

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. LVI November / December, 1973 No. 6

Shalom -- Peace on Earth

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." -Isaiah 9:2, A. R. V.

As noted on the second page of our last issue, our beloved Brother Paul E. Thomson ended his earthly pilgrimage August 17, 1973.

Brother Paul had served the brethren for more than sixty years as a Pilgrim in the United States, Canada, and the British Isles. In addition to service as Secretary of the Institute, he contributed many articles to our *Herald* pages. In this issue we are publishing one as a special tribute to his memory.

-Directors and Editors

"BLESSED BE the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." - Luke 1:68, 69, R.S.V.

It seems most fitting that the Evangel story should begin within the Sanctuary, and at the time, as is supposed, of the Morning Sacrifice. One day, while the priest, Zacharias (the name signifying "he who remembers Jehovah"), was burning incense in the temple, "the angel of the Lord" appeared to him, "And when he came out he could not speak to the people: and they perceived that he had seen a vision." Four hundred years Israel had waited for a message from heaven, every true Israelite eager that it should announce a king to deliver them from bondage, and eager that they should be among those to welcome the king. In quick succession there followed the angel visit to Mary, the prophecies of Elizabeth, Zacharias, and Mary, the heavenly messengers to the shepherds on the fields near Bethlehem, and prophecies of Simeon and Anna, then silence for about thirty years.

To Zacharias the angel revealed that, his son, though great, was only a messenger to go before the face of the Lord to convert the hearts of the people, "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:12-17.) That this greater One should sit on the throne of his father David was

revealed by Gabriel in his visit six months later to Mary. (Luke 1:28-33.) The mother of our Lord then hastened to the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth, and "Elizabeth filled with the holy spirit lifted up her voice with a loud cry and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And blessed is she that believed that there shall be a fulfilment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord." The almost tumultuous speed of Elizabeth's message vividly contrasts with Mary's equally inspired one that immediately followed, given calmly and in great simplicity. Hers is an echo of the lyrical poetry of the Old Testament, evidencing a mind that had absorbed and retained the phraseology of the sacred Scriptures as heard in the synagogue service since the days of her youth-or is it merely that the same spirit that inspired the messengers of old was moving her. The latter is the more likely explanation, for even the poetic form of their utterances was followed:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior
For he hath looked upon the low estate of his bond maiden:
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; And holy is his name,
And his mercy is unto generations and generations On them that fear him.
He hath shewed strength with his arm;
He hath scattered the proud by the imagination of their heart.
He hath put down princes from their thrones,
And hath exalted them of low degree.
The hungry he hath filled with good things;
And the rich he hath sent empty away.
He hath holpen Israel his servant,
That he might remember mercy
(As he spake unto our fathers)
Toward Abraham and his seed for ever."

Two minds given over to the influence of the holy spirit as were the minds of these two mothers must have had precious communion in the three months that followed-a three months during which their meditation and conversation doubtless were of the hope of Israel and of the part their two lads might play in it, a three months that must have accomplished much in preparing them to efficiently mother the two infants.

Just as Zacharias may be described as the representative of the good and true in the priesthood at that time, "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, so the holy family of Nazareth may be considered as a typical Israelitish household. The scantiness of particulars supplied by the :Gospels was intended, we believe, to prevent the human interest from overshadowing the grand central fact, to which alone attention was to be directed. "The design of the Gospels was manifestly not to furnish a biography of Jesus the Messiah, but, in organic connection with the Old Testament, to tell the history of the long promised establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth." The object was as indicated by St. Luke (Luke 1:4): "That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed," and by St. John (John 20:31): "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." May there not be a lesson here for us in our inclination to give details that merely satisfy human interest and add nothing to the spiritual.

Eight days after the birth of John the rite of circumcision introduced him into Jewish citizenship, a rite without which no one has ever been accepted of the Lord as a member of that favored

people. On this occasion a miracle advertised to the populace that God was dealing with their nation. It is recorded of Zacharias, who had been dumb since his vision of nine months before, that "his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, "blessing God." The holy spirit that loosed the tongue also used it for a message of assurance to the people, telling them as the spirit had, done through Mary, that now at last the blessings of the covenant with Abraham would be realized:

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
For he hath visited and wrought redemption for his people,
And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of his servant David
(As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old),
Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;
To show mercy towards our fathers,
And to remember his holy covenant,
The oath which he swore to our father Abraham ...
And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High;
For thou shalt go before the Lord to prepare his ways."

Six months passed, and the One whom the closing lines of this inspired message described, visited them, Jesus of Nazareth, by the Lord's providence born in Bethlehem, the city -of David, only six miles from their beloved Jerusalem.

"And it came to pass, while Mary and Joseph were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (translated "Guest chamber" in Luke 22:11). This lowly entrance into life, was not inappropriate to one whose dwelling place and labor were to be of the humblest for thirty years; one who for his closing-years was to have "no place to lay his head," and whose end was to be a thousand times more pitiable than this beginning.

In the same country where Abraham had ranged with his flocks and David had tended his sheep, "there were shepherds in the field, keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this its the sign unto you; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, which comes of God's good pleasure, is among men." - Variorum Bible marginal rendering.

"NOT MANY GREAT, NOT MANY WISE"

With haste the shepherds came to "the City of David" and "found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger" and "returned, glorifying God." "The associations of our Lord's nativity were all of the humblest character, and the very scenery of his birthplace was connected with memories of poverty and toil. On that night, indeed, it seemed as though the heavens must burst to disclose their radiant minstrelsy; and the stars, and the feeding sheep, and the 'light and sound in the

darkness and stillness,' and the rapture of faithful hearts, combine to furnish us with a picture painted in the colors of heaven. But in the brief and thrilling verses of the Evangelist we are not told that those angel songs were heard by any except the wakeful shepherds of an obscure village."

Then, Forty-eight days later this babe with a name somewhat common among the Jews, but a name now "above every name that is named" because it is *his* name, was presented in the temple for the required purifying rites, probably with two pigeons or doves, the offering permitted to those too poor to bring a lamb. The Law also required that at this time five shekels should be paid into the temple treasury that that firstborn son might be redeemed from the Aaronic priesthood -- in this instance that he might become the High Priest of God for all mankind on the higher Melchisedec plane.

"When the parents brought in the child Jesus, . . . Simeon received him in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

"Now lettest thou thy servant depart, O Lord,
According to thy word, in peace;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples;
A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
And the glory of thy people Israel."

