

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. LVII July / August, 1974 No. 4

World Population, Food Problems and the Hope of Mankind

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." - John 5:28, 29.

In a feature article in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* of May 4-5, 1974, the World Population and Food Problems are discussed at some length:

"... The voices of doom are being heard with increasing frequency and volume.

"They are not coming from wild-eyed, long-haired, robed fanatics carrying placards proclaiming the end of the world tomorrow. The modern doomsayers are sober, respected, responsible scientists who are warning us that the world as we know it is coming to an end. Fairly soon now.

"What they see is a devastating human tidal wave, perhaps some years away, but nevertheless approaching at an inexorable pace.

"The twofold problem, simply stated, is this: First, the population of the world is growing too fast; each year there are 75 million more mouths to feed. Second, the demand for food, fuel and natural resources is outstripping the earth's ability to provide them. We are on a collision course with disaster.

"Most experts agree we are in serious trouble. They differ only in their estimates of how severe the problem will be. Some predict catastrophe, others believe the problem is rough but still solvable.

"At the very least, it appears, we are in for some profound changes."

Among the scientists quoted in the article are: Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission; Dr. Garrett Hardin, professor of human ecology at the University of California in Santa Barbara; Dr. Ian L. McHarg, of the University of Pennsylvania, an expert on ecological planning; Dr. J. George Harrar, president emeritus of the Rockefeller Foundation and principal architect of the "green revolution"; Dr. Preston Cloud, the University of California geobiologist; as well as unnamed scientists from six other nations and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"To many experts," the article continues, "one of the most unsettling things is that few ordinary citizens realize we are in a severe bind. The idea generally is dismissed in America because it simply seems preposterous in our affluent culture. And in the underdeveloped countries, where the problem is the most severe, there appears to be a general helplessness, a total inability to cope with it...."

"We are perhaps more responsible for the future of mankind than any other generation. The problem is sheer numbers. More than 4,000 years ago, there probably were only about 200 million people on earth. By the end of this year, there will be close to 4 billion. The United Nations has declared 1974 as World Population Year to make people aware of the population problem."

In view of the timeliness of these subjects, we reprint below, in condensed form, an article published in these pages in October 1950. It not only discusses Population and Food Problems, but indicates their scriptural solution, and offers some observations on the "Hope of Mankind."

ONE OF the propositions which "to us the Scriptures teach" is stated on the second page of this journal in the following words:

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

Our older readers are aware that nearly fifty years ago, in the celebrated Eaton-Russell debates, these Millennial hopes were criticized by Dr. Eaton on the grounds 'that there was not sufficient land surface on the earth to accommodate all the people who had lived from Adam's day to ours, so that a literal resurrection, as human beings on this earth, was an impossibility. His words, in part, were as follows:

"This Millennial doctrine encounters a very serious difficulty. If the world's population had doubled each century for the past sixty-which seems a very reasonable estimate -- the present population of the earth would be two and one-third quintillions of people. That would cover over the fifty millions of square miles of land surface on (this globe with people as thickly as they could stand, four thousand deep. If each were five feet high, they would reach up into the sky nearly four miles. No doubt enough people have been born to make that number."

It will also be recalled that Pastor C. T. Russell, in debate with Dr. Eaton, thoroughly examined this criticism and showed:

(1) That Dr. Eaton's estimate of two and one third quintillions of people was a gross exaggeration -- seventy million times too large -- that a figure somewhere between ten and thirty billions would be much closer and

(2) That the ability of the earth to furnish all those with habitation and food was ample; and that this was especially true when Making into consideration the Lord's promise that in the coming Millennial day the earth would yield her increase, and her desert and wilderness places become like Eden, the garden of the Lord. - Ezek. 34:27; Isa. 51:3; 35:1.

However, it will also be recalled that after proving the position of Anti-millennialists to be untenable, Pastor Russell extended the discussion to show not only that the Millennium, must come, but that it must come *soon*; that if it were to be delayed (not fifty thousand years, as Dr. Eaton expected, but only one thousand, it would be literally impossible;* and that even if it were delayed only three *hundred* years, "there would be room for an argument on the possibility of God's promise of restitution of all things spoken." - Acts 3:19-21.

*In this he was in agreement with the celebrated naturalist Charles Darwin, who, in his "Origin of Species," wrote: "In less than one thousand years, there would literally not be standing room for his [man's] progeny."

Consequently, since God's promise is sure, the result of the examination of the question was to strengthen faith in the belief that its fulfillment, *due to commence at the Second Advent of Christ, could not be long delayed. The time was, indeed, at hand.*

Pastor Russell's defense of the Bible doctrine of the World's Millennial Hope took place nearly fifty years ago -- October 29, 1903 to be exact. What is the outlook today? Today it seems that his 300 year computation is confirmed by competent writers on the subject, as witness the following:

Guy Irving Burch, in the Population Bulletin ** states that "in 1940 the population of the earth was a little over two billion."

** Published by the Population Reference Bureau, a non-profit scientific educational organization located in Washington, D. C., founded in 1929 for the purposes of gathering, correlating, and distributing population data.

Kingsley Davis, of the Office of Population Research, Princeton University, is quoted by Burch as saying: "Should the present global population continue to increase at the same rate that prevailed between 1900 and 1940, the earth would hold over twenty-one billion by the year 2240"; -- that is to say, by approximately 300 years from now. (Pastor Russell's estimate was sixteen billion in 300 years from 1903.)

Warren S. Thompson, in his book "Danger Spots in World Population" tells us: "China might send forth six million emigrants each year and still increase in population at home."

The Red Cross Commission to China in 1928-29 said: "It is estimated that if all the ships in the world now engaged in passenger traffic on, the seven seas were withdrawn from their usual routes and were devoted solely to transporting Chinese from their native land to other countries, they could not keep up with the growth of population."

Guy Irving Burch, commenting on the last two items quoted, says: "The above statements may be applied also to India, and if the high death rate of Russia were lowered to the level of that of the United States, the statement might be applied in a decade or so to that country." And again: "We

have mentioned before . . . that if India's death rate were lowered to the level of that of the United States, with her present birth rate India could populate at least five earths as large as ours, in a single century. The same statement applies to China." Elsewhere he writes: "In India, according to British official records, the population increased fifty million between the 1930 and 1940 census periods, notwithstanding that one out of four die on or before their second birthday."

WORLD POPULATION AND THE "FOUR FREEDOMS"

"Today the whole world is divided between human slavery and human freedom-between pagan brutality and the Christian ideal. We choose human freedom -- which is the Christian ideal."

Thus spake the late President Roosevelt in his historic address on the evening of May 28, 1941. Then, after observing that it was possible for the seeds of the present menace to human liberty to be planted and allowed to grow only in a world such as the post-war world of the 1920's, which "we will not (again) accept," he went on to say, "We will accept only a world consecrated to freedom of speech and expression -- freedom of every person to worship God in his own way-freedom from want and freedom from terrorism."

The next day Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden stated Britain's war aims. He called for permanent guarantee of the "four freedoms" mentioned by President Roosevelt. He spoke of "a new moral order" in the world, in which there will be no starving peoples, in which nations will trade at will and to mutual advantage, in which there will be work for all and assurances that chaos must not come again to this world. He envisioned the establishment of social security in all lands.

