way" (Job 12:24); and Jeremiah of "a way not cast up" (Jer. 18:15). To these descriptions, Isaiah's highway presents a decided contrast.

The use of this Highway of Holiness has been referred by some interpreters, to the return of the exiles from Babylon. And doubtless it had its first fulfillment then. After the first two verses (of chapter 35) the prophecy very evidently addresses itself to the nation of Israel in captivity, speaking of their salvation in verses 3 and 4 (Isa. 35:3-4), and in the remainder of the chapter, of all the wonderful providences of God which they would experience as they journeyed back. But in a larger sense, the Highway of which the Prophet speaks, is the road by which the pilgrims, first of Israel, and then of all nations, will journey to the mountain of the Lord's house, in the Millennial Age, now so close at hand. Isaiah, himself, has told us this in an earlier passage (Isa. 2:2, 3)

"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

- P. L. Read



## Entered Into Rest

H. B. Beveridge, Scotland  
Elsie Biltorf, Columbus, Ohio  
Florence Brinkman, England  
Val Bunker, England  
Alide M. Carr, Monsey, N.Y.  
Nellie Chester, England  
Ethel M. Court, England  
John E. Dawson, N. Andover, Mass.  
Victor Demerkis, Palos Heights, Ill.  
George Emmet, Kingston, N.Y.  
Agnes Gaven, Palos Heights, Ill.  
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Gerrit Van Halewijn, Holland  
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Genoveffa Mastroianni, Providence, R.I.  
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