

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. LIX May / June, 1976 No. 3

A Meditation for Whitsuntide

"The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ..." - Galatians 5:22.

DURING the closing days of our Lord's earthly life he gave his disciples assurance that after his departure they would not be left desolate. "I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper ... the spirit of truth, which ... abides with you, and will be in you." John 14:16, 17, *Diaglott*.

This gracious promise was confirmed to them during the forty days in which he was seen of them after his passion. "John, indeed, immersed in water, but you will be immersed in holy spirit after a few days." - Acts 1:5, *Diaglott*.

For the fulfillment of this promise they were to "wait" at Jerusalem. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8). They had not long to wait. When ten days had passed -- as soon as "the day of Pentecost had fully come," the promise of the Father was fulfilled. - Acts 2:1.

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE

Elsewhere we have considered in some detail the typical significance of Pentecost. Here we content ourselves with observing that Pentecost had long pointed to the time when, in the Father's great plan of redemption, the offering of the Church as "a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" would be made and God's acceptance thereof manifested (James 1:18; Rev. 14:4). And now that time had come, and to these early followers of the Master was to be given the privilege of representing the whole Church in its anointing experience. The antitypical Passover Lamb (Christ Jesus) had been sacrificed; the true Feast of Unleavened Bread could now be kept. Already Christ Jesus, as prefigured in the Omer Sheaf, had been raised "from the dead *and* become the firstfruits

of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20). They had conversed with him during the space of forty days following his resurrection and had watched him ascend to heaven (Acts 1:3, 9). What, yet remained ere they, too, though in lesser measure, would be endued with that "power from on high" which had possessed him so completely and had operated in him so mightily? What must have been their thoughts and emotions as in obedience to his word they had waited at Jerusalem? This we can only surmise. Their days and evenings, we know, had been passed in "the" upper room in which they had last communed with him (Acts 1:13). Certain it is that such a company of sincerehearted ones, meeting together thus, with "one accord," could not but have been blessed (Acts 2:1). By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving they had sought to prepare themselves to receive the "promise" (Acts 1:14). First, perhaps, they would earnestly plead for its fulfillment. Next, perhaps, they would recall some of the Master's teachings, the grace of his countenance, his habit of thanks at mealtimes. Doubtless there would come at times a keen sense of shame and regret at some of their own past conduct. Following quickly upon this mood would come the happy memory of his grace in forgiving, and they would be relieved of their compunctions. Then, perhaps, would follow a sense of feebleness, of utter helplessness without the Lord -- as sheep, indeed, without a shepherd (Zech. 13:7). As day after day followed without event or sign, perhaps they would give way to a sense of disappointment at God's delay; possibly, since they were men and women of like passions and frailties with us, to a feeling of doubt that the promise would ever be fulfilled. Shame at their doubt and disappointment would follow, and then -- a willingness to wait God's own time and to accept God's own way. Perhaps, as God's time drew near, there may have arisen in the hearts of some of them the thought: "The Feast of Pentecost draws near; can it be that the Father will fulfill his promise then?"

THE SPIRIT DISPENSATION

The day came at last; they were as earthen vessels cleansed by prayer, emptied and waiting for the outpouring of the spirit, when "suddenly" it came. Just as at his baptism the holy spirit descended upon the Lord Jesus, so now it descended upon all them that were his, and they were all filled with it. - Acts 2:1-4.

In the case of our Lord the descent of the spirit upon him was manifested by an outward sign. To the Baptist it seemed "like a dove" (note: not a dove, but the appearance of one) (John 1:32-34). So also, at Pentecost, the outpouring of the spirit on the waiting Church was accompanied by outward manifestations. A sound like a rushing mighty wind filled the place where they were sitting (note: not a wind, but a sound like a wind). Tongues, not of fire, but "like as of fire" sat upon them. Evidently these manifestations, as also the "gift of tongues" (which seems to have been bestowed on the whole company), were for signs. The appearance of a dove on the occasion of our Lord's baptism gave the Baptist the confirmation he needed in identifying and heralding Jesus as the long-promised Messiah. The "sound," the "tongues of fire," and the gift of speaking with tongues," likewise served to call the attention of all to the great change of dispensation then being inaugurated. Doubtless, too, when at the close of the seventy weeks of Jewish special favor (three and a half years after Pentecost) the holy spirit was poured out on Cornelius and his associates, some similar gift was granted them as a sign, an evidence, that Gentiles, too, were now to be privileged to share in the high calling of God extended to consecrated believers of every nation during this Gospel Age. - Daniel 9:25-27; Acts 10:45-48; 11:15-17; 15:8, 9.

How eminently suitable these signs were for the purposes intended! The dove, the emblem of peace and purity, fitly represented the fullness of Jehovah's spirit of love in Jesus; as the tongues of fire fitly represented the mission of the Apostles to be, under the holy spirit, that of testifying as "witnesses."

Nor was the "gift of tongues" without its special meaning. It may well be understood as a sign, we think, that the confusions of Babel are to be reduced to order, that the separations induced by the various languages of men are to be healed, as gradually men are drawn, some in the Gospel Age and others in the Millennial Age, into the Kingdom and fellowship of Christ. On the plain of Shinar, thinking to raise themselves above the reach of divine judgment, to build a tower which no flood could drown, men had been smitten with a divine judgment; their one language was broken into many dialects; they were divided and scattered over the whole earth. This curse is to be conquered by the powerful influence of the holy spirit poured out at Pentecost, which spirit is yet to be poured out on all flesh. In the perfection of the Kingdom none is to be unintelligible to his brother, or separated from him; the whole earth is to be of one mind and heart. - Zeph. 3:9; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16.

"They were all filled with the holy spirit and began to speak in other tongues," "the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:4, 11). Ah! gracious omen! When will it be wholly fulfilled? For let us not forget that just as the Omer presented on the morrow after the Passover, setting forth Christ Jesus as "the firstfruits of them that slept" was a pledge and earnest of the two loaves presented on Pentecost, which prefigured the Church in its elective character as the firstfruits from among men, so also the second firstfruits are themselves a prophecy and a pledge of the fuller harvest yet to be gathered in the coming Age, of which, in the Scriptures, all God's holy Prophets have spoken since the world began. - Acts 3:19.