And then directing his prophecy to Mary, he continued:

"Behold, this child is set for, the falling and the rising of many in Israel; and for a sign which is spoken against; yea and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul; that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." - A. R. V.

Once more, this time through Anna, a prophetess, the spirit spoke "to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem," "the consolation of Israel," and the thirty years of silence began. Then again Jesus came to them, but now a man, legally and actually, offering to remove the desolation that had fallen centuries before upon that nation. Short-sighted, unappreciative, a type of the spiritual Israel that began there, they nationally rejected him; and Mary, after three and a half years of ministry at his hand, learned the full force of what it meant to have a "sword pierce her soul." Jerusalem was "left desolate," without a king, as it is to this day. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto her" "if thou hadst . . . known in this day, even thou the things which belong unto thy Shalom," thy peace. - A. R. V.

Again peace, the Christmas message, must wait; this time while the Prince of Peace lies three days in the tomb. Darkness covered the earth as he entered death's portals, but

"The three sad days are quickly sped;
He rises glorious from the dead."

"Angels, roll the rock away!
Death, yield up the mighty Prey!
See, the Savior quits the tomb,
Glowing with immortal bloom.
Alleluia, Alleluia."

The first word on the lips of the risen Savior when he came into the upper room in the evening of that eventful day was the Christmas message, "Shalom," Peace. The fulfilment of the angelic prophecy that the shepherds heard, there began; not the peace of earthly prosperity, taxes paid, food and clothing provided; but the peace that nothing can disturb, the peace of One who had not where to lay his head, the peace of the One who promised, "My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth give I unto you." "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

The following paragraphs from the pen of our late beloved Pastor will meet a response in the hearts of all who have learned the true meaning of the "Good tidings of Great Joy":

"LET HEAVEN AND EARTH REJOICE"

"The Message of the angels to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem becomes more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his ears and eyes of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God's great Plan of the Ages, that prophetic Message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. Nor can our attention be called too frequently to the great event which lies at the foundation of that Message -- the Savior's birth . . .

"The angelic Message was a prophecy of good things to be accomplished for the Church and the world during the Millennial Age. The Church is to have the first blessing. The First Resurrection is to be composed only of the blessed and holy who shall live and reign with Christ during the thousand years. Then Satan shall be bound, and the good influences of truth and righteousness shall enlighten the whole earth. (Rev. 20:1-6.) The declaration of the Scriptures is that the deliverance of the Church will come early in the morning of the Millennial day. As the Prophet declares, 'God will help her early in the morning.' -- Psalm 46:5, margin....

"But much as we rejoice in the glorious hopes of the' Gospel set before us who now see, who now rejoice with joy unspeakable, we are glad that the divine mercy and love are of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths as to encompass the whole world of mankind, and provide a blessing for every member of Adam's race through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood... .

"Truly, the more we see of the Divine Plan for our salvation, which began to take shape in the birth of Jesus, the more we feel like shouting with the angelic choir praises to the God of heaven, thankfulness for his mercy to the children of men! It mattered not that the babe born in Bethlehem was the Savior only in prospect, that he could not even be anointed to do his work until he reached manhood's estate thirty years later. It mattered not that even then it would be necessary for him to lay down his life gradually during the three and a half years of his earthly ministry, to be finished at Calvary. Nor did it matter that his resurrection was still three days after his death, and his ascension forty days later; and that the blessing in general would be deferred for nearly nineteen centuries thereafter. As the angels could sing and rejoice at the first budding of the Divine Plan of Salvation, so also can all who have faith in the, ultimate outcome rejoice with joy unspeakable and give praise to God in the highest and to his Son our Lord."

"Joy to the world! the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king:
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing."

- P. E. Thomson.

"We seek not, Lord, for tongues of flame,
Or healing virtue's mystic aid;

But power Thy Gospel to proclaim --
The balm for wounds that sin has made.

"Breathe on us, Lord; Thy radiance pour
On all the wonders of the page
Where hidden lies the heavenly lore
That blessed our youth and guides our age.

"Give strength, blest Savior, in Thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into Thine image bright,
Shall teach, and love, and live, like Thee."

Giving Thanks Always

"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." - Eph. 5:18-20.

THERE SHOULD be a very close relationship between heart and lips when offering praise and thanks unto God; for true thanksgiving must spring from the inner grace of heartfelt appreciation. The words of Paul in Romans 10:10 find application here, in that they set forth a principle which is *true in all* our relationships to God: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

As we grow in appreciation *of* the character and attributes of God, we will feel constrained to give expression to His goodness, not only in words, but in acts and mode of life. This attitude on our part is pleasing unto the Father and is necessary to our own spiritual well being.

There can be no true praise and thanks apart from heart appreciation; and so, if this inner grace is lacking, all outward expression becomes mere idle service and mockery, and as such, is an abomination. God hates hypocrisy, and His Word expresses condemnation of those who draw near with their lips only. To some such Jesus said, "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as *their* doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15:7-9.) Both the houses of Israel are declared to be guilty of this abomination, and lest we partake of "the leaven of the Pharisees," we should continually join with David in the prayer that we may so live that "The words of our mouths, and the meditation of our hearts may be acceptable unto the Lord." - Psa. 19:14.

When we come to Jesus as our Savior and are accepted of Him as 'probationary members -of His Body, a great change takes place in us, but this change does not at once do away with our natural tendencies; consequently, these are carried over into the new life, where we undergo the refining process, the transformation into the image of our Lord and Master.

Some of us in our natural tendencies are too much under the control of sentiment and impulse; others too coldly intellectual and phlegmatic; and so 'the Word furnishes us with mental and spiritual tonics and exercises to build. up that which is lacking, for the well developed Christian must have both. 'And who is that Christian' that does *not*, especially when he makes an honest comparison between himself *and* the perfect pattern of our Lord, find himself lacking? Most of us find that we are deficient both in understanding and feeling as respects worship of the heavenly Father.

WINE-DRUNK VERSUS SPIRIT-FILLED

Seemingly there was need for admonition respecting the unrestrained use of wine among' the early Christians, for *we* find warnings concerning it in a number of places. (Luke 21:34; Rom. 13:13; 14:21; Gal. 5:21; 1 Tim. 3:8; Titus 2:3.) Palestine was a grape producing region, and wine was in general use. John the Baptist was peculiar *in* that he did not drink wine; but Jesus evidently did partake thereof *on* occasion, for the hypocritical Pharisees, who accused John of having a demon because of his abstemiousness, reversed their criticism of Jesus and called him a "wine bibber and a friend of publicans and sinners." - Luke 1:15; Matt. 11:18, 19.