Unfortunately details as to how this "new moral order" is to be secured and the "four freedoms" established do not appear in either speech. Nor are 'we ourselves able to furnish these details, much as we can and do sympathize with their objectives. We know only that God has, indeed, promised a world such as these statesmen hoped to see -- one even better than they hoped, and that His promise is certain of fulfillment. Meantime we are determined not to *think* or *speak* or *do* anything that might tend to discourage in the slightest degree, those who, in high places, are filled with such ideals, and who are laboring to accomplish them in the earth. On the contrary let us pray for such, and, to the extent of our ability, cooperate with them to those ends. - 1 Tim. 2:1-3.

We must not, however, indulge in wishful thinking; and that is what millions of people do engage in, when they suppose that good will and technology alone, or even with the aid of a strong international police force, can free all the people of the world from want. Certainly they are not free from want now, as was pointed out by Clinton P. Anderson, who, as Secretary of Agriculture, in his radio address June 15, 1946 said:

"The present food crisis isn't an unusual situation-it's only unusually *severe*. There's never enough food in the world to give every one what he needs to eat, at any given moment. Two-thirds of the world's people are chronically undernourished."

During the Second World War the U. S. Office of War Information issued a pamphlet entitled "The United Nations Fight for the Four Freedoms," which says:

". . . beyond any doubt, men now possess the technical ability to produce in great abundance the necessities of daily life-enough for every one. This is a revolutionary and quite unprecedented condition on earth, which stimulates the imagination, and quickens the blood. . . . In the short space of a few decades we have changed scarcity to abundance and are now engaged in the

experiment of trying to live with our new and as yet unmanageable riches. The problem becomes one not of production, but of distribution and consumption."

Characterizing this statement as "a typical example of wishful thinking," Burch and Pendell, in their book "Human Breeding and Survival" further comment:

"That men now possess the technical ability to produce in great abundance the necessities of daily life is true. But that men can produce enough for 'every one' is certainly not 'beyond any doubt.' The huge death rates of two-thirds of the earth's people indicate that man is not producing enough for healthful living; and this fact suggests how much more is needed to provide for even the present population of the world. Yet population is very much on the move, and 'every one' fifty years from now will mean something quite different from what it means today. In 1900, 'every one' meant some 1,600,000,000 people. Today, notwithstanding two world wars and very high death rates in Asia and parts of Europe, it means about 2,500,000,000; and by the end of this century, at recent rates of increase, it may mean as many as 3,300,000,000 people."

It has been estimated that, with our present ability to produce, we could probably care adequately for a world population of three quarters of a billion people. H. G. Wells once said that one-half a billion was probably closer to a "right-sized" world population, under present-day conditions. Others who have carefully studied the subject are in agreement with Wells. Note the following:

"If each family in the world had a fair-sized house with its own yard; had meat to eat at least once a day and an adequate supply of fruits and milk; had proper medical care and lived in a healthful and stimulating climate; it is doubtful whether all these good things of life could be spread over more than 500,000,000 people at the present time." (Population Bulletin, December, 1948.)

In further support of this view we quote Colin Clark, the authority on international levels of living. In his book, "The Conditions of Economic Progress," he shows that:

"The oft-repeated phrases about poverty in the midst of plenty, and the problems of production having already been solved if only we understood the problems of distribution, turn out to be the most untruthful of all modern cliches."

BRITAIN'S POPULATION PROBLEM

Some idea of the vastness of this "population" problem -- and the urgency with which its solution must be found, may be seen from a study of the situation in Great Britain today. In the book by Colin Clark above referred to, figures are given showing the relative levels of living of thirty-four nations. The first seven are listed in the following order: United States, Canada, New Zealand, Great Britain, Switzerland, Argentina, Australia. Included in these it will be noted are five New World countries, where the ratio of population to land and natural resources is relatively low. Switzerland, of course, maintains its high level of living largely because of the rich tourist trade it enjoys.

Britain owes her place in this fortunate list because of her empire, on which "the sun never sets." But this list was prepared in 1940. It may be questioned if it would remain unchanged today. According to the June, 1949 Report of the Royal Commission on Population, Great Britain has more than two and one-half times as many people per square mile as Europe, and more than eleven times as many as the United States.

During the nineteenth century Britain was supreme in industrialization, trade, naval force, and investments abroad. Today this is no longer true, and the trend in her vital coal production, her exports and foreign investments has been decidedly downward. This trend was inevitable, but it has been hastened, since 1913, by two world wars. As a result she is caught with a surplus population; that is to say, a population larger than she can support from the combined yields of her land, industry, and foreign trade.

This large surplus population, estimated to be at least fifteen million, is almost certain to continue Britain's chronic crisis. Britain, -of course, has other problems. One which is perhaps better known is her acute "dollar" shortage-coming as the aftermath to World War II. However, this surplus population is not her *acute* problem; it threatens to be her *chronic* problem.

In the St. Louis Globe Democrat for December 26, 1949 there appeared an article containing a solution to this problem. It was captioned:

"FIFTEEN MILLION MUST EMIGRATE IF ENGLAND IS TO SURVIVE"

This solution was the suggestion of Dr. Burch, from whom we have already several times quoted. According to Burch, the emigration of some fifteen million, or approximately one-third of Britain's present population, to more thinly inhabited British areas, such as Australia, Canada, and parts of Africa, would not only prove advantageous to the emigrants themselves, but would help to make the United Kingdom self-supporting. The suggested mass migration, of some half-million a year for thirty years, would not be an easy job, Dr. Burch admits, and it would doubtless be at the expense of the United States. It is nevertheless his contention that it would be cheaper to move a 140 pound person *once*, than to move some 1,400 pounds of food, plus other raw materials, *every year*, to support that person if he remains in Britain.

The case of Britain, which has statesmen "at their wit's end" to solve, is not mentioned here because it is the world's foremost population and living problem. Quite to the contrary. It is intended to show that if in the case of such a country these problems have become so grave as to defy solution, what must they be in the rest of the world? How much we need to continue, and never to cease, to pray: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth."

"MAN'S EXTREMITY GOD'S OPPORTUNITY"

Just how the Almighty will bring Order out of this chaos we know not. That he will do so we are sure. This earth is his footstool (Isa. 66:1; Matt. 5:35; Acts 7:49), and he has declared it to be his intention to make the place of his feet glorious. (Isa. 60:13.) With us this would be impossible -- not so with him.

The food question will be solved-miraculously if need be, but more than likely it will be, done naturally. If a miracle is necessary our faith will not falter. Did not our Lord Jesus show us, in the feeding of the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, that to the power of the Creator, in his hands or in his Father's, it could be no greater difficulty to produce bread for a few thousand people, in an extraordinary (supernatural) way, than it is to produce, by ordinary (natural) methods, food for the supply of the teeming millions who daily feast at God's bountiful table. - Matt. 14:15-21.

But we doubt if such miracles will prove *necessary*. Under the new government shortly to be established when out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, the nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. That is to

say, the money now spent on the armies and navies of the world will be channeled into agricultural pursuits. *That* miracle will be enough, we think. - Isa. 2:2-4.