Thank God, though this glorious vision tarry, it will come; it will not fail of fulfillment (Hab. 2:3). True -- we must "wait out" *this* promise of the Father; but we may wait in the strength and patience of hope.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Meantime, while waiting the Lord's time and way, we are not to be idle, but to occupy ourselves with those things which pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). Our chief occupation is to be the cultivation of the fruit of the spirit. Valuable though they were, the miraculous gifts vouchsafed to the early Church were but transient. The gift of tongues, along with the rest, was destined to pass away, as St. Paul plainly indicates (1 Cor. 13:9). Even when bestowed, it needed to be supplemented by another gift, that of "interpretation" before it could be exercised with profit and to edification. In discussing this gift of tongues, St. Paul affirms that many could speak in a tongue who could not interpret, and declares that for himself he would rather speak five words with the understanding than ten thousand words in a tongue. Its chief importance, he says, was as a sign, "not to them that believe but to them that believe not." The brethren were not to despise any of these miraculously bestowed gifts; on the contrary they were to esteem them. Nevertheless there was a more excellent way -- expounded by St. Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians -- the way of love. Love (as the Apostle observes, in the text quoted at the head of this article), with its component elements, is the fruit of the spirit. While doubtless the gift of God, its very nature precluded the possibility of its being miraculously bestowed; in every case it must be developed personally by the individual who would possess it. Moreover this gift, unlike those miraculously bestowed, is not destined to pass away. It is to abide (John 14:16; 15:10; 1 Cor. 13:8, 13). We may, therefore, well esteem it to be "more excellent" and earnestly cultivate it in our hearts and lives.

"FRUIT" NOT "FRUITS"

How shall we do this? The Apostle points the way in our text (Gal. 5:22). There he enumerates nine elements of the fruit of the spirit, namely "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, faithfulness,* meekness, selfcontrol."

*That the Revised Version "faithfulness" rather than "faith" is to be preferred here is clear, we think, from the context, where relative duties rather than faith in its theological sense are plainly in evidence. Compare also Titus 2:10.

It is to be noted that the Apostle speaks not of "fruits" (plural) but of "fruit" (singular), thus drawing our attention to the fact that the nine graces mentioned (the list is not exhaustive) are not to be separately cultivated, "love" in one Christian, "joy" in another, etc., but that all are to be developed together in the character of each consecrated follower of the Master. We may compare this passage with the Beatitudes (Matt. 5) where our Lord (in declaring the blessedness of those who are poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers) is surely not describing various persons, but one person, namely his truly consecrated follower, from many points of view.

We may also compare the wellknown passage, 2 Peter 1:5-8, where the one who "has obtained precious faith" is exhorted to give all diligence to furnish in his faith fortitude, and in fortitude knowledge, etc., and thus to develop, not a one-sided, but a well-balanced Christian character.

This passage from St. Peter, moreover, should caution us against a disproportionate inference from the imagery of "fruit" suggested by St. Paul in Galatians 5:22 and by our Lord in the parable of the Vine (John 15). The ideas suggested by "fruit" and "fruitbearing" are not those of effort and care in the fruitbearing branches; effort and care are the cultivator's part. But St. Peter's exhortation reminds us that the analogy between the impersonal fruit tree and the personal believer cannot be in all respects complete. In the conscious and responsible man there is a place for "all diligence."

But when this is said, by way of balance and clearness, then without reserve we may give our thankful attention to the blessed suggestions and significance of the word "fruit." What does it tell us? It tells us, the branches of the true Vine, that in us, but not of us, there is a mighty, fructifying principle. It tells us that the Christian character is not something to be worked up by weary efforts out of the material of self. Rather it is the result of *growth*. It is not something to be *manufactured*. Nor is it to be acquired from our surroundings; it is produced in the midst of them, not because of them, but often in spite of them.

"Contrast," says our Lord, "the glory of Solomon with that of the lily of the field." Why was it that Solomon's glory could not be compared with but only contrasted with that of the lily? Because the *lily grew*, and all the colors of the lily came from *within*, while all the glorious raiment worn by Solomon was a glory not his own, but put on him from *without*.

THE THREE TRIADS

Commentators, generally, have suggested that the nine elements of fruit mentioned in St. Paul's inspired analysis may be taken in three triads, or sets of three, corresponding to three sides of the much diversified Christian experience. The first three, Love, Joy, and Peace, find their sphere of operation in the inner life of fellowship with God, which is known only to God and to the individual Christian's own consciousness; Long-suffering, Gentleness, and Goodness describe the Christian's character in his relationship with men; Faithfulness, Meekness, and Selfcontrol manifest themselves in the personal character, which interprets itself in words and deeds, yes,

even in face and manner. In those who possess it, and (if we may use the expression) are themselves possessed of it, the spirit of Christ bears fruit in every region of human life.

The essence, then, of the life and character of one producing the fruit of the spirit is Love, Joy, and Peace. These cannot be called *duties*; they should not be thought of as *virtues*, even; they are simply the result of communion or fellowship with God—the *fruit* of the spirit. The *love* of God has been shed abroad in the Christian's heart by the holy spirit (Rom. 5:5). The exalted Head of the Church was anointed with the oil of *gladness* and this anointing flows down upon the members of the Body as righteousness, *peace*, and *joy*, in the holy spirit (Rom. 14:17). These three elements of the fruit are in the private, inner life which God alone beholds. Nevertheless when *love* and *joy* and *peace* are within, they cannot but find outward expression, and make their possessor *loving, joyful, and peaceful*; *loving* towards God, the brethren and all men; *joyful* with a calm but contagious and beneficent happiness; *peaceful*, with a sense of rest which cannot but diffuse itself in the direction of those with whom he comes in touch.

Again, in his relationships with the brethren and with all men, the fruitbearing Christian is seen to be Long-suffering, Gentle, and Good. *Long-suffering*, it has been observed, is the capacity to present the same calm surface today, tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow, in spite of anything and everything. It is long temper, as contrasted with short temper; the ability to "bear all things" (1 Cor. 13:7). *Gentleness* is to touch others lightly, and then only with a healing touch; to manifest a disposition at all times to be tender in one's treatment of others -- tender even in one's just reproofs. *Goodness* in this connection, is to be good *to others*; to pronounce benediction upon them; to be benevolent to them, to see that they benefit from their association with us.

Finally, the true Christian character, as it develops, results in a practical, alert, circumspect outward life. Bright with a secret happiness, *long-suffering* with an infinite forbearance, the fruit of the spirit will be seen in Faithfulness, Meekness, and Self-control. The truly spiritual man will be *faithful* in every duty, loyal to every promise. He will be dependable in business. His friends will receive faithful and careful counsel. His employers will get a service out of him in which their just interests will be as his own. His employees will find him watchfully equitable, considerate, courteous. He will take great care to owe no one anything. The local ecclesia will be well and truly served by him, be it ever so large, or small, or unresponsive. He will be known to be one who will take trouble for others, and who is glad to be their servant indeed for Christ's sake. He will be *meek*, avoiding a manner and habit of self-assertion among his brethren in matters of opinion or of work. And with and over it all he will be *self-controlled*. He will, for the glory of the Master, *his* Master, and that he may be truly serviceable in his ministry to others, watch and pray over his own acts and habits; over bed, and board, and literature, and companionship, and recreation, and imagination, and tongue -- over thought, word, and deed.