John 2:1-11 tells us that the first sign *wrought* by Jesus was in Cana of Galilee when' he turned water into wine at a wedding feast; and *so* common was its use even among Christians that the Apostle felt it necessary to advise that only those brethren who were moderate *in* their drinking be considered *for* the position of Eldership. (1 Tim. 3:8.) Some *in* the Corinthian Church even went to the extreme of getting drunk at the Memorial observance. (1 Cor. 11:21.) Therefore, in our text, the Apostle again warns against the tendency to intemperance, but urges the unrestrained filling with the Spirit. In this respect it is impossible to go to excess.

In much of his *writings* Paul stresses the importance of a correct understanding of truth, but here in our text he is emphasizing the need for emotional release by the expression of the heart's gratitude in psalms; hymns, and songs of thanksgiving. A person who is drunk with wine, is often sentimentally foolish and not rational in giving vent to the emotions; but one "filled with the Spirit" is keenly aware of what he does, and so benefits in the stirring of his emotions through the beauties of verse and melody, which, in turn help to deepen the sense of appreciation.

PRAISE IN PSALMS AND HYMNS

We all know by experience how this emotional release, through the expressing of gratitude and praise in songs and testimonies of thanksgiving, brings an uplift that causes us to forget the difficulties and trials that attend our way. How much good we derive therefrom, we have no way of determining, but we know that it must be great else the Lord would not have provided so many psalms and hymns of praise, and admonished us in their frequent use.

When King Saul was low in spirit and could not rest, he would call for David and his harp, and the music eased his troubled mind and enabled him to rest. When the Apostles were chained in prison and were in pain and misery from being beaten, they sang songs and forgot their troubles. Many-hospitals and curative institutions, especially those for the insane, now use music as a therapeutic in the healing of mind and body and have found that its soothing strains are often efficacious when nothing else seems to help.

We have observed that drunkards have a tendency to talk to themselves and to sing maudlin songs. Paul suggests that, being filled with the Spirit, we speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and that we not only make melody with our lips, but in our hearts. Some singers are so able in their art that they can convey sentiments with their lips that give impression to the listener of deep feeling, when in reality there is no real sentiment there. God, however, is not deceived by mere lip service, no matter how real it may seem to us, for He looketh upon the heart and judges not by the seeing of the eye or hearing of the ear.

When the Church was established on the day of Pentecost, and God's Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples, the record is that "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." This was evidently a loud sound and quite a demonstration, for we read that "When this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man ["devout Jews from every nation under heaven"] heard them speaking in his own tongue, and they were amazed and marveled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? . . . But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine." - Acts 2:5-13.

These who were filled with the Spirit rather than with new wine, as Peter points out, were not speaking to one another so much as they were unto the multitude, for the context shows that it was in witness of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, and of the power of God through Jesus

Christ to give salvation by faith rather than through works of the Law that they spoke. This witness of the Spirit through the disciples was very effective in convincing these devout Jews that the Christ of whom they were in expectation had indeed come, for about three thousand were added to the Church that day. The gifts of the Spirit granted to the early Church, did much toward its establishment, but were not intended to aid much toward its growth in character-likeness unto the Lord, for as gifts, they were bestowed apart from any effort toward Christlikeness.

THANKS FOR ALL THINGS

In the last verse of our text, the Apostle admonishes us to "Give thanks always for all things unto God, even the Father [R. V.], in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." To be able to do this indicates a well developed Christian-one who has really come to know that "All things work together for good to them that love God." Only those who actually believe that God's providences are over all their waysthat He directs their path, and withholds no good thing from them that walk uprightly, can thus give thanks.

But what does the Apostle mean by "all things"? Naturally, there would be no question about the things we consider to be good-our daily bread, our comforts of home, the bed upon which we ease our tired bodies at night, pleasant surroundings and associations, time for study, opportunity for fellowship, and a thousand other things we could name-we would readily agree that we should give thanks for these. But how about the multitude of things that are hard, unpleasant, monotonous, disagreeable, disquieting, trying, painful, dishonoring, unjust, inhuman and even detestable: *must* we give thanks for these?

No, God will not compel us to give thanks, not even for those things for which we ask; nor will He force us to make our calling and election sure. But, if the question be asked, Should we give thanks for these things? then the answer is, Yes. Have we not made a covenant under which these bodies, reckoned holy through Christ, are committed to sacrifice, even unto death? Have we not placed ourselves under the control of the Father's will in order that His wisdom and power may be exercised on our behalf to perfect us as New Creatures? And has He not told us that through much tribulation lies the way into the Kingdom, and that He scourgeth every son He receiveth?

And so the multitude of things which are to try us, call for our thanks just as sincerely as do the things we enjoy, for "all things work together for good to them that love God." If the "all things" work for our good, then we should give thanks for the "all things.

But how about the weaknesses and tendencies of our own fleshly minds and bodies-do not these often, cause, us to stumble? And how about Satan and the principalities and powers arrayed against us to entrap us and bring to naught God's purpose concerning us? Are we to give thanks for these? Yes, we can even be thankful for these; not because they have become what they are, but because,, under God's overruling providence, -they become invaluable in our-development. If the deed of Joseph's brethren,- which they meant for evil, could become (under the providence of God) an' experience for good, (Gen. 45:5-8) , and if all of Satan's power and cunning, exercised directly and indirectly,, against Jesus could become the cup poured out by His, Father, is it too much to believe that God scan work the same wonders for us? "Moab is my washpot." - Psa. 108:9.

The text concludes with a statement most important to us, a statement which, if it always continues the expression of our hearts, will make all our efforts and prayers and thanksgiving acceptable unto God; but if rejected, nothing we can do will be acceptable. May God help us always to recognize and remember, that only "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the merit of His, blood is there any possibility of salvation or reward for our endeavors -to serve and praise Him.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."
- J. T. Read.

What Say the Scriptures?

Basic Bible Studies No. 3 - The First Man, Adam

"God made from one every nation of men." - Acts 17:26, R. S. V.

THE Bible declares itself as the only revealed religion, and sets itself as such over against all other religions, which are represented as all products of the art and device of man. Its great theme is the eventual mental, moral, and physical regeneration of the human race through the beneficent arrangement of an intelligent Creator, with a view to their eternal blessing. This magnificent purpose is delineated in a Plan of the Ages traceable through all of its sixty-six books -- a fact indicative of divine supervision in its compilation. Its pages embrace the creation of original man perfect; the entrance of disobedience, sin, and death; the temporary permission of evil; the restorative reign of a Messiah, and the Ages of Glory to follow. To authenticate the certainty of this purpose, the introductory chapter of the first book, Genesis, is devoted to a most remarkable account of the Creative steps -- phenomena to which no human mind was witness. The record of later events named in the Bible *might* have been handed down without divine inspiration by the ordinary processes of human tradition. Here alone such a tradition was plainly impossible unless (as seems to be the fashion today) the record be degraded from a Divine message into mere human speculation.

One recalls Leonardo da Vinci's words: "Let there be no interference with the Holy Scriptures, for they are the supreme truth."

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

What are some of the viewpoints regarding this creative record?

The past century, with the rise of evolutionary biology and geology, has witnessed a seemingly irreconcilable conflict between Genesis and science. We have statements such as Jean Paul Richter's: "The first leaf of the Mosaic record has more weight than all the folios of men of science and philosophers." This noble tribute is in direct contrast with Herbert Spencer's harsh words: "The belief in special creations of organisms [as taught in Genesis] is a belief that arose among men during the era of profoundest darkness, and belongs to a family of beliefs which have nearly all died out, as enlightenment has increased'... . The hypothesis of special creations turns out to be worthless; worthless by its derivation, worthless in its intrinsic incoherence, worthless as absolutely without evidence, worthless as not supplying an intellectual need, worthless as not satisfying a moral want."

Consider on the other hand the words of one of the greatest geologists, Professor J. D. Dana, and written shortly before his death:

"Geologists vary much as to their views on this chapter [Gen. 1]; and some will take it literally, affirming that it is a mere fable, no better than other fables in ancient history. We would ask of all such (as well as of the nature-doubting exegete) a reconsideration of the question; and if they have doubts with regard to the authenticity of the Bible itself, they may perhaps be held, after a fair examination of the narrative, and a consideration of the coincidences between its history and the history of the earth derived from nature, to acknowledge a divine origin for both; and to recognize the fact that in this introductory chapter its divine Author gives the fullest endorsement of the Book which is so prefaced. It is his own inscription on the title-page."

So bitter was the controversy that in 1865, at a meeting of the British Association of Science, a manifesto was drawn up and signed by 617 scientists who felt impelled to declare their belief in the ultimate harmony of Scripture and natural science. A copy was deposited in the Bodleian Library of Oxford. The text reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned students of the Natural Sciences, desire to express our sincere regret that researches into scientific truth are perverted by some in our own times into occasions for casting doubts upon the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

"We conceive that it is impossible for the Word of God as written in the Book of Nature, and God's Word written in Holy Scripture to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ.

"We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete, but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us only to see as through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular.

"We cannot but deplore that Natural Science should be looked upon with suspicion by many who do not make a study of it, merely on account of the unadvised manner in which some are placing it in opposition to Holy Writ.

"We believe that it is the duty of every scientific student to investigate Nature simply for the purpose of elucidating truth, and that if he finds that some of his results appear to be in contradiction to the written Word, or rather to his own interpretation of it, which may be erroneous, he should not presumptuously affirm that his own conclusions must be right, and the statements of Scriptures wrong. Rather leave the two side by side until it shall please God to allow us to see the manner in which they may be reconciled; and instead of insisting upon the seeming differences between Science and the Scriptures, it would be as well to rest in faith upon the points in which they agree."

Unfortunately, these salutary words are largely lost to the Science of our generation. An age which has seen amazing progress in the knowledge of the physical universe is also an age of increasing disbelief in God, and in the Bible as his revealed Word. To confess an intelligent Creator as the Cause of the wonders about us is seemingly anathema to our learned men. Strange hypotheses of every sort are substituted for the honest confession a child can make. It is written: "Great men are not always wise." Nevertheless here and there can yet be found a statement from some deep student of the sciences which is in refreshing contrast to the prevalent infidelity. One such is that of W. M. Smart, Regius Professor of astronomy in the University of Glasgow, who closes his learned recent volume, "The Origin of the Earth," with these words

"Our study in this book has been concerned with inanimate matters ranging from the nimble electron to galaxies of unimagined grandeur. The achievements recorded in the previous chapters have been many and even, on occasions, spectacular and certainly beyond disparagement; nowhere, however, have we touched the greatest topic of all -- man's place and destiny in this marvelous creation. Our study has been one of the stage only, and we have learned much about its construction, properties, lighting, and so on, but we have been in no position to investigate the characters, the aspirations or even the foibles of the actors, and, most important of all, the mind of the Author, in the background, who has created the play.

"When we study the universe and appreciate its grandeur and orderliness, it seems to me that we are led to the recognition of a Creative Power and Cosmic Purpose that transcends all that our limited minds can comprehend. In one of his essays, Lord Bacon expressed this belief picturesquely as follows: 'I had rather believe all the Fables in the Legend and the Talmud and the Alcoran than that this Universal Frame is without a Mind.' Today we have learned very much more about the 'Universal Frame' than was known in Bacon's time; nevertheless, to many of us, scientific and non-scientific

alike, the belief in a Divine Creator is as necessary now as ever it was. To one astronomer at least 'The Heavens are telling the Glory of God and the Wonder of His Works.'

THE CREATION DOCUMENT

Let us consider for ourselves this highly controversial first chapter of the Bible. We need not be concerned with its biological and geological teachings, resting assured that the wonderful simplicity and grandeur of its words have a meaning in advance of science and independent of it, running, as it were, round the outer margin of all possible discovery. Science may pursue her boundless course and multiply her discoveries in the heavens and the earth, but it can never "do anything against the truth, but for the truth." Let us briefly linger over some of the separate jewels of truth in this chapter, considering first its opening words

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Thus with majestic abruptness, the Bible, in contrast to the reasonings of men, directs us to the primal Cause. We turn back the pages of time to search out the origin of the world and of our race only to meet this sublime declaration, *In the beginning*, God. We may wander through the interminable ages of geology but will come at length to this terminus, *In the beginning*, God. We may roam the whole field of speculative philosophy but shall reach only this same sublime result, *In the beginning*, God. This sentence denies atheism, denies polytheism, denies materialism, denies pantheism, denies fatalism. Instead, it declares the being of God, it confesses the one eternal Creator, it asserts the creation of matter, it announces the existence of God before all things and apart from them, and reveals the freedom of action of the Eternal Being. All the subsequent communications of this grand chapter do not outweigh the great introductory sentence of the Word of God.

Within the sentence itself are two words of singular significance. The first, "God," translates the Hebrew word "elohim, which is a plural noun, though followed by a verb in the singular. Various have been the explanations advanced. The Rabbis look upon it as an *intensive* to express the majesty of Him to whom it is applied. Other scholars see in it a proof that Monotheism rose on the ruins of a polytheistic faith which worshiped the true God under many names. Thus "elohim" comprehending by one name everything called divine, a plural conceived and construed as a singular, became the name by which the monotheistic age of Abraham was inaugurated. Another suggestion, that the word signifies a plurality of persons in a unity of substance, is inadmissible. Such an interpretation does violence to reason, and furthermore, is at variance with the philosophy of the ransom-sacrifice expounded in the New Testament. The word "elohim" actually signifies *mighty*, and like the English word "sheep," is used either in the singular or plural as occasion may require. In the Bible it is applied to the Deity, to angels, and to great men. Of this latter class two examples may suffice. In Genesis 23:6, in reference to Abraham we read: "Thou art a *mighty* [elohim] prince among us." In Exodus 7:1, Moses is also thus called: "I have made thee a *god* [elohim] to Pharaoh."

The second remarkable word in the opening sentence of Genesis is the Hebrew word "bara," translated "created." This word occurs over forty times in the Old Testament. It is never used as the word for human creations (for which three other words are reserved) but in each case defines a creative act, a distinctive power of God, which man cannot even approach. Man can make, form, or build, but only God can bring into existence what had no existence before. This stupendous thought -- that God created the universe from *nothing*, and not out of formless matter coeval with himself -- was considered "unscientific" until recently; for to science, matter was uncreatable and indestructible. The advance of theoretical physics has disproved this long accepted hypothesis and unwittingly corroborated the lone witness for thousands of years of this Hebrew word "bara," that creation is a Divine act -- the evidence of God!

The next two verses reveal additional gems of truth. We read that "the spirit of God *moved* [literally "brooded" or "hovered"] upon the face of the waters. And God said, Light, be."

Two phenomena resulted from these earliest Divine acts following the Creation-matter was energized and light was manifested (not created). These two simple statements are exactly in accord with the scientifically recognized basic steps for the formation of all things. Nuclear studies have revealed the astounding fact that subatomic entities when acted upon by electrical forces can be transmuted into any of the ninety-two chemical elements which compose all matter. Light is simply matter in its freest form. Powerful radiation of various kinds is now known to exist. The familiar X rays used in medical photography easily pass through flesh and bone, though they cannot penetrate one-sixteenth inch of lead plate. On the other hand the amazing cosmic rays, which reach the earth from interstellar space, penetrate *six feet* of lead! The action of such forces on the material world is still a large mystery. The power (spirit) which "brooded" upon the face of the waters emanated from God and was consequently of an infinitely higher order. There is an awesome quality in the brevity of Biblical statements which encompass such vast fields of scientific and philosophic thought.

Considering the chapter as a whole we note that the work of ordering and filling the earth in preparation for man was subdivided into six "days." The Bible does not say how long a period elapsed between the *beginning*, when God created the heaven and the earth, and the *beginning* of the creative week. This we may leave to be determined by geologists, with however the sincere wish that before their conclusions they would more seriously contemplate the physical effects resulting from a cataclysm of the Cyclopean proportions of the Biblical Flood, evidence for which is continually being uncovered by their own researches in earth's crust. As regards these six "days," inasmuch as they are nowhere declared to be twenty-four hours long and the word is used in the Bible to describe periods of various length, we may reasonably conclude that in this creative week they represent epochs. Gladstone called them "chapters in the history of the creation." Attempts have been made to correspond them to the "Ages" of modern geology, but with limited success. A suggestion of some merit, based on the Jewish Jubilee Cycle instituted by Moses (who is believed also to have written Genesis), considers these "days" as each seven thousand years long. On this theory, the six creative days, would cover a period of forty-two thousand years, closing with the creation of man. The seventh day of seven thousand years, God "rests" -- rests in the sense of ceasing to create. The period of Divine cessation from creative and energizing activity in connection with the earth, measures also man's "week"; six "days" of labor in the experience of sin, each a thousand years long, terminating in a seventh day, a Millennium of rest. This Millennial period of restitution under the beneficent reign of Christ, will uplift mankind to mental, moral, and physical perfection. Thus will close man's week of seven thousand years and God's week of forty-nine thousand years, ushering in the grand jubilee epoch of eternity, when there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain, and no more dying, because God's work of creation shall then have been completed so far as this earth is concerned. Significantly, under the Mosaic Law, all male children were circumcised (the mark of separation to God) on the eighth day. God's great eighth "day" will find humanity completely devoted to the doing of his will in conformity to the first and greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

Passing on, we note the Scripture language in reference to the creation of organic life:

"And the *earth brought forth* grass," etc.

"Let the *waters bring forth* the creeping creature," etc.

"Let the *earth bring forth* the living creature," etc.

Such language does not forbid the possibility that plants, water and land creatures were more or less developed or evolved, but only to the point where the species was *fixed*, each "after his kind" by God. Note the Bible record:

"The earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after its *kind*, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, after his *kind*."

"God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, with which the waters swarm, after their *kind*, and every winged fowl after its *kind*."

"God made the beast of the earth after its *kind*, and cattle after their *kind* and earth-reptiles after their *kind*."

These phrases involve the doctrine of the invariability of species; a fixation which is the stamp of the intelligent Creator upon his handiwork. The ingenuity of the human mind has never been able to pass this barrier. Argyll said: "The founding of new forms by the union of different species, even when standing in close natural relation to each other, is absolutely forbidden by the sentence of sterility which Nature pronounces and enforces upon all hybrid offspring. And so it results that man has never seen the origin of any species. Creation by birth is the only kind of creation he has ever seen; and from this kind of creation he has never seen a new species come." In which Agassiz concurs in briefer words: "Breeds (i.e., varieties) among animals are the work of man; species were created by God."

THE ORIGIN OF HUMAN LIFE

We consider finally the grandest work of the creative week -- the last act of the sixth day -- the creation of man. The sacred record reads: "And God said, We will make man in our image, and after our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every reptile that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them, and God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue and control it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

It becomes at once evident that there is a clearly drawn issue between the Bible's account of man's origin and that of the Evolution theory. The Bible knows of no pre-Adamite race. It presents the first man as created perfect; the moral and mental *image* of his Creator; as dominant over the lesser creatures, and so in miniature, a *likeness* of God in his universal rulership. Originally a being of dignity, created to glorify his Maker, his subsequent disobedience brought forth sin and its penalty death upon himself, and by their imperfect generation, upon his posterity. "For all," says St. Paul, "have sinned and come short of the glory of God." In consequence, (the Bible relates) the course of humanity has been downward, away from original perfection. But from this, as the result of divine redemptive love, they will be eventually rescued to a glorious and eternal destiny through the restitution processes of Messiah's Kingdom.

This doctrine of the original creation is no "crude fancy of ignorant peasants," but has prevailed for thousands of years. Among its firm believers are listed all the Prophets, the Apostles, and a host of philosophers, scientists, intellectual lights and standard-bearers of the leading nations of earth. It is bound up with the teaching of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, and the repudiation of it is a repudiation of the Bible as the inspired Revelation of God.

This simple narrative of Scripture is rejected with scorn by the theory of Evolution, which, denying the fall of man and, by consequence, his need of a Divine redemption, dispenses wholly with the Creator in the formation of the world. Laying hold of the partial variation which, by different means,

can be produced within the same *species*, it erects this into a fundamental law, by which specific distinctions may be disregarded and the whole world of living things fortuitously developed from obscure protoplasm. But all direct evidence of transmutation of species is wanting, and this assumed explanation of the origin of the human race remains a vague hypothesis beset by countless questions and immense difficulties. These however are brushed aside by a "faith" almost exceeding that required to move mountains, and which has now exalted the Evolution theory into a dogma of science not to be questioned.

Such is the great controversy, of our day -- one not to be resolved until the manifestation of Him who is to "restore all things." St. Paul testifies that "there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, *by* whom are all things," who, as the active agent of God created all things "that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." The Genesis record: "Let *us* make man in *our* image," reveals his presence with God in the creative operations. Later, in obedience to his Father's will he came in human form into the world, a world made by him, a world which recognized him not. Subsequent to his crucifixion as the world's redemptive sacrifice, a ransom or corresponding price for Adam (and in him the human race), he returned to his Father. Once again, but now in glorious majesty and power, shall he be manifested to an astounded world, to complete the wondrous work of redemption begun at Calvary.

In the words of the inspired Apostle:

"The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; The second man is from heaven. The first man Adam became a living being; The last Adam became a life-giving spirit."

- *W. J. Siekman*

(The subject of the fourth article in this series will be: "The Wages of Sin.")

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

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

The Seed of the Woman

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." -Genesis 3:15.

IN LUKE 1:26-38 we read of the visit of the angel to Mary with the announcement of the selection of herself to be the mother of the long expected Messiah. As there have been many claims by men, women, and children of having had visions of angels, of Mary, and even of Jesus, we must test this account of the angelic visit, and the subsequent birth of Jesus to a virgin, by the consistent testimony of Scripture. In doing so we will find that there is a line of prophecy which terminates in the virgin birth of Jesus to a descendant of the lineage of David.

Our faith, as Christians, in great measure is based on this testimony to the virgin birth. If God is not directly the father of Jesus, then we have a weak link in our chain of theological reasoning, for this affects the value of the sacrifice of Jesus as "a ransom for all" and as an offering for sin. Had Jesus been a wonder worker, but still of Adamic stock (and therefore under condemnation), his life given in sacrifice would have had no justifying, sanctifying, redemptive value, and so would have vitiated the central doctrine of the New Testament: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," and also that Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." It would have made void the declaration of Paul in Romans 1:3, 4 and Romans 4:25 that Jesus "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead . . ." "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

The first statement of Scripture which has reference to a possible virgin birth is in Genesis 3:15. After the transgression in Eden, in connection with the judgment put upon the Serpent, the Lord God spoke these prophetic words: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Notice that it is "her seed." Further we read in Gen. 3:20: "Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." Adam's confession of faith in this promise is manifested in so naming her; for when she was first brought to him he called her, simply, Woman. At that time she was already the potential mother of the race according to Genesis 1:27, 28: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it." But, now, Adam not being deceived as to the death consequence for disobedience (1 Tim. 2:14), and believing that life would be restored through the seed of the woman, calls his wife's name Eve, which in the marginal reading is "living." He evidently understood that he could bequeath only dying to his offspring (how few or many he could not know), whereas the woman was to be the mother of "all living." The word living is to be understood as being a substantive, not an adjective, -- not all living people, not just the mother of the race, but the mother of "living," or "life giver." That God accepted or honored this faith of Adam is seen in his providing skins of animals as a covering for their nakedness, as we read: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them"; thus setting forth the great fundamental truth of Scripture that "without shedding of blood [life poured out in sacrifice] there is no remission" of sins. - Hebrews 9:22.

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

Prior to the call of Abram to leave Ur of the Chaldees there was no such division of people as we now know as Jew and Gentile, for the word gentile (Hebrew Goyim) simply means non-covenant

people. But when God called Abram and gave a promise to him, Abram by this very call was set apart from all others of the race; he only was in covenant relationship with Deity, all others now became non-covenant, Gentiles. And, further, when the covenant was confirmed to Abraham and his seed (Gen. 22:15-18), from henceforth his descendants became a covenant people, all others Gentiles. This distinction is noted by Paul in Ephesians 2:11-19; "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles . . . That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." That is, brought into covenant relationship as the Seed of Abraham to bring blessings to "all the nations of the earth." - Genesis 22:18.

THE SON OF DAVID

By a covenant with David as recorded in 2 Samuel 7:1-16, the promise of a Messiah was limited to the family of David together with this strange, enigmatical statement: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee . . . *I will be his father, and he shall be my son.*"

We can detect the puzzlement of the author of Psalm 89, when, after prophetically writing that David's Seed and throne would continue forever, he muses: "What man liveth and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" - Psa. 89:48.

A VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE HOUSE OF DAVID

In the days of Samuel, when the demand was made for a visible king and a king was given to Israel, Jehovah did in no sense abdicate his right to rule over them. By the covenant at Sinai they were joined to him as his peculiar people, subject to his laws and rule (Ex. 24:8; Heb. 9:20). All the kings of Israel sat on the throne which was in reality Jehovah's throne, as we read: "Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father" - 1 Chron. 29: 23.

But though sitting on the throne of the Lord, there were but few kings of whom it is written: "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." Many were unbelievers, and scoffed at the messages of the prophets that delivered to them God's instructions. In the days of Ahaz, when he refused to ask a sign of Jehovah (see Isa. 7:1-14) with no limit attached ("ask it either in the depth, or in the height above," which means that he could ask what was to him humanly impossible), Isaiah was instructed to give a sign: "Hear ye now, O house of David ... therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." We note that the prophecy was not given to Ahaz as a person, but to the "house of David." It was a continuing prophecy until the literal fulfillment. The "us" of Isaiah 9:6, 7 refers to the house of David: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder" - a government that would result in lasting peace; "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end ... to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever."

SOLOMON'S LINE ELIMINATED

After the removal of the ten-tribe kingdom by the Assyrians, the Davidic house continued to reign over Judah until the final overthrow of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. There the line of David as descended from Solomon ceased forever (Ezek. 21:18-27). It happened this way: Nebuchadnezzar had removed Jehoiakin after only three months' reign, and had established his

uncle Zedekiah on the throne of Judah. But when doing so, the Chaldean king made Zedekiah swear by Jehovah that he would not rebel, but would render such yearly tribute as was specified (2 Chron. 36: 13). Zedekiah violated that oath, and Jehovah considered that violation as compromising himself. For this Zedekiah is called "thou profane and wicked prince," as we read: "As I live, surely mine oath that he has despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head." "Thou profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him." - Ezekiel 17:19; Eze. 21:25-27.

Efforts have been made by the Anglo-Israelite theory to connect the royal house of Britain with a supposed daughter of Zedekiah, claiming that Jeremiah had taken this supposed daughter to Ireland where she was married to an Irish prince, and that from them descended the royal family of England. But nowhere in Scripture is the genealogy reckoned through mothers; always it is thus: "Abraham begat Isaac"; "Isaac begat Jacob"; "Jesse begat David"; etc., until we come to Matthew 1:16 where we read: "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." In the line of kings given in the third chapter of 1 Chronicles no women are found. In the genealogical table of Jesus, Luke does not mention any women, although Matthew lists four: Tamar, Rachab, Ruth, and the wife of Urias, evidently for a special reason, but they are not in the line of descent. In all cases the generation is attributed to men. As we understand the matter, the life principle is passed from father to child, so that the life force flowing in the veins of the whole race is the same life force that was in Adam. It is of importance to grasp this fact in order to appreciate the relationship of Jesus to both God and man.

THE TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW AND LUKE

It was necessary for the salvation of the race of Adam that one should appear who had a life not derived from Adam, not under condemnation, one who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," that he might lay down this life for us. That Jesus perfectly fulfilled this necessity is the clear testimony of the New Testament writers.

Actually, the Gospels were not written until some years after the death of Christ. This was due to the expectation of the soon return of Jesus, according to his own words, "I will come again and receive you unto myself"; and the words of the angel in Acts 1:11: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven." As time went on without the expected return, many began to commit to writing what was remembered of Jesus -- his life, his works, his teachings. It is very evident that the synoptic writers had recourse to such material in compiling their testimony of Jesus. But they selected and arranged their findings according to whom they were writing and the purpose they had in mind. Thus Matthew, writing for Jewish readers, sees Jesus as the King of the Jews, the long promised Messiah; Luke presented Jesus to the Greek mind as the ideal man, the universal Savior.

Matthew 1:18-25: "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the holy spirit." Joseph, being minded to put her away privately, was visited by an angel in a dream, and was told "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the holy spirit . . . Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son . . . Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him . . . and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son; and he called his name Jesus." This information, which Matthew records,

could only have been supplied by Joseph, for only he could have known the intimate details revealed here.

Luke, writing to a "most excellent Theophilus," says that he had investigated from their source all things accurately in order that Theophilus might know the reliability concerning the things in which he had been instructed (Luke 1:1-4). If a report of a virgin birth were circulated today, we dare say that there would be hardly a scientist, or physician that would not be deeply interested in it, and follow the investigation of the report.

So Luke, himself being a physician, naturally would be sure to make careful inquiry and investigation before giving an account of the birth of Jesus to a virgin. The information which he gives could have come from no one else but Mary, for, as in the case of Matthew's account, it contains much of private thoughts and reactions which would have been unknown to others. Mary being "troubled at the angel's saying"; and how "she cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be"; and her questioning "how shall this be?" Then, further, Mary's acquiescence: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." And then the incident of the visit of Mary to Elizabeth, and Elizabeth's testimony that "as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe [John] leaped in my womb for joy."

Century after century had passed, civilizations had risen and fallen, until "when the fulness of the time was come God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" in fulfillment of the Edenic promise of a life-giver who is to bruise the Serpent's head. No wonder the heavenly host sang "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will toward men. For unto you is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Many questions, and claims, and objections have been advanced seeking to nullify the virgin birth. They are but schemes of the Serpent, working through deceived ones (2 Cor. 4:4) as he carries on the conflict of enmity prophesied in Genesis 3:15. As Paul warns: "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." This is a favorite role of the Serpent, beginning in Eden. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

John, in his first epistle, testifies "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." - 1 John 5:10, 11.

- F. A. Essler

Touched With the Feeling of Our Infirmities

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." - Heb. 4:15.

WHILE in this our judgment day we find great comfort in this blessed assurance, realizing as we do our own weaknesses and shortcomings and manifold temptations, we call to mind this statement now for another purpose; *viz.*, to remind the members of the elect Church of God who are to constitute the Royal Priesthood of the new dispensation, that they, like their Lord and Head, must also be touched with the feeling of the world's infirmities, else they would be totally unfit for so exalted and responsible a position.

In the Royal Priesthood of that Age, the world is to have the same comfort in its priesthood that we in our present infirmities find in Christ. For this cause, chiefly, we apprehend that the priesthood is chosen from among men -that redeemed men who were once in the same plight with all the rest of humanity, being thus exalted to the divine nature with all its power to bless, might also, from their past experience and observations while they were men amongst men, be qualified to be very wise and merciful priests, knowing well how to deal with the poor sin-sick world; and that the world might find comfort and consolation in the realization of such sympathy.

Such being the mission of the Church in the not far distant future, all who expect to be of its approved membership in glory should now be cultivating a broad and generous sympathy for all their fellows of the "groaning creation" -- a sympathy which considers the weaknesses and temptations, mental, moral, and physical -- of fallen men, and which is ready to forgive and to help the repentant erring; a sympathy illustrated by the verse --

"A bending staff I would not break,
A feeble faith I would not shake;
Nor even rudely pluck away
The error which some truth may stay,
Whose sudden loss might leave without
A shield against the shafts of doubt."

It is not enough that we know the truth and rejoice in hope of a future personal exaltation: we must not forget the very object of that exaltation -- the blessing of all the families of the earth -- and the present duty of conformity to the word and example of our Lord, that thus by his Word and Providence he may fit us for the duties and honors to which he has called us. Only by so doing can we make our calling and election sure.

If we turn our eyes to the Pattern, we see in our Lord Jesus one who was deeply moved at the sight of human degradation, moral and physical. So must it be with all his followers. We must be in sympathy with every impulse of the world which is toward righteousness and reformation of character and life; we must rejoice at every movement that is made in this direction; and our sympathies should go out toward all who are laboring for the common uplifting as well as for all the oppressed everywhere. And so we trust they do. We sympathize with the temperance work and would not have one abandon the ranks of its laborers, except to engage in the higher work of this harvest time, to which the elect, consecrated sons of God are now specially called. And we say, God bless every truly philanthropic heart and hand that is trying to rescue the unfortunate victims of strong drink! We would have all such go on until the Master, noting their zeal, where it

springs from love to him, shall say, "It is enough; come up higher"-to the higher work, the harvesting or gathering together of his elect from the four winds" (Matt. 24:31)....

Dearly beloved of the consecrated household, let us not forget to keep in touch with the groaning creation; to sympathize with its sorrows and its woes; to realize its deep degradation and misery; to remember its frailties, its awful burden of hereditary taints and consequent weaknesses; its present environments of ignorance and superstition; and its long established errors of public sentiment; remembering that we too are still in the sinful flesh, and that the motions of sin are still often painfully manifest in us, in some directions, at least, if not in many. And as the cries of the groaning creation come up into the ears of the Lord of hosts (James 5:4) with strong and pathetic pleading to his loving heart, so let them come into our ears and gain our sympathies, and quicken our zeal to cooperate with our Heavenly Father's plan for the establishment of his Kingdom of righteousness and peace.

But let us bear in mind that a real pity for the world, a full sympathy with every good work of reform, and an active cooperation with God in the necessary preparation for our great future work, imply also that we have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness and that our lives be a standing rebuke to them. "How," says the Apostle, "shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" . . .

It should be our constant effort, therefore, to seek to discern the course of righteousness on every question of moral obligation, and to see to it that our conduct, our sympathies and our influence, however small, are on the side of righteousness. In this day of searching judgment it should be observed that every principle of moral obligation is being brought forward for searching examination... .

But right and truth must and shall prevail when the Kingdom has been established (Matt. 6:10; Luke 12:32; Luke 22:29), however feeble now may be the voices lifted in their defense. Let our sentiments and our course of action always be noble and pure, and on the right side of every subject that comes forward for ventilation and investigation; for we should be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

- *C. T. Russell*

True Worshipers

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall, worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him - John 4:23.

PAUL prayed for the Philippians that their love might "abound yet more and more in knowledge and all judgment; that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence ... being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:9-11).

In religion the natural tendency of man is to go beyond the bounds of moderation and right judgment and what is written, and to fall into extravagances, unbalanced views and wrong conceptions in all directions. Hence the religion of some is nothing but exterior performances, rites, ceremonies, churchgoing, reading prayers, or other mere routine formalities. With others it is a mere intellectual affair, a cold mental knowing, learning, and understanding without regard to anything further. To be able to talk theology, and to be ready with arguments to defend their faith against skepticism or criticism or heresy, is their ideal of a Christian. With some it is a simple morality which makes nothing of creeds or churches, too weak to hold convictions in any definite shape. People of inquisitive or speculative turn of mind are in great danger of taking theology for faith and of substituting doctrines, inferences, theoretical subtleties, Pharisaic niceties for Christian purity. Others of dominating inclination transform the Christian life into pretentious activities, arrogant assertions, malignant faultfinding, heresy-hunting. All these are systems of acknowledging truths and opinions that play about the head but impart no warmth to the region of the heart.

When we consider that an important part of our constitution inheres in our affections and how powerful they are in determining our course of life, it is absurd to suppose that God has given us a faith capable of saving us and making us his true children, in which the affections are not at least as much concerned as the intellect.

There is no right or saving Christianity into which the warm and, living affections do not enter. If God is to be loved, he must be loved ardently, supremely. If Jesus is the friend, which the Scriptures represent him to be, there is due him an attachment stronger than death. If the soul is worth anything, it is above all valuation, and no earnestness for its security and salvation can be too great. If the interests of man stretch beyond the present life and through an eternity of existence, it is impossible to be too much moved, anxious and alive in all the springs and impulses in looking after and taking care of those interests.

If you have no heart, no relish, no pleasure, no satisfaction in devotion, prayer and the worship of God, then question your piety and consider your faith a failure. If you have never felt the luxury of doing good, of being loving, kind, and true, and if your soul never warms to the Savior who died for you, and your nature never kindles and thrills, and your heart never glows with joyous, living gratitude, admiration and love towards him who so loved us, then conclude that you know nothing yet aright of the "glorious Gospel."

Men have warmth, zeal, hope, intense desire for everything else. How can it be possible to be genuine Christians without these for the Lord Jesus Christ and his service, for truth and good, for perishing souls, for fellow believers, for the favor of God, and for the blessed things of an eternal heaven?

Only when these, through earnest, persistent supplication and by the mighty power of God, the holy spirit, are burned in our inmost heart and welded to our deepest being as part and parcel of ourselves, can we attain to that which the Scriptures so much desire us to attain, "to abound in," to be "rooted and grounded" in Christ.

- Joseph Seiss

Entered Into Rest

John R. Callahan, Lynchburg, Va.
Annie Carter, Bury, England
Dorothy Carter, Liverpool, England
Will Crawford, Ilford, England
Ethel Edge, Downham Market, England
Stephen Kwolek, Milford, Mich.
Edna Marshall, Bronx, N.Y.
Robert L. Merchant, Grand Rapids, Mich.
Leonard Renton, Bristol, England
H. C. Underwood, Bristol, England
Rose T. Willie, Richmond, Va.
Mrs. A. Withers, Santa Barbara, Cal.