The population question will be solved-and that in a manner clearly stated by our Lord Jesus. Our readers will recall his answer to the Sadducees. (Luke 20:34-36.) At the close of the Millennium, when perfection shall have been reached, mankind will have become sexless -- in that respect they will then be like unto the angels. The marriage relationship, instituted (with the human family only) for the special purpose of producing a race, will have accomplished its purpose. The earth will be filled -- not over crowded with holy, happy, human beings, all doing right, not from compulsion, but from choice. Then he, our Lord Jesus Christ, having put down all rule, and authority, and power, having reigned until all enemies are under his feet, with death itself destroyed, shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. - 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

"No place shall be in that new earth
For all that blights this universe;
No evil taint the second birth --
There shall be no more curse.
Ye broken hearted, cease your moan;
The day of promise dawns for you;
For He who sits upon the throne
Says, 'I make all things new.'

"We mourn the dead, but they shall wake

The lost, but they shall be restored!
O! well our human hearts might break
Without that sacred word!
Dim eyes, look up! sad hearts, rejoice!
Seeing God's bow of promise through,
At sound of that prophetic voice:
'I will make all things new.'"

- P. L. Read.

The Army Corps of Christ

Verse I

The Army Corps of Jesus Christ is mustering above;
The royal standard has been raised, the banner of his love;
And one by one his soldiers true are answering his call,
Assembling for the Grand Review - they'll be there, one and all.

Verse II

See how they stand in serried ranks -those twelve complete brigades!
Of each tribe full twelve thousand men - their glory ne'er shall fade.
Each soldier has a hero proved; on many well-fought fields
Victors o'er self. Greater than they to whom a city yields.

Verse III

The King himself, on Zion's mount, is marshaling his band,
As Head o'er all things to his Church he takes supreme command.
Victorious o'er death and hell he leads them to the fight,
For God, for King, for Humankind, the Army of the Light!

Verse IV

Then when the war is fought and won and ev'ry knee has bowed,,
And ev'ry tongue is speaking forth JEHOVAH'S praise aloud,
When writing up the peoples that obey him, near and far,
The Father will record of these: "*They fought in Zion's war.*"

Chorus:

They're gathering in glory to attend the Grand Review;
Be ready when the call shall come, my comrade dear, for you;
Be ready, O be ready, for the call!

THE word "Corps" is derived from the Latin word meaning *a body*. An "Army Corps" is the largest military unit or single body of troops. It has represented in its organization every branch of the service, and so is complete in itself. An Army Corps consists of three or more Divisions, each Division containing three or more Brigades, and each Brigade is composed of a number of Regiments.

As every true Christian is a "good soldier of Jesus Christ," the Church as a whole, now organizing in glory, may be said to be his *Army Corps, or Body*.

Its further resemblance in organization to an earthly Army Corps is suggested in Revelation 7:4-8, where the twelve *Brigades* (called "tribes") composing it are specifically mentioned; and in Revelation 21:12, 13, where, under another figure, these twelve Brigades are grouped in four *Divisions* as the city's "gates" -- three opening toward each of the cardinal points of the compass.

The further details of its order and arrangement in glory are only hinted at in other Scriptures; but since it is particularly likened to the human body (1 Cor. 12), wherein every member to the tiniest nerve and artery has its special and essential function in ministering to the welfare of the whole, we may conclude that even so "He bath set every member in the body as it bath pleased him," and

not one is misplaced, superfluous, or forgotten. "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (1 Cor. 12:21). The Cavalry may not claim superiority over the Infantry, nor the Infantry be envious or jealous of the Artillery. All are alike necessary to the welfare and completeness of the Corps -- the Staff, the Line, Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers -- none can be spared. The Commander has assigned to each soldier his place and duty, and to him alone is each soldier finally accountable -- "to his own master he standeth or falleth."

This being the case we readily perceive why, in all the Scriptures bearing on this subject, the necessity is emphasized of the complete subordination of every member of the Corps to its Commander. The soldier who is insubordinate -- disobedient -- or the member of the body that is uncontrollable, is of no value to the body as a whole. It is axiomatic in military circles that he who has not learned *to obey* - promptly, willingly, cheerfully -- is not fit to command. As the members of the Church are being selected, tried, educated, *drilled* for positions of responsibility and power in the future life (Rev. 1:6), how *essential* that they acquire this most important of all soldierly virtues -- subordination, or "holding the head."

To this end we are exhorted to *practice* subordination -- the words submit, submitting, and subject, in the following quotations from the Epistles, being a translation in each case of the Greek word "hupotasso" -- literally *to subordinate*: "*Submit yourselves therefore to God*"; "*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man*"; "Servants, be *subject* unto your masters"; "Ye younger, *submit* yourselves unto the elder"; "Wives, *submit* yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord"; "Obey them that have the rule over you and *submit* yourselves"; "Yea, all of you be *subject* one to another"; "*Submitting* yourselves one to another *in the fear of God*."

Why is this exhortation so often and urgently repeated? *For our own good* that through constant practice we may acquire the fixity of habit, or character, of *recognition* and *submission to constituted authority*, without which we cannot possibly become members of the Body -- the Army Corps -- of Jesus Christ.

Next in importance as a necessary prerequisite to membership in the Corps, is the development of what the French call "*Esprit de Corps*" -- *the spirit or life of the body* -- *which* makes a soldier *forget self* in his devotion to his military organization; the spirit that welds a number of individuals into one coherent whole, so that they think and move and act in unison, at the word of their Commander. This Spirit, or company *life*, is developed by close association living, eating, drinking, marching, fighting *together* -- *with* one common object in view and a command and united effort to attain it; and precisely so is it developed in the soldiers of Jesus Christ. As Israel of old, all those who are Christ's eat of the same manna, and drink of the same spiritual Rock, and are all baptized in the same baptism, and so are animated and actuated by one spirit -- the spirit of our Head, the spirit of his Body, the "*Esprit de Corps*" of the Army Corps of Jesus Christ. Thus "God hath tempered the body together . . . that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

Furthermore, as a soldier who absents himself from the body of troops to which he belongs is liable to dishonorable discharge or death as a deserter; and as the member of the human body severed from the other members ceases to be a member and passes into corruption, even so the Christian soldier who allows himself to continue in a position or spirit of separation or antagonism toward his fellow-soldier or soldiers will surely eventually lose his standing and membership in the Corps. This the Apostle, one of our "superior officers," tells us: "The works of

the flesh are manifest ... hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, common strife, seditions, heresies [divisions] envyings,... of the which I tell you that they which do such things *shall not inherit* the Kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

So, dear Comrade-in-arms in "the good fight," let us be of those who "gather with" him, not "scatter *abroad*" -- *one* who builds up, not who tears down. Let us neglect no opportunity to "assemble ourselves together" with others of "like precious faith," joining them in spirit and heart-sympathy even if we cannot in the flesh.