Will he progress thus, to perfection? No—not in this life. Indeed, as though to caution against such a thought the Apostle immediately presents the case of a brother overtaken in a fault, urging all, as they seek to restore the erring one, to do so in the spirit of meekness, lest they also should be tempted (Gal. 6:1). No -- perfection in this life is not present to the Apostle's mind, here or elsewhere, for them or himself. In Philippians 3:13, he emphatically declares: "I count not myself to have apprehended."

"THIS ONE THING I DO"

But he did not stop with that confession. His further words show that he had an objective which reached beyond the present life. "This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and

stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." - Phil. 3:13, 14.

Let us follow him as he followed Christ. As the Apostle Peter declares: "If ye do these things ye shall never fall."

- *P. L Read*

Some Thoughts on 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

"Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober ... Putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

FOLLOWING his unfolding to the Thessalonians of the hope of a resurrection of the departed saints at Christ's descent, and of their being gathered with those "which are alive and remain" to meet the Lord in the air, the Apostle continues: "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day ... Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5:1-6). So the descent of Christ, the rising of the sleeping saints, the departure of "we which are alive and remain," and "the day of the Lord," of "sudden destruction," are related events.

But the question arises: Who are the "they" that are concerned about maintaining or establishing "peace and safety"? Evidently they are those who see the weakening and gradual breaking down of erstwhile stable society; those whose position and influence in this present evil world has been beneficial to themselves but who now contemplate the possibility of its utter dissolution, leaving them with no protection against the foreseeable reign of anarchy and the uncontrolled passions of the angry masses. All signs point to a coming climax in the affairs of nations and human arrangements; men are perceiving that tremendous changes are taking place, undermining the stability of ordered society. Old institutions are crumbling, rebellion against established authority is on the increase, financial burdens of governments -- national, state, and local -- are becoming increasingly a perplexity to those who have to pay taxes, and to those who have to find sources of new revenue to pay current bills and the interest on mountainous debts incurred to keep abreast with modern progress.

The breaking up of this "present evil world" is but a necessary prelude to the establishing of Christ's Kingdom. As Peter writes, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a rushing sound, and the elements burning intensely shall be dissolved ..." (2 Pet. 3:10-14, *Diaglott*). The change from this present world order into the Kingdom of Christ will not be by a process of evolution-one kingdom (Satan's) changing or being merged into another (Christ's). It will not be this present world system being remedied and made over into a Kingdom of Righteousness and Peace; no sewing of a new patch on an old garment. This would be contrary to the teaching of Jesus, "No man putteth a piece o new cloth unto an old garment." It just would not hold together!

A DECAYING WORLD MORALITY

The present closing age is rapidly giving way to open immorality, to unrestrained sin and godlessness, wholly without remedy. It is ripening for destruction. It is impossible to give up the idea and truth of God without ethical and moral deterioration. This is well expounded by the Apostle in the 1st chapter of the Roman epistle: "And as they did not choose to possess the knowledge of God, God delivered them over to a worthless mind, to do improper things; abounding in every iniquity .." (Rom. 1:28, *Diaglott*). God does not coerce. To be in harmony with the revealed truth of God is blessedness. To disregard and to will contrary to the revealed truth works wrath-works all manner of uncleanness and shame. The truth of this is evidenced in

the decadence of society in our day when open lewdness and wickedness run riot. Sinful propensities cling even to us who have experienced redemption, ever reminding us that "we were children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:13). "We were once darkness, but now are we light in the Lord" (Eph. 5:8). Seeing this is so, how appropriate the exhortation of Romans 13:12: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Notice that it is not "come out of darkness into light," but "cast off the works of darkness . . . put on the armour of light." This armor is not simply mental appreciation of God's Word and plan for the "fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." - Eph. 5:9.

Consistently throughout the New Testament, the exhortation to watchfulness and constancy is based on the hope that "the Lord is at hand." To the Philippians Paul wrote, "Let your moderation be known to all men. The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5). This phrase may have been commonly used among the early Christians as being designed to keep before the mind a lively impression which should have the effect of being always aware of a relationship with Christ as the Lord and the hope of his return. "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," writes James (James 5:8). Patient endurance is thus encouraged and stimulated by reflecting that Christ is coming to render judgment in righteousness. So, also, Paul continues in 1 Thessalonians 5:5-11: "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day ... Let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another."

THE HIGH EXALTATION OF CHRIST

At his ascension Jesus told the disciples that "all authority has been imparted to me, in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18, *Diaglott*). This high exaltation of Christ is attested to in many Scriptures:

Ephesians 1:20: "[God] . raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*."

Hebrews 1:3: " ... when he had . . . purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Hebrews 12:2: "Looking unto Jesus ... and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Matthew 26:64: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power . . . "

Acts 2:34, 35: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool."

Colossians 3:1: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

Acts 5:31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be a Prince* and a Saviour ... "

Acts 7:56: Stephen testified, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

Romans 8:34: " ... Christ, that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God ... "

Hebrews 10:12: " ... this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

"Sitting" or "standing" do not refer to posture, but position. To sit on the right hand signifies not only a mark of honor (1 Kings 2:19), but also implies participation in power and authority. Such was the thought of the disciples, James and John, who asked of Jesus that they might sit "the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy Kingdom." They desired positions of chief favor and influence, close participation in wielding the authority of the Kingdom which they thought was soon to be established.

There is further attestation to the high exaltation of Christ in Revelation 5:6-10: "The Lamb as it had been slain ... came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." As we are informed in succeeding chapters of the Revelation, the book contained God's plans and purposes for the future which it now became the exalted privilege of the Lamb to carry out. It is the Father's authority Christ wields, the Father's plans he executes. And although Revelation 6:16 does speak of the "wrath of the Lamb," it is only in conjunction with the carrying out of the Father's judgments on this evil world's systems.

A DISTINCTION IN THRONES

Revelation 3:21 makes a distinction between the throne (power, authority) which Christ now shares with the Father and the throne (authority) which the Church will share with him in his Kingdom. They are not the same. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." What Christ's throne (Kingdom) is to accomplish is revealed in Jesus' answer to the query of Peter, "What shall we have" [as a reward for forsaking all to follow you]? And the answer, "In the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). In 1 Corinthians 6:2, Paul writes, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? ... Know you not that we shall judge angels?" The term, "in the regeneration" is that period of time set apart by God when the world will be judged in righteousness; when the whole human race, raised from the dead (John 5:28, 29), shall be regenerated and given the light of the knowledge of the glory of God; and when the way to life will be made so plain that none need err through ignorance (Isa. 35:8). The Church is to share with Christ, as Abraham's seed, in bringing blessings to all the families of the earth. - Genesis 22:17, 18; Psalm 72:1-17; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Psalm 2:8; Romans 8:17; Galatians 3:29; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 20:4: 22:17.