The "church which is His body" is the "Corps-de-elite" -- the "King's Own." And of all those who are finally gazetted to that Corps as a reward for "patient continuance in well doing" here below, there will not be found one who has not learned the soldierly virtue of *subordination* - prompt and implicit obedience to his Head and submission to all his arrangements; nor one who is not possessed of a consuming love and devotion to the Body as a whole -- the "Esprit de Corps" of the Army Corps of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

- H. E. Hollister

"For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed!
Alleluia!

"Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might;
Thou wast their Captain in the well-fought fight;
Thou, in the darkness drear, their one true Light.
Alleluia!

"O blest Communion, fellowship Divine!
We toil on earth, while they in glory shine:
Yet all are one, for all, dear Lord, are Thine.
Alleluia!

"And when the strife is fierce, the conflict long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
And hearts are brave once more, and arms are strong.
Alleluia!"

What Say the Scriptures?
Basic Bible Studies No. 7 - The Ransom Sacrifice
Jesus of Nazareth - the "Stranger of Galilee"!

"Behold the Lamb of God!" - John 1:36.

BEFORE the radiance of His person that of the brightest names pales and wanes. "The young men see and hide themselves; the aged arise and stand up. The princes refrain from talking, and lay their hand on their mouth. The nobles hold their peace, and their tongue cleaves to the roof of their mouth. The ear hears and blesses; the eye sees and gives witness." This historic supremacy of Jesus is incontrovertible. To every thoughtful mind, believing or unbelieving, he is the ideal of humanity, the Son of man, and as no other, the very Son of God. His power over men is still the power of a living personality. The perfect ideal presented by his extraordinary life has been extolled by writers of all nationalities and degrees of culture of all faiths and unbeliefs, by men unlike each other in all respects. Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, Newton, Milton, Kant, Goethe, an innumerable list of the illustrious -- all have paid homage.

"How petty are the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp," says Rousseau, "compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the works of men? Can he whose life they tell be himself no more than a mere man? Is there anything in his character of the enthusiast or the ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his ways, what touching grace in his teachings! What a loftiness in his maxims, what profound wisdom in his words! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in his replies! What an empire over his passions! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness and without display? My friend, men do not invent like this; and the facts respecting Socrates, which no one doubts, are not so well attested as those about Jesus Christ."

Napoleon, who in his day strode the world like a Colossus, also pays tribute: "In every other life than that of Christ, what imperfections, what inconsistencies! Where is the character that no opposition is sufficient to overwhelm? Where the individual whose conduct is never modified by event or circumstance, who never yields to the influences of the time, never accommodates himself to manners or passions that he cannot prevail to alter? From first to last he is the same; always the same, majestic, and simple, infinitely severe and infinitely gentle; throughout a life that may be said to have been lived under the public eye, Jesus never gives occasion to find fault; the prudence of his conduct compels our admiration by its union of force and gentleness. Everything in him amazes me; his spirit outreaches mine, and his will confounds me. Comparison is impossible between him and any other being in the world. He is truly a being by himself: his ideas and his sentiments, the truth that he announces, his manner of convincing, are all beyond humanity and the natural order of things. His birth, and the story of his life, the profoundness of his doctrine which overturns all difficulties, and is their most complete solution, his gospel, the singularity of this mysterious being, his appearance, his empire, his progress through all centuries and kingdoms -all this is to me a prodigy, an unfathomable mystery. I see nothing here of man. Near as I may approach, closely as I may examine, all remains above my comprehension -- great with a greatness that crushes me. It is in vain that I reflect -- all remains unaccountable."

The purest of saints has not escaped the breath of slander, but against Christ none dare charge any sin save his claim to be the Son of God. In the ineffable purity and beauty of his character, the

strictest scrutiny could find no flaw. "Have thou nothing to do with that just man," said the Roman lady. "I find no fault in this man," witnessed the bloodstained Pilate. "This man hath done nothing amiss," exclaimed the dying malefactor. "I have shed innocent blood," shrieked the miserable Judas. His most eager accusers stammered into self-refuting lies. The witnesses of his uttermost humiliation, as they returned, smote upon their breasts with despairing agony and assented to the cry of the heathen centurion, "Truly this was the Son of God."

How sweet is the remembrance of the patience with which he bore wrong, of the gentleness with which he rebuked it, and of the love with which he forgave it, earning for him the name "friend of sinners." The scenes at the gate of Nain, at Jairus' home, at the tomb of Lazarus, the happy family at Bethany, Gethsemane's garden, Calvary's mount, and at the sepulchre -- such memorials of love and sorrow continue to attract and charm the hearts of the weary and heavy-laden who find repose only in him who could say, "Come unto me -- ye shall find rest unto your souls."

This then is Jesus, and a thousand things more. Here is one not merely to be ranked with philosophers and princes of this world. Here, indeed, is none other than the Messiah, the Scripturally promised Savior, and the one divinely appointed to occupy three mighty offices -- Prophet, Priest, King -- in a stupendous scheme of redemption affecting the destiny of every human being.

GOD'S ANOINTED PROPHET

Jesus was unapproachably distant from all that ever were honored with a divine mission, with no predecessor and no successor in the multitude and harmony of his spiritual revelations. The Hebrews epistle opens thus. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days *spoken unto us by his Son*"; a fulfillment of a promise which waited fourteen centuries for its accomplishment, given in the days of Moses to Israel -- "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18:18). This the Son confirmed: "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:49). Again "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me" (John 17:8). Those who heard and saw testified, "This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world." - John 6:14.

For "never man spake as this man!" "His lips like lilies, dropped sweet smelling myrrh." His hearers, enthralled, "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded forth from his mouth" as he appropriated to himself the divine commission recorded by Isaiah eight centuries before: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19). A wondrous light burst upon sin-sick and weary humanity. He spoke forth doctrines strange for their searching character and revolutionary for their boldness, and always with the air of authority: I am the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Door, the Bread from Heaven, the Light of the World; no man cometh unto the Father except by me. A most astounding message, a message of salvation "which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord" . . . a "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Heb. 2:3; Titus 1:2). It was "the word," said Peter to Cornelius, "which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all;) that word, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the holy spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." - Acts 10:36-38.

His deeds attracted attention and enforced awe at the mysterious power which lay in his hand and voice. He defended the weak, forgave the sinners, fed the thousands, healed the sick, raised the dead. "The people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?" (Matt. 12:23). Here was a transcendent character and a Teacher without parallel, who could instruct in truth higher than man had conceived, opening vast and pure reaches of the unseen realms of knowledge. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shone forth from his face. The ruler Nicodemus confessed, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3:2). "The common people heard him gladly," and would have made him king. - Mark 12:37; John 6:15.

But resolutely rejecting all human exaltation, he "stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," in marvelous obedience to a greater commission entrusted him by the Father. This commission he revealed to his inner circle of disciples in words perplexing and strange: "The Son of Man must be lifted up" (John 3:14). "The Son of Man came to give his life for many" (Mark 10:45). "My flesh I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15). "This is my body, broken for you. This is my blood, shed for you" (Matt. 26:26-28). But they fell on unbelieving ears for they were incompatible with the disciples' expectation of an immediate establishment of God's Kingdom. They were not to comprehend until after his resurrection when he spoke to them again: "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Then he said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that *repentance and forgiveness of sins* should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." - Luke 24:25-27; 44-47, R.S.V.

In these plain words explicitly and unqualifiedly does Christ, the central and supreme theme of all Old Testament disclosure, affirm *his atoning death* to be the one fact that gives vital significance, substance, and value to the entire body of the Inspired and Written Scriptures of that time. For God has made the Death of Christ the procuring means of Human Salvation. This, the central and cardinal fact of divine revelation found its concentrated expression in the heralding Baptist's sublime announcement when, pointing to the approaching Christ, he exclaimed

"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!" - John 1:29.

GOD'S ANOINTED PRIEST

We are thus brought directly to the ultimate objective in Jesus' earthly ministry. He who had existed before the world was -- who had made all things-who had left the glories of a higher nature and been made lower than the angels -- whose birth, supernaturally of a virgin, was heralded by the spirit host-dedicated his life to the will of his Father, and in perfect submission to that will "emptied himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). He became a man for the very purpose of "tasting death for every man." He took on him the human nature "for the suffering of death" -- the very penalty that was against our race. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). "The law was given by Moses, but

grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). The revelation of God through the Mosaic Law resulted only in proving Jews and Gentiles as all under sin; stopping every mouth and making the world subject to divine judgment, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But the revelation of God through Jesus Christ brought justification freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For though "the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." See Romans 3:9-24; 11:32; 6:25; Galatians 3:22.

Great (worthy of all acceptance) is the inner doctrine of the religion of Christ:

"Who in the flesh was manifest,
In spirit just was shown;
To angel eyes he stood confest,
Was preached the Gentiles' own;
On him the world has glad believed,
In glory now, on high received."
- 1 Timothy 3:16.

This doctrine of the atonement effected by Jesus in the sacrifice of himself, is the grand touchstone by which we may determine what is Truth and what is not Truth. For in the great Plan of God for human salvation the Ransom constitutes the very central feature from which radiates all the doctrines which end in the fullness and completion of that Divine Plan. The vicarious aspect of Jesus' death is the definite teaching of many Scriptures, for example:

Matt. 1:21 - He shall save his people from their sins.
Matt. 26:28 - My blood . . . shed . . . for the remission of sins.
Isa. 53:5 - He was wounded for our transgressions.
Isa. 53:12 - He bare the sin of many.
Dan. 9:24 - To make an end of sins.
1 Cor. 15:3 - Christ died for our sins.
Gal. 1:4 - Who gave himself for our sins.
Eph. 1:7 - We have redemption through his blood.
1 Tim. 1:15 - Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
Heb. 9:26 - He was manifested to put away sin.
1 Pet. 1:19 - Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.
1 Pet. 3:18 - Christ suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous.
1 Pet. 2:24 - Who his own self bare our sins.
1 John 2:2 - He is the propitiation for our sins.
1 John 1:7 - The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.
Rev. 1:5 - Washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Typically, also, the elaborate sacrificial system of the ceremonial Law of Sinai revealed the same truth. The substitution of an unoffending animal for the human offender - where nothing less than the lifeblood (Lev. 17:11 -- "Blood maketh atonement by reason of the life.") of the substituted victim sufficed for the remission of deserved penalty, with the offerer's act of laying his hand on the animal, an exercise of faith in the transfer of guilt - conveyed the fact and meaning of Atonement. These sacrifices of Israel were intended and adapted to point onward to him in whose death a real sacrifice was offered, in whose death a real want of mankind was met. This truth is forcefully expounded in the Book of Hebrews, particularly chapters 9 and 10 -- the key thought itself in Heb. 9:22 -- "Without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." - R.S.V.

Jesus' atonement work must not however be crudely construed as simply shedding literal blood to placate an angry Deity. We may be certain the Philosophy of the Ransom is commensurate with the lofty attributes of God. In seeking to understand the workings of him, "whose thoughts are not our thoughts, and whose ways are not our ways," we may accept the theologian Hooker's dictum: "Let us not think that, as long as the world doth endure, the wit of man shall be able to sound the bottom of that which may be concluded out of the Scriptures." This question as to the ability of the human mind to comprehend absolute truth need not, however, diminish our appreciation of the boundless love of God for his human creatures; ill whose Plan on our behalf the "Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world"; and who "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Students of the Scriptures are generally agreed in a Philosophy of the Ransom which magnifies the Creator; an interpretation whose pivotal truth is expressed by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22 -- "As by *a man* came death, by a *man* also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

This interpretation has been briefly stated thus: "The ransom views the matter of man's recovery from sin and death as a purchase -- a redemption. The basis of this thought is the divine law, "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life" (Deut. 19:21). Adam and his entire race of thousands of millions are in dire distress through sin and its penalty. God has provided a recovery by a ransom process -- purchasing back from their fallen condition.

"Our first thought naturally would be that to redeem, or purchase back, the right of humanity to life, would mean that each member of Adam's race must be purchased by the life of another person, holy, harmless, unsentenced. But looking deeply into God's Plan we find that only one man was tried before the divine court -- namely Father Adam; that only Adam was sentenced to death; and that all of his children go into death, not because of their individual trial and death, but simply because Adam failed to maintain his perfection, was unable to give his children more life or rights than he possessed. And so it has been throughout the entire period of six thousand years from the time of Father Adam's sentence until now.

"Here we see a wonderful economic feature connected with the Divine Plan. God would not permit more than one member of the human race to be tried and sentenced to death; for his purpose from the beginning was that the sacrifice of one life should redeem the entire human race. By one man the whole trouble came; by another Man the whole trouble will be rectified.

"Thus we see the value of Jesus' death -- that it was not merely for Adam, but included all his posterity. We see, too, how necessary it was that Jesus should be 'holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners'; otherwise, he, like the remainder of the race, would have been under a divine death sentence. Because all of Adam's race were involved in sin and its penalty, it was necessary to find an outsider to be the world's Redeemer; and that outsider, whether angel, cherub, or the great Michael himself, the Logos, must exchange the spirit nature for the human nature in order to be a corresponding price -- a ransom for the first man.

"It was not a god that sinned; hence the death of a god could not redeem. It was not a cherub that sinned; hence the death of a cherub could not redeem. It was a [perfect] man who sinned, and the ransom for him must be furnished by the death of a [perfect] man. It was for this cause that the great Logos, in carrying out the divine plan for human redemption, left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, humbled himself and became a man, 'was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. "

To this agree the words of Jesus himself: "The Son of Man came ... to give his life *a ransom* [Gk. *lutronanti* -- a price to correspond] for many." - Mark 10:45.

In Romans 5:15-21, we read St. Paul's contrast between Adam and Christ. The two great heads of the race are introduced, Adam in the Fall, Christ in the Redemption; and the results of the Fall and the results of the Redemption are shown in strong and pointed contrast. Because of its direct relation to our study, we give the following presentation of the passage subdivided into nine antitheses or contrasts of ideas, and marked by Roman numerals. The first part of each contrast shows the fall of Adam (A) and its results; the second, the grace of God in Christ (C) and its results. The several sections of the single verses are marked by the letters of the alphabet. This is a closely literal translation, with a few words supplied [in brackets] as demanded by the current sense or authorized from other parallel passages. In addition, the contrasted and emphatic words have been *italicized*.

(A) I. 15a. Nay, but not, as was the *Fall*,

(C) 15b. So also was the act of *Grace*;

(A) II. 15c. For if, by the *Fall* of the *one* man, the *many* die,

(C) 15d. Much rather the *Grace* of God, and the *Gift* in the *Grace* of the *One* Man, Jesus Christ, abounded unto the *many* [unto justification of *Life*, v. 18].

(A) III. 16a. And not, as was [the *Fall*] through *one* man, having sinned;

(C) 16b. So also was the [perfect] *Gift* [through *One* Man having justified us].

(A) IV. 16c. For the judgment, indeed, was from one [*Fall*] to a sentence of *condemnation* [of *all* men to *Death*, v. 18a];

(C) 16d. But the act of *Grace* was from *many Falls* unto a sentence of *justification* [of *all* men to *Life*, v. 18b].

(A) V. 17a. For if in the *Fall* of the *one* man the *Death* reigned through the *one* man [over *all* men, v. 12];

(C) 17b. Much rather they that receive the abundance of the *Grace* and of the *Gift* of *justification* will reign in *Life* through the *One* Man, Jesus Christ.

(A) VI. 18a. Accordingly, then, as through *one Fall* [the result], was unto *all* men unto *condemnation* [to *Death*];

(C) 18b. So, also, through *one act* of justification [the result], was unto *all* men, unto justification of *Life*.

(A) VII. 19a. For as through the *Disobedience* of the *one* man, the *many* were constituted *sinful*;

(C) 19b. So also through the *Obedience* of the *One* Man, the *many* will be constituted *just*.

(A) VIII. 20a. But law came in besides, that the *Fall* may multiply;

(C) 20b. But where this *Sin* multiplied, the *Grace* over abounded;

(A) IX. 21a. That as the *Sin* reigned in the *Death*;

(C) 21b. So, also, the *Grace* may reign through *justification* unto *Life* eternal, through *Jesus Christ*, our Lord.

In brief, this remarkable passage teaches that Adam, the progenitor of the race, carried all his descendants with him into corruption, condemnation, and death; that Christ the Second Adam, and constructive Head of the race, carried, *potentially*, all the race redeemed by his vicarious death, with him into regeneration, justification, and life.*

*See also May-June 1967 *Herald*.

The Scriptures are thus explicit in their assurance that our Redeemer bought the world with his own life, "his own precious blood." Here is also assurance of the *unchangeableness* of divine law, which could not be broken, but instead provided redemption at so great a cost. The remission of the death penalty is not a violation of God's justice, but its satisfaction by his love; "that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). We may be grateful and satisfied that the *Truth of the Atonement stands as a Fact*, clear, immovable, and supreme among the stupendous verities of Divine Disclosure, and that it is unchangeably interwoven with them all. "Mercy glorieth against judgment." "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." - James 2:13; Psalm 85:10.

GOD'S ANOINTED KING

"Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord." . . . "Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." - Heb. 8:1, 2; 7:25, R.S.V.

Christ's obedience in carrying out his Father's will brought its exceeding reward. "Wherefore God also bath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." - Phil. 2:9-11.

This sovereignty over all will be realized in the glorious Millennium. For "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by, that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he bath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a *ransom* [Gk. *anti-lutron* -- corresponding price] for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). This will be the "times of restitution" which will see the original purpose of God in the creation of man accomplished in the peopling of earth with perfect human beings, restored thus and to eternal life through Christ's Ransom *Work*. Of the result of that ransom, and of the work of redemption as it shall finally be accomplished by the close of the Millennial Age, the Prophet speaking of our Lord says, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." - Isaiah 53:11.

The reason for the intervening centuries between Calvary and Christ's Kingdom will constitute the theme of the next article in this series. We conclude this present study by adding, in spirit, our voice to that of the "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" of angels as they rapturously proclaim:

"WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING."

- *W. J. Siekman*

(The subject of the eighth article in this series will be: "GOD'S SECRET PURPOSE.")

Praise Is Comely

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name: bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not any of his dealings: who pardoneth all thine iniquities, and who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth from the pit thy life, who crowneth thee with kindness and compassions, who satisfieth with good thy desire, thy youth reneweth itself like an eagle." - Psalm 103:1-5, Rotherham.

DANGER HAS threatened the life, or sorrows have engulfed the one who could write or sing with the understanding such a Psalm as this one hundred and third. Perhaps it was inspired by the experience from which the Psalmist had prayed in the previous Psalm to be delivered. All who have their senses exercised by reason of righteous use to discern the contrast between the evil that is in themselves and the good that is in our Great Provider, in everything, at all times, will give thanks to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Such outpouring of gratitude may be made on bended knee or standing in the public market place, seated at the table furnished by his wisdom with natural or spiritual food, lying on the bed to rest from a day of weary toil or for hours of restlessness, or going about in the performance of the daily task.

We need not concern ourselves with the critics' contention that David did not write this Psalm. Whoever wrote it, the divine spirit was dictating phrases to fit the need of every suffering and repentant son of Adam, whether living in David's troubled age or in the age of grace. In this Age one of the manifestations of that grace is the permitting of Satan and his cohorts to turn the wheels that polish God's chosen ones, preparing them for the time of the greater grace, the time when true praise will be rendered to his holy name. That inestimable privilege is reserved for those who value the polishing enough to sing Psalms of praise while they daily submit to the grinding experiences without which the perfections of that reflected glory could never be manifested.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his *dealings*." To bless him for all that is apparent to the flesh as benefits, as the King James version renders it, is fairly easy; but blessing him for all his dealings, as Brother Rotherham has rendered it, takes us far down into the Christian life, takes us to the point where the Christian not merely quotes, "All things work together for good," but really believes it, and believing to that point where he can "in *everything* give thanks." To give thanks in everything without having faith to believe that God's hand is guiding in everything is a vapid substitute for the sparkling faith that "renews itself like the eagle." - Psalm 103:5.

To bless Jehovah implies affection as well as praise, all that is within one recognizing the holiness of his name, and giving the reverence that can never be satisfied with lip service, or even the giving of hours of one's time to the passing on to others that which delights us so. All that is within me is not enough to Praise his holiness as it deserves. To refrain from giving that much is robbery of the basest sort. Rotherham comments: "*Forget not any of his dealings: his benefits, if thou wilt-but have not all his 'dealings' been 'benefits,' though sometimes in disguise? Forget not any of his dealings, for whereas it would be difficult to forget them 'all,' be it thy care, as far as may be, that thou forget none, since the forgotten mercy or chastisement may be that which thou dost now most need to recall.*"

Though we multiply a hundred times the list of reasons for gratitude which the Psalmist gives in verses three to five, and who could not, our feeble appreciation would probably have left out more than it has added. Not until life's end has been reached will any of us be conscious of all the reasons for gratitude. Not until the grass has faded, the flower of the field has withered, the wind has passed over it and it is gone, its place knoweth it no more (Psa. 103:15-16), and the new place

Jesus went to prepare for those thus represented is entered upon-not until then will that praise appropriately sound forth.

The Psalmist's praise flows on in unbroken phrase. No minor strain is dwelt upon. The fading flower is introduced only to make more vivid the "loving kindness of Jehovah from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." The stream broadens as it flows on, the benefits of the individual widening into gifts which are to fill the universe, "all places of his dominion."

The fallen human flesh, or even the new creature that dwells in this imperfect flesh, cannot be depended upon to be properly grateful for its experiences, but must be urged to "Bless the Lord." The Hebrew method of repetition indicates the urgency of the necessity of that plea for thanksgiving, and therefore the depravity, the natural ingratitude of the creature. Some limited gratitude there might be where there is any nobility of soul, but if all that is within us is to be marshalled for our Psalm of praise, it must be urged to it. Memory must be trained to retain the innumerable evidences of God's grace, the senses must be devoted to the proposition of discerning the kindness of the Hand that often seems rough. A few moments listening to the complaining tongue controlled by the flesh, makes painfully apparent the woeful habit of retaining in the memory all the disagreeable details of life with little or no attention to the benefits derived. These "light afflictions," not worthy to be compared with the glory to follow, are the least of experiences crowded into the life of any Christian. Until the experience comes, it is easy to speak thus about it, but let tomorrow see the hand of our dearest friend turned against us, or perhaps even that of a brother in the Lord, and if there is not the faith to be assured that all is of the Lord's permission, and essential for our eternal good, the lips that should be praising God, the life that should rise as sweetest of incense before him, will indicate that self has been exalted as a hideous idol occupying the niche that once we consecrated as devoted to the Lord, a hallowed dwelling place for him alone.

LIFE'S BLESSINGS CATALOGUED

Twice the name of Jehovah has been mentioned in our text. Now in listing some of his "benefits," the pronoun "who" carries us back five times to that name, the name of the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The supreme Gift of gifts is implied in the first benefit mentioned, the forgiveness of *all* our iniquities, It is no more possible for our feeble intellects to cope with the enormity of our transgressions than with the breadth, length, height, and depth of God's generosity. Since we are "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity," it is too familiar a companion for us to rightly appraise it. Hence the justification that covers all, cannot possibly be fully appreciated by us. Neither the blackness of the sin nor the purity of that white covering can be comprehended. It is Christ's righteousness that the Father sees when he looks at us. We therefore appear to him as white, as pure, as lovely as Jesus was when he walked this earth in his per section. Without his revelation such a claim would be blasphemous.

"God's work is perfect and not done by halves," so Matthew Henry comments in introducing the phrase, "Who healet.h all our diseases." Sad indeed would be the state of one whose sins were covered, but he himself left with soul-sickness, the putrifying power of sin still working in him. That our God could not do. Yea, further yet, the life that is redeemed from the pit is crowned with daily loving-kindness and compassion. The brow of every Christian is thus garlanded-every blessing, every compassion is a leaf resting there as an advance token of the victory to be theirs if their Thanksgiving Day can be extended to reach to the day of their change. "We are made partakers of Christ [Greek: "sharers in, partners of" Christ] if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end," "if we hold the confidence *and the rejoicing* of the hope firm unto the end. " - Heb. 3:14.

This crown and "its adornment is not only a result of the divine attributes of loving-kindness and compassions, but the very things themselves, so that an effulgence from God beautifies the soul. Nor is even this all, for the same gifts which are beauty are also sustenance, and God satisfies the soul with good, especially with the only real good, himself. " (*A. Maclaren.*) "Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart," he will give thee himself, if he is the desire of thy heart. Without thankfulness for *all* that comes from his hand, there can be no evidence of delighting ourselves in him.

SATISFACTION THAT SATISFIES

"Who satisfies thy mouth with good." The natural mouth, like the grave, is never satisfied; but he who feeds on God, he who eats the flesh of his Son, finds a nourishment that results in a growth into his likeness, and those who now feed on him alone must be made partakers of the divine nature; perpetual youth is his portion, and only the bird that makes its nest on the highest crags of the eternal mountains can be a fit symbol of the one who gives all that is within him to the praising of Jehovah, the one whose rejoicing is not slackened by "infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses *for Christ's sake*," but whose praise of Jehovah rings only the louder as he realizes that in these things he is "filling up that which is [for his sake] left behind of the afflictions of Christ."

"Who satisfies thy mouth with good." The natural mouth, like the grave, is never satisfied; but he who feeds on God, he who eats the flesh of his Son, finds a nourishment that results in a growth into his likeness, and those who now feed on him alone must be made partakers of the divine nature; perpetual youth is his portion, and only the bird that makes its nest on the highest crags of the eternal mountains can be a fit symbol of the one who gives all that is within him to the praising of Jehovah, the one whose rejoicing is not slackened by "infirmities, reproaches, necessities, persecutions, distresses *for Christ's sake*" but whose praise of Jehovah rings only the louder as he realizes that in these things he is "filling up that which is [for his sake] left behind of the afflictions of Christ."

Patiently the rejoicing Christian can wait until

"Jehovah has established his throne in the heavens,
And his Kingdom rules over all.
Bless Jehovah, ye his angels,
Ye mighty in strength, who perform his word,
Harkening to the voice of his word!
Bless Jehovah, all his hosts,
Ye his ministers, who perform his will!
Bless Jehovah, all his works,
In all places of his dominion!
Bless Jehovah, my soul!"

-P. E. Thomson

The Question Box

"Hath not the potter power aver the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" - Romans 9:21.

Question:

What is the lesson to be drawn from St. Paul's words here?

Answer:

Amongst the writings of St. Paul there are some things which the Apostle Peter says are "hard to understand." (2 Pet. 3:16.) This, doubtless, is one of them. Not only have scoffers failed to grasp the import of these words, but sincere Christians have been puzzled, and not only puzzled but burdened, by them. They have seemed to shut out hope. Instead of being a part of, or at least in harmony with, the glad tidings that God has "no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek. 33:11), these words seem only to proclaim his absolute sovereignty. Not in these words as St. Paul meant them, but in their misunderstanding, lies the germ of all that is most repulsive in the Calvinist doctrine of election. It is in a similarly wrong conception of this and related passages that the Mohammedan finds justification for his acceptance of the will of Allah as a destiny which he cannot understand, but to which he must, perforce, submit.

To get our bearings on the question we must go back to the time of Jeremiah. It was in a dark and troublous time that Jeremiah was called upon to serve as the Lord's mouthpiece. His counsel went unheeded; his ministry seemed a failure. In fact, he was put in the stocks by the false leaders of his time. In these circumstances his spirits sank; he decided to preach the word of the Lord no more. (Jer. 20:9.) It was while he was in this mood that there came to him an inner prompting in which, either then or later, he recognized "the word of the Lord." (Jer. 18:1.) Acting on that impulse, he went "down to the potter's house," and watched him at work molding clay into form and fashioning it according to his purpose. When he began his task, the potter had a design or pattern in mind, which Jeremiah knew not. That lump which the potter had taken shapeless into his hands might be for honor or dishonor; a vessel for the king's table, a vase for fruit or flowers, a basin in which men might wash their hands or feet.

The Prophet looked and saw that here too, as well as in his own experience, was apparent failure. "The vessel that 'he wrought was marred in the hands of the potter." The clay did not take shape; there was some hidden defect that seemed to resist the plastic guidance of wheel and hand. The Prophet stood and gazed -- quite possibly was beginning, in his mind, to criticize the potter for his lack of skill when he looked again and saw what followed. "So he [the potter] returned, and made it another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." It was not a lack of skill which Jeremiah saw, but skill in its highest form -- a skill not baffled by seeming or even by real failure -- triumphing over difficulties. And then, by one of those flashes of insight which the world calls genius, but which we recognize as inspiration, he was taught to read the meaning of the parable. "Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." - Jer. 18:5, 6.

Did this "word of the Lord" as it came rushing in on his mind, crush him as with the sense of a destiny arbitrary, supreme, not necessarily righteous, against which men struggled in vain, and in

whose hands they had no freedom and therefore no responsibility? No indeed! Quite to the contrary. To Jeremiah that which he saw was a parable of wisdom and love, working patiently and slowly; the groundwork of a call to repentance and conversion. Hear him further: "At what instant I [the Lord] shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." (Jer. 18:7,8.) *That "word of the Lord" we must believe, was one that brought light and hope into the thick darkness in which the Prophet's mind had before been wrapped.**

* It had as its necessary complement that which, dealing with the case of apparent failure which frustrated the purpose of the Divine Craftsman, involves what seems a change of another kind in that purpose. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." (18:9, 10.) But this, no less than the other, showed that what seemed to the Prophet the one great lesson taught by the parable of the Potter and the Clay was not that the decrees of God are irreversible, but that man is free to choose, and that though God may be constrained to punish, he delights rather to forgive.

As in thought he thus passed from the potter and his wheel to the operations of the great Master Workman, as seen in the history of nations, Jeremiah saw in them the vessels that were being molded, as on the wheel of Providence. Here was clay, indeed, but with one important difference—they were not masses of dead, inert matter. Each was, as it were, instinct with a self-determining power, which, either yielded to or resisted the plastic workings of the potter's hand. The urn or vase designed for kingly use refused its high calling, and chose another and less seemly shape. The Supreme Artisan, who had determined in the history of mankind the times before appointed, and the bounds of men's habitations, had, for example, called Israel to be the pattern of a righteous people, the witness of Truth to the nations, a kingdom of priests, the first-fruits of humanity. That purpose had been frustrated. Israel had refused that calling, had chosen to be as the nations round it, in its worship, its sensuality, its greed of gain, the tyranny of its oppressors. It had, therefore, to be brought under another discipline, fitted for another work: "He returned, and made it another vessel." The pressure of the Potter's hand was to be harder, and the vessel was to be fashioned for less noble uses. Shame and suffering and exile -- their land left desolate, and they themselves weeping by the waters of Babylon -- this was the process to which they were now called on to submit. *But at any moment in the process, repentance, acceptance, submission might modify its character and its issues.*

True it was that a little later on in the Prophet's work the teaching of the parable was carried one step further, to a tragic conclusion. This time it was not enough to point to the potter's patient skill. The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah again, "Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests, and go forth unto the valley of the son of Hinnom" (Jer. 19:1) and there in their sight he was to break the bottle as a witness that, in one sense, their day of grace was over, that something had been forfeited which now could never be regained. Israel and Judah had been unfaithful to the ideal of their national existence. Never again was that form of their existence to be renewed. The form and use of this vessel of the Master Potter were to be altered altogether. But did this mean that the purposes of God had been frustrated? By no means. Israel had still a calling and an election. They were still to be used by God as witnesses to the nations, stewards of the treasure of Truth. In that thought the Prophet's heart could and did find hope and comfort. He could accept the doom of exile and shame for himself and for his people, because he looked beyond it to that remolded life which might be theirs after the period of servitude and desolation had expired. Those who, instead of accepting it,

were rebelling and resisting, questioning the wisdom or the righteousness of God, were as the thing formed saying to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

The age in which St. Paul lived was like that of Jeremiah, a dark and troublous time for one whose heart was with his brethren, the children of Abraham according to the flesh. Once again the potter was fashioning the clay to high and noble uses. Israel might have taken their place as the first-fruits of the Church of Christ, as the prophets and teachers of mankind. God started, one might say, speaking as men, in the hope that it would be so. "To the Jew first," was the rule invariably followed. But here, also, there was apparent failure. Blindness, 'hardness, unbelief, these marred the shape of the vessels made to honor. Because this was true, did St. Paul cease to believe in the righteousness and faithfulness of God? Did he see no loving purpose behind the seeming severity? No -- the vessel would be made for what men held to be dishonor -- exile lasting through the centuries, dispersion over all the world; but this would prove to be but the preparation and discipline for the far-off future, fitting them in the end for nobler uses. The gifts and calling of God were without repentance, and the wisdom of the great Master

Workman would eventually be made manifest, when, "in that day" He who 'had concluded all in sin and unbelief, should have mercy on all. Did any Israelite, zealous, impatient, eager to anticipate the purpose of him who sees the end from the beginning, question yet once more the wisdom or righteousness of God in this discipline--for him the Apostle had the answer: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Hath not the potter power over the clay?"

We have spoken thus far on the bearing of the parable on God's dealings with the nations -- especially that of Israel. That, obviously, is what was prominent in the thoughts of both Prophet and Apostle in their interpretation. But we need not shrink from accepting it as it bears on the individual life of every one of us. *The lesson to be drawn is a lesson of the matchless skill and infinite love and patience of the Master Potter.* One less skilled and less patient, less inclined to mercy and forgiveness, would have discarded this wretched clay long ago. But not he! *This* Potter would fain return and mold and remold till the vessel is fit for some use in the great house of which he is the Supreme Head. By the discipline of life, by warnings and reproofs, by failures and disappointments, by prosperity and success, by sickness and health, by varying work and ever-fresh opportunities, he 'has been educating us in the school of Christ, leading us to know and to do his will. Who is there of us who does not realize that this is a true account of the various experiences of life through which we pass? May not the language of our hearts continue to be, as the hymn writer has so well expressed:

"Have Thine own way, Lord,
'Have Thine own way,
'Thou art the potter,
I am the *clay*.
Take me and mold me
After Thy will,
While I am waiting,
Yielded and still."

- P. L. Read.

Entered Into Rest

Maryanna G. Binda, Van Nuys, Cal.
Sis. A. H. Carpenter, England
Charles Cornell, England
Lily Hall, Wales
Elsie Harding, England
Mary G. Harrison, Florence, Ala.
Charles V. Hinke, Abbotsford, Wis.
Bogumila Jakubowicz, Chicago, Ill.
Walter Jakubowicz, Chicago, Ill.
Stanley Kiszla, South Bend, Ind.
Martin C. Mitchell, Rutherford, N.J.
Daniel J. Morehouse, Chicago, Ill.
John Richmond, Belfast, Ireland
Esther V. Thilmany, Baltimore, Md.
Eleanora J. Trautfelter, Baltimore, Md.
Robert F. Warren, Australia
Matthew Wesolowski, Chicago, Ill.