But Christ's own throne, his reign, awaits the utter destruction of the last form of Gentile world dominion before his investiture with "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom." As we read in Daniel 7:11-14, 27: "I beheld even till the beast [Gentile world dominion] was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame . . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed ... And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

CHRIST'S REIGN NOT YET

Christ's own kingdom is not yet. Although the prophetic word declares, "Thou hast put all things under his feet," we can observe with the writer of the Hebrew epistle, "But now we see not yet all things put under him" (Heb. 2:8). The idea conceived by some that Christ is now reigning, is an inference due to misunderstanding some prophetic utterances.

Note the contrast between Micah 4:1-4 and Isaiah 2:2-4 and Joel 3:4-6: ". . . in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain [Kingdom] of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains [Kingdoms] ... And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," a condition that is not now prevalent. How much different from this is that which now prevails among all nations, as depicted by Joel 3:9-14: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, *I am* strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about . . . Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about . . . Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision."

For years, students of the prophetic word have been aware that the progress of events in the world is fulfilling predictions that have to do with the end times of this Age. What the immediate future has in store for us we do not know. But this we do know: "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Let us watch and be sober.

- F. A. Essler

Jehovah's Footstool Made Glorious

"Thus saith Jehovah, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." "And I will make the place [footstool] of my feet glorious." "And his [Jehovah's] feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. Isaiah 60:13; 66:1; Zechariah 14:4; Matthew 5:35; Acts 7:49.

GOD'S footstool has been anything but glorious for the past six thousand years: sin, pain, crying, mental and physical suffering, and death have made it one vast charnel house in which now, conservatively estimated, at least fifty thousand millions of humanity wait for the time to come when the curse of divine justice shall be lifted; and the light of divine favor, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, shall rise as the Sun of righteousness,

"Chase away sin's dismal shadows,
Light the gloom with healing ray."

To this end God has made abundant provision. The *ransom* for Adam, and for all who suffered loss through him as his children, bought the whole world, and secured for each member of our race an opportunity for a trial for everlasting life under favorable conditions; but it did more, it purchased back Adam's Paradise home (lost by his transgression), and his dominion as earth's king, representative of God, his Creator and Father.

Hence we read, "And thou, O Tower of the flock [Christ], the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the *first dominion*" (Micah 4:8). The Apostle Paul also speaks of the "redemption of the purchased *possession*" (Eph. 1:14). Our Lord in one of his parables referred to this also, showing that he purchased not only mankind, the treasure, but also the field, the world, the earth from under the curse: and that all who join with him, as members of the Kingdom class, share in that purchase of the field and the treasure (Matt. 13:44).

The entire work of the Millennium will consist in reordering and making glorious God's footstool. Paradise, when lost through sin, was but a "garden" in a corner of the earth; but inasmuch as the race of Adam has multiplied to fill the earth, in accordance with the divine intention (Gen. 1:28), and inasmuch as they all have been redeemed, it will be necessary to provide a Paradise sufficiently large to accommodate all: and this will imply that the entire earth shall become as the Garden of Eden for fruitfulness and beauty and perfection. And all this is promised as the grand future consummation of the divine plan (Acts 3:20, 21; Rev. 2:7; 2 Cor. 12:4).

But the richest jewel of the Lord's glorified footstool in the close of the Millennium will be mankind, in whose perfection, liberty, and likeness to God, in moral and intellectual graces, will be reflected the very image of Divinity. And most gloriously will the perfect man reflect honor upon his Maker and his wondrous plan for his creation, redemption, and restitution. And with that wonderful plan will always be intimately identified first the Lord Jesus, Jehovah's "Word," and second the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and joint-heir in disbursing the blessings secured by the ransom.

The beautifying and glorifying of the Lord's "footstool" will not be *completed* until our Lord Jesus, as the Father's honored agent, "shall have put down all [conflicting] rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet," before he delivers up the Kingdom at the close of the Millennium (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

The period of the reign of Sin and Death is represented as the time when God "remembered not his *footstool* in the day of his anger" (Lam. 2:1); but following the beginning of the Millennium, the people are prophetically called upon to -- "Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his *footstool*; for he is holy [worthy]" (Psa. 99:5). And this thought, that the establishment of the New Jerusalem, the Church of God glorified, as the new government in the earth, will mean the beginning of the restoration of divine favor to Jehovah's footstool, is clearly set forth through the Prophet Zechariah (Zech. 14:4, 5).

JEHOVAH'S FEET ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

This prophecy is generally misunderstood, and applied to the feet of our Lord Jesus, at his second advent: and indeed, those who thus err generally go farther and assert that it will be the feet of flesh, pierced with the nails of Calvary; -- not realizing that our Lord gave his human nature, complete and forever, as our ransom; and that he was raised from the dead, by the Father's power, a glorious spirit being -- "the express image of the Father's person."

But a glance at the preceding verse (3) shows that the Prophet's reference is to the return of Jehovah's feet; for the statement (referring to the trouble by which the Kingdom will be established) is: "Then shall *Jehovah* go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle [in olden times for Israel]. And *his feet* shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be divided in its center, from east to west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove northward and half southward."

As soon as any recognize the fact that the feet mentioned are Jehovah's feet, they will not dispute that this language is symbolic, and refers to the Lord's reestablishment of his dominion in the earth, which has long been comparatively abandoned to the "god of this world" Satan; -- except as the Lord was represented first by the typical Tabernacle, secondly by the Temple at Jerusalem, and lastly by the present tabernacle condition of the Church of Christ, during this Gospel age. Surely, no one will err and get the thought that Jehovah literally rests his feet upon this earth as a "footstool."

And if the placing and resting of Jehovah's "feet" are symbolic, and signify the return of divine favor and dominion to earth, so, we may be sure, other features connected in the same prophecy are symbolic: the Mount of Olives, its peculiar division, its valley, the flight of the people, the waters of life from Jerusalem (Compare verse 8 with Ezek. 47:1-9.), etc., are all symbolic statements -- pictures of grand spiritual truths.

If then the olive be the symbol of *light*, *peace*, and *divine blessing* through the holy spirit, and if mountain be considered as elsewhere the symbol for a Kingdom, the significance here of the term Mount of Olives is easily seen to be -- the Kingdom of Light, Peace, and Divine Blessing. And the standing or establishment or fixing of Jehovah's "feet" upon it, signifies that the divine favor and law will be reestablished in the earth by and through the holy Kingdom.

This application of the term Mount of Olives is in full accord with the Apostle's statement (Rom. 11:17, 24) in which he compares fleshly Israel with the original cultivated olive tree, and Gentile converts to wild olive branches grafted in where the natural branches had been broken off. (Compare Jer. 11:16, 17.) And he explains that the root of the tree is in the promise of God -- the Abrahamic promise, that the seed of Abraham should eventually bless all the families of the earth, etc. Eventually the same root or promise will bear two kinds of branches -- the ingrafted wild olive branches, and the reingrafted natural branches: when fleshly Israel shall have his

blindness turned away, and shall look with the eye of faith upon the Savior crucified and pierced nineteen centuries ago -- a sacrifice for sin. We remember also that fleshly Israel was God's typical Kingdom or mountain for a long time, and that spiritual Israel of the Gospel age is called to be the real Kingdom of God, as our Lord declared, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Moreover, from these *two* Kingdoms (even before Jehovah's *glory* rests upon them, to make them his channels of blessings to the whole world of mankind) has proceeded all "the *light* of the world" during all the darkness of the past: for are not these the representatives of the Old and the New Testaments, the old and new Covenants? Do not these correspond to the Lord's two witnesses and to the two olive trees of Zechariah (Zech. 4:3, 11, 12) distinctly mentioned also in Revelation (Zech. 11:4)? -- in that these two parts of the mountain symbolize the outcome of those covenants, the results of the witnessing -- the Kingdom in its heavenly and its earthly phases?

Here we see, then, that the *two halves* of the Mount of Olives signify the *two parts* of the Kingdom of God, distinctly separated according to a divine order or arrangement. The separation indicates no opposition between the two parts of the Kingdom. It is, on the contrary, for the purpose of producing the "Valley of Blessing" between -- to which all who desire divine aid may flee and find succor under the blessed protection of both the heavenly and the earthly phases of the Kingdom.

The valley thus produced would be one full of light -- free from shadows for the sun would stream through it from east to west. This speaks symbolically of the Sun of Righteousness and its full light of divine truth and blessing scattering the shadows of sin, ignorance, superstition, and death, and healing and restoring the willing and obedient of humanity who will flee to this valley of blessings, the valley of mercy. The valley of mercy, *between* and under the care of the spiritual and human phases of the Kingdom of Light and Peace (the establishment of Jehovah's feet), will surely be a "Valley of Blessings" to all who enter it with broken and contrite hearts.

We must remember, further, that while it is to Israel only that it is said, "Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains," yet as a name Israel signified "The people blessed of the Lord," "The people of God," "The Lord's people" (2 Chron. 7:14). And while, as we have seen, the first or spiritual blessing of the Kingdom shall come to spiritual Israel, and the second or earthly blessing shall begin with Israel according to the flesh, yet it will not stop there; for whosoever will may become an Israelite: by exercising the faith and obedience of Abraham, all mankind may become Israelites indeed-"the people of God." And hence the Prophet Isaiah declares that when Israel is called back to divine favor, at the establishment of the Kingdom, it will include "*Every one that is called by my [Jehovah's] name*: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." The name Israel will then apply to all who are God's people (Isa. 34:7; Rom. 9:26, 33; 10:13).

"And [thus] will Jehovah my God come in, and all the holy ones shall [thus] be [united] with him" (Zech. 14:5). When God's time shall have fully come, when the lease of power to the Gentiles shall have run out, when the sacrificing of the great Day of Atonement (the Gospel Age) shall have ceased, when the High Priest shall have finished making atonement, not only for his own "body," the Church, but also for his "house," and for "all the people," and he shall come forth to bless all the people, then Jehovah's curse, or sentence of death, shall be lifted from the earth, his footstool tabernacle will again be recognized, and its beautifying in righteousness and truth and in the holy spirit of love shall begin and progress, until, in the end of the Millennium, all

the willingly righteous shall have reached perfection, or been reunited with Jehovah, and all the unwilling shall have been destroyed (Acts 3:23; Rev. 20:9).

Carrying the picture further, the Prophet declares, respecting that day in which gradually the earth shall be made glorious as Jehovah's footstool: --

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be bright, nor the darkness thick; but the day shall be the one foreknown to the Lord - neither full day nor night: but it shall come to pass that at its close [evening] it shall be [clear] light" (Zech. 14:6, 7).

Some confounded the "day" here described with the "day of Vengeance" which is "a day of clouds and thick darkness with no light in it" (Joel 2:2; Zeph. 1:15) and the translators have, seemingly, generally, tried to harmonize the translations. But not so; the day here referred to by Zechariah as only partially bright is the Millennial day, although in it the Sun of righteousness will arise and shine, to scatter earth's miasma of sin and superstition and death. It will nevertheless be only partially bright, because throughout it will be dealing with generation after generation of the fallen race as brought from the tomb, and in various stages of restitution toward perfection. But how refreshing it is to be assured that in that day of the reestablishment of Jehovah's feet upon his footstool, there shall be no more "thick darkness"; and that at the close of that Millennial Day, instead of growing darker, the world will only have reached the high noon of its "light of the knowledge of Jehovah"; and that its sun shall never set.

The reference to the rivers of living waters flowing from Jerusalem, during this Millennial Day of the reestablishment of Jehovah's feet upon his footstool (Zech. 14:8, 9), reminds us of the corresponding testimony of Ezekiel (Eze. 47:1-12) and of John's Revelation (Rev. 22:1, 2) which, under this same symbol of living waters proceeding from the throne of the Millennial Kingdom, show us the restitution blessings under the symbols of "waters of life," to which whosoever will may come and drink freely, and fruitful trees of life everlasting whose leaves will heal the repentant peoples of earth of all imperfections.

Ah yes! "In that day the Lord shall be King over all the earth"; His Kingdom shall have come as his faithful have long prayed; and by the end of that day his will shall be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. God's footstool shall then be glorious indeed: as it is written: --

"As truly as I live, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah" (Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14).

- C. T. Russell (in *Scripture Studies*, Vol. 4).

Jehovah's Footstool Made Glorious

"Thus saith Jehovah, Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." "And I will make the place" [footstool] of my feet glorious." "And his [Jehovah's] feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives."

-Isaiah 60:13; 66:1; Zechariah 14:4; Matthew 5:35; Acts 7:49.

G

OD'S footstool has been anything but glorious for the past six thousand years: sin, pain, crying, mental and physical suffering, and death have made it one vast, charnel house in which now, conservatively estimated, at least fifty thousand millions of humanity wait for the time to come when the curse of divine justice shall be lifted; and the light of divine favor, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, shall rise as the Sun of Righteousness,

"Chase away sin's dismal shadows, Light the gloom with healing ray."

To this end God has made abundant provision. The *ransom* for Adam, and for all who suffered loss through him as his children, bought the whole world, and secured for each member of our race an opportunity for a trial for everlasting life under favorable conditions; but it did more, it purchased back Adam's Paradise home (lost by his transgression), and his dominion as earth's king, representative of God, his Creator and Father.

Hence we read, "And thou, O Tower of the flock [Christ], the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the

first dominion" (Mic. 4:8). The

Apostle Paul also speaks of the "redemption of the purchased *possession*" (Eph. 1:14). Our Lord in one of his parables referred to this- also, showing that he purchased not only mankind, the treasure, but also the field, the world, the earth from under the curse: and that all who join with him, as members of the Kingdom class, share in that purchase of the field and the treasure. - Matt. 13:44.

The entire work of the Millennium will consist in reordering and making glorious God's footstool. Paradise, when lost through sin, was but a "garden" in a corner of the earth; but inasmuch as the race of Adam has multiplied to fill the

mean the beginning of restoration of divine favor to Jehovah's footstool, is clearly set forth through the Prophet. - Zech. 14:4, 5.

JEHOVAH'S FEET ON THE MOUNT
OF OLIVES

This prophecy is generally misunderstood, and applied to the feet of our Lord Jesus, at his second advent: and indeed, those who thus err generally go farther and assert that it will be the feet of flesh, pierced with the nails of Calvary not realizing that our Lord gave his human nature,

complete and forever, as our ransom; and that he was raised from the dead, by the Father's power, a glorious spirit being-"the express image of the Father's person."

But a glance at the preceding verse (3) shows that the Prophet's reference is to the return of Jehovah's feet; for the statement (referring to the trouble by which the Kingdom will be established) is: "Then shall *Jehovah* go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle [in olden times for Israel]. And *his feet* shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be divided in its center, from east to west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove northward and half southward."

As soon as any recognize the fact that the feet mentioned are Jehovah's feet, they will not dispute that this language is symbolic, and refers to the Lord's reestablishment of his dominion in the earth, which has long been comparatively abandoned to the "god of this world" Satan-except as the Lord was represented first by the typical Tabernacle, secondly by the Temple at Jerusalem, and lastly by the present tabernacle condition of the Church of Christ, during this

earth, in accordance with the divine intention (Gen. 1:28), and inasmuch as they all have been redeemed, it will be necessary to provide a Paradise sufficiently large to accommodate all: and this will imply that the entire earth shall become as the Garden of Eden for fruitfulness and beauty and perfection. And all this is promised as the grand future consummation of the divine plan. Acts 3:20, 21; Rev. 2:7; 2 Cor. 12:4.

But the richest jewel of the Lord's glorified footstool in the close of the Millennium will be mankind, in whose perfection, liberty, and likeness to God, in moral and intellectual graces, will be reflected the very image of Divinity. And most gloriously will the perfect man reflect honor upon his Maker and his wondrous plan for his creation, redemption, and restitution. And with that wonderful plan will always be intimately identified first the Lord Jesus, Jehovah's "Word," and second the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and joint heir in disbursing the blessings secured by the ransom.

The beautifying and glorifying of the Lord's "footstool" will not be *completed* until our Lord Jesus, as the Father's honored agent, "shall have put down all [conflicting] rule and all authority and power. For he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet," before he delivers up the Kingdom at the close of the Millennium. - 1 Cor. 15:24-28.

The period of the reign of Sin and Death is represented as the time when God "remembered not his *footstool* in the day of his anger" (Lam. 2:1); but following the beginning of the Millennium, the people are prophetically called upon to-"Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his *footstool*; for he is holy [worthy]" (Ps. 99:5). And this thought, that the establishment of the New Jerusalem, the Church of God glorified, as the new government in the earth, will

Gospel Age. Surely, no one will err and get the thought that Jehovah literally rests his feet upon this earth as a "footstool."

And if the placing and resting of Jehovah's "feet" are symbolic, and signify the return of divine favor and dominion to earth, so, we may be sure, other features connected in the same prophecy are symbolic: the Mount of Olives, its peculiar division, its valley, the flight of the people, the waters of life from Jerusalem (compare verse 8 with Ezek. 47:1-9), etc., are all symbolic statements-pictures of grand spiritual truths.

If then the olive be the symbol of *light, peace, and divine blessing* through the holy spirit, and if mountain be considered as elsewhere the symbol for a Kingdom, the significance here of the term Mount of Olives is easily seen to be-the Kingdom of Light, Peace, and Divine Blessing. And the standing or establishment or fixing of Jehovah's "feet" upon it, signifies that the divine favor and law will be reestablished in the earth by and through the holy Kingdom.

This application of the term Mount of Olives is in full accord with the Apostle's statement (Rom. 11:17, 24) in which he compares fleshly Israel with the

original cultivated olive tree, and Gentile converts to wild olive branches grafted in where the natural branches had been broken off. (Compare Jer. 11:16, 17.) And he explains that the root of the tree is in the promise of God-the Abrahamic promise, that the seed of Abraham should eventually bless all the families of the earth, etc. Eventually the same root or promise will bear two kinds of branches-the ingrafted wild olive branches and the reingrafted natural branches: when fleshly Israel shall have his blindness turned away, and shall look with the eye of faith upon the Savior crucified and pierced nineteen centuries ago-a sacrifice for sin. We remember also that fleshly Israel was God's typical Kingdom or mountain for a long time, and that spiritual Israel of the Gospel Age is called to be the real Kingdom of

God, as our Lord declared, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Moreover, from these *two* Kingdoms (even before Jehovah's *glory* rests upon them, to make them his channels of blessings to the whole world of mankind) has proceeded all "the *light* of the world" during all the darkness of the past: for are not these the representatives of the Old and the New Testaments, the old and new Covenants? Do not these correspond to the Lord's two witnesses and to the two olive trees of Zechariah 4:3, 11, 12 (distinctly mentioned also in Rev. 11:4)-in that these two parts of the mountain symbolize the outcome of those covenants, the results of the witnessing-the Kingdom in its heavenly and its earthly phases?

Here we see then, that the *two halves* of the Mount of Olives signify *the two parts* of the Kingdom of God, distinctly separated according to a divine order or arrangement. The separation indicates no opposition between the two parts of the Kingdom. It is, on the contrary, for the purpose of producing the "Valley of Blessing" between-to which all who desire divine aid may flee and find succor under the blessed protection of both the heavenly and the earthly phases of the Kingdom.

The valley thus produced would be one full of light-free from shadows: for the sun would stream through it from east to west. This speaks symbolically of the Sun of Righteousness and its full light of divine truth and blessing scattering the shadows of sin, ignorance, superstition, and death, and healing and restoring the willing and obedient of humanity who will flee to this valley of blessings, the valley of mercy. The valley of mercy, *between* and under the care of the spiritual and human phases of the Kingdom of Light and Peace (the establishment of Jehovah's feet), will surely be a "Valley of Blessings" to all who enter it with broken and contrite hearts.

We must remember, further, that while it is to Israel only that it

is said, "Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains," yet as a name Israel signified "The people blessed of the Lord," "The people of God," "The Lord's people" (2 Chron. 7:14). And while, as we have seen, the first or spiritual blessing of the Kingdom shall come to spiritual Israel, and the second or earthly blessing shall begin with Israel according to the flesh, yet it will not stop there;

for whosoever will may become an Israelite. By exercising the faith and obedience of Abraham, all mankind may become Israelites indeed-"the people of God." And hence the Prophet Isaiah declares that when Israel is called back to divine favor, at the establishment of the Kingdom, it will include *"Everyone that is called by my [Jehovah's] name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."* The name Israel will then apply to all who are God's people. - Isaiah 43:7; Romans 9:26, 33; 10:13.

"And [thus] will Jehovah my God come in, and all the holy ones shall [thus] be [united] with him" (Zech. 14:5). When God's time shall have fully come, when the lease of power to the Gentiles shall have run out, when the sacrificing of the great Day of Atonement (the Gospel Age) shall have ceased, when the High Priest shall have finished making atonement, not only for his own "body," the Church, but also for his "house," and for "all the people," and he shall come forth to bless all the people-then Jehovah's curse or sentence of death shall be lifted from the earth, his footstool tabernacle will again be recognized, and its beautifying in righteousness and truth and in the holy spirit of love shall begin and progress, until, in the end of the Millennium, all the willingly righteous shall have reached perfection, or been reunited with Jehovah, and all the unwilling shall have been destroyed. - Acts 3:23; Rev. 20:9.

Carrying the picture further, the Prophet declares, respecting that day in which gradually the earth shall be made glorious as Jehovah's footstool:

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be bright, nor the darkness thick; but the day shall be the one foreknown to the Lord-neither full day nor night: but it shall come to pass that at its close [evening] it shall be [clear] light." - Zech. 14:6, 7.

Some confounded the "day" here described with the "day of Vengeance," which is "a day of clouds and thick darkness with no light in it" (Joel 2:2; Zeph. 1:15), and the translators have, seemingly, generally, tried to harmonize the translations. But not so; the day here referred to by Zechariah as only partially bright is the Millennial Day, although in it the Sun of Righteousness will arise and shine, to scatter earth's miasma of sin and superstition and death. It will nevertheless be only partially bright, because throughout it will be dealing with generation after

Day of Grace

SINCE the Apostles "fell asleep" a number of Christian scholars, particularly those living during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, testified to their belief in a hope which extended beyond the grave—that probation for eternal life does not end for all mankind when this present earthly life ends. While such scholars, in other respects, were not fully aware of the truths in the Divine Plan which have been unfolded in the clearer light of our day they, nevertheless, did see and preached this hope.

Albert O. Hudson, editor of the Bible Study Monthly, well and favorably known to our readers, addresses himself to this subject in his new book *Future Probation in Christian Belief*. With his permission, we present below the third of a series of seven articles excerpted from that book.

- Editorial Committee

It is laid down in the Gospels that Jesus Christ is the "true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). Unless every man who comes into the world is at some time brought face to face with the radiance of Christ that text has no meaning and Scripture is unreliable. Upon one occasion Jesus said He came to seek and save that which was lost and upon another that He had come that men might have life, superabundant life. (Luke 19:10; John 10:10). In his parables of the lost sheep and the lost piece of silver He shows how intense is his endeavour to seek the lost among mankind and give life to those who will to have it and this in turn demands that he leave no stone unturned, as it were, to achieve his object. There is no warrant for exceptions; in some way or another every human being ever born must at some time in his experience have that enlightenment. In the final stage of mankind's probationary experience before the ages of eternity begin, there comes a broadcast invitation "the Spirit and the Bride say 'Come ... and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely'" (Rev. 22:17). That expression "whosoever will" is a travesty if it does not imply that every man has by that time attained sufficient of knowledge and opportunity to realise what the invitation involves and is sufficiently free from the external power and influence of evil and of the Devil to have ability to accept it. If it is indeed the Divine will, as St. Paul in 2 Timothy 2:4 says it is, to "have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," then quite obviously God has provided at least for all men to come to that knowledge even although conceivably some may in the outcome refuse to be saved.

If all this be true, it involves the obvious difficulty that many -- the greater proportion -- of men have lived their lives, and died, without having so much as heard of the Name in which alone they may find life. Even among those nations to which Christ has been preached, there are the mentally sick, those who have died before reaching years of discretion, and, too, so many to whom Christ has been presented in so miserably distorted a fashion that by no stretch of the imagination could it be said that they have heard the Gospel. Despite all the efforts of all the missionaries and evangelists and Christian workers for two thousand years past, the fact must be accepted that the majority of men pass into death without in any sense of the word coming into vital contact with Divine truth or knowing anything of the issues which are eventually to determine their destiny. Of this second half of the twentieth century in which we live, there are the teeming millions of China, over a quarter of the entire world population, practically entirely without knowledge of the Name; India, Russia, Africa, the Arab world, the greater part of whose peoples know nothing of the Name; in this materialistic irreligious Western world of ours how many of the contemporary generations have ever heard of Christ except perhaps as a character in some film or musical feature in which none of the vital attributes of the real Christ are displayed.

One recent estimate is that three-fifths of the living population of the earth have not heard, and to their dying day will not hear, anything at all about Christ, that He came to earth that "whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And this is one generation only, the generation which by reason of the tremendous increase in travel and diffusion of knowledge characteristic of our day might be expected, of all generations, to have the best opportunity at least to hear of his Name. Of the remaining twofifths, by far the greater proportion have not had the claims and the call of Christ presented to them in anything like a sufficiently adequate fashion to give them a true impression of what it is all about. Of three and a half thousand millions now living, over two thousand millions will never hear the Name in this life, and will inevitably die without having made that decision and profession which is the essential condition for entry into eternal life. What is the Divine purpose for these, and others like them of past generations, all creatures of God's hands, to whom He has given life and endowed with such marvellous potentialities?

Medieval theology had a simple answer. These are the non-elect, born outside the purpose of God and destined to be cast away as the wastage of his Creation. Later thought rejected this callous dismissal of the problem and a number of hypotheses have been suggested through the years and found acceptance in many quarters although they are hypotheses only without Scriptural foundation and in some cases are directly at variance with the basic principles of Scripture.

The greatest problem is concerned with those who never knew, the "unsaved heathen," those who never had Christ preached to them, which includes not only so many in all Christian ages but also the whole of the ancient world before Christ came. His Name obviously could not have been preached to these latter. All these, it is so often suggested, will be saved in their ignorance provided they have lived good lives according to their own light and understanding. Strangely, however, if at some time in their experience they should have Christ preached to them, and, in the exercise of that same understanding, fail to be convinced and so do not believe, they are lost forever, having rejected the opportunity. That is the orthodox Christian theology and constitutes much of the driving force behind missionary endeavour and evangelistic revival efforts. One might be pardoned for suggesting that if this be indeed the case and all that is necessary to salvation is a good and honest life, with or without Christ, it were better that the Christian evangel be not preached to the ignorant, for without it they would certainly be saved whereas with it the issue could be in doubt!

As illustrating the abysmal ignorance of Christianity characteristic of the modern western world, Rowntree, some twenty-five years ago, in *English Life and Leisure*, cites the case of one observer who overheard a snatch of conversation between a young couple looking into a shop window in which a crucifix was displayed. "Look at that little figure of a man on a cross" exclaimed the girl; "I've seen them before. There must be a story behind it. I wonder what it is!" "Something to do with the Bible, I believe" her companion answered vaguely, and the pair moved off. An ordinary young couple, probably looking forward to all that life had to offer them, but a life in which Christ would have no place because they had never heard of him. Not good enough for heaven, certainly on that account; but, do they really deserve the alternative, without first having a chance?

A somewhat related case is that of babies and children dying young before they could be capable of understanding the Gospel, and of mentally deficient individuals who are incapable of understanding it anyway. Are these also to be accounted failures of the Divine creative Spirit, waste material not coming up to standard and so discarded? Not so, say the hearts of Christian thinkers; despite the conditions laid down by the Scriptures, these must be accorded entry into the future felicity where they will no longer be immature or irresponsible. Because of their in-

nocence, or because of their deficiency, they must be excused the necessity of believing into Christ and will thus be saved nevertheless. Some old-time ministers used to enthuse over the early demise of some sweet child on the ground that it had not lived long enough to sin and therefore had ensured its eternal salvation. Here again it would logically follow that the surest aid to the attainment of heaven is inability to understand or fulfill the conditions laid down for entry!

A factor which is often slurred over is the position of intelligent professors of other religious faiths -- the Jew, the Moslem, the Buddhist, and so on. None of these faiths give Christ his rightful place even although the Jew and the Moslem worship the same God as does the Christian. When one considers the outstanding witness and faithfulness to God and his righteousness manifested by so many sons of Israel in ancient times and the continuing witness preserved by at least a remnant among them during this present Christian Age it would seem illogical to deny such a place of some kind in the future Divine purpose; and yet, these same stalwarts either never accepted Christ because they lived before his Advent or, in the case of many who lived in later times, definitely opposed and repudiated him. This, too, despite their loyalty to the God of Israel who is also the God of the Christian. The dilemma here is, are they admitted to eternal felicity because of their faithfulness to God despite their denial of Christ, or are they doomed forever because of their denial of Christ despite their faithfulness to God?

Something of the same kind applies to the sincere Moslem. It is sometimes forgotten in Christian circles that the lifework of Mahomet was to replace idol and Nature worship among the Arabs by the worship and service of the One true God, and to Mahomet that God was the One also revered by the Jews. The excesses committed by his followers have diverted attention from the higher aspects of the Moslem faith and many do not stop to consider that so-called Christians were doing much the same kind of things to fellow Christians or to Jews at much the same time in history. It remains that through the ages there have been many high-minded men among the followers of the Arabian prophet who have manifested a valid understanding of the ways of God and a sterling faith in him. The Moslem differs from the orthodox Jew in that he holds Jesus of Nazareth to have been a prophet sent from God although only ranking with Moses and Elijah and Mahomet. The lives of many such men compare equally with those of many sincere Christians and the only fundamental difference is their refusal to accept the Divinity of Christ and to place their trust in him as Saviour and Lord. They are sincere in their allegiance to God, but they will not accept his Son. The same dilemma presents itself as with the Jew.

Consider also adherents to the faith preached by Gautama Buddha. Buddhism is a newer faith than is Christianity, only some thirteen centuries old, but even so has spread through most Eastern lands and to a great extent supplanted Christianity in those lands. Even Western countries are being penetrated nowadays and a European Buddhist is no longer a rarity. It is a gentle religion and many who espouse it are good people, but they have no place in their philosophy for the redeeming work of Christ. In the countries where it is the faith of the masses it has become institutionalised and debased just as has Christianity under similar circumstances, but the fact remains that a substantial proportion of mankind -- some two hundred millions of the present generation alone -- are living and dying in the Buddhist faith and without Christ. Yet in their lives and actions and characters they are, many of them, amenable to the principles which Jesus proclaimed when He was upon earth; they live his kind of life and practice his precepts without knowing or acknowledging him. Like the lawyer of Jesus' day who "answered discreetly," they are "not far from the Kingdom of God"; but, will they ever get in?

Faced with this imposing array of candidates for eternal life or the reverse, reluctant to endorse the old medieval certainty that they are all irrevocably lost souls, and yet conscious of the New Testament insistence that without complete profession of faith in Christ and the merit of his death

on man's behalf, and dedication of life to him, there can be no salvation, the problem is usually tacitly shelved. It is very customary to meet with the suggestion that God has not revealed his Will in these matters, that the "Judge of all the earth" will assuredly "do right" and that we are best advised to leave the matter with him. Now with all possible respect for the sincerity of the oft-times eminent leaders of thought, and others, who speak thus, this is simply not good enough! The whole basis of the Christian mission is involved. The followers of Christ are commissioned -- nay, commanded -- to preach the gospel in all the world "for a witness" until the end of the Age has come. The kernel and core of that witness is, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It is vital that the evangelist is not only informed, but positively confident, of the implications both for those whom he does succeed in reaching and those whom he fails to reach. The Christian worker or missionary who is admittedly uncertain or ignorant as to the conditions upon which entry into the life of the future can be had is not likely to be a very efficient representative of the Lord Christ. In practice the trumpet gives an uncertain sound; the traditional evangelist proclaims faith in and acceptance of Christ as essential whilst the modern theologian increasingly holds that the ignorant, the immature, the incapable, the honest devotee of a non-Christian faith, will be saved at the end by the grace of God, and the merit of Christ's death, even though he has not intelligently taken that to himself.

The logical inference from this increasingly generally held position would be that the population of the future eternal realm when God has finished his work with mankind will consist for the most part-by far the most part -- of people who know nothing of the offering for sin made on their behalf by the Lord Jesus Christ, nothing of his saving power, nothing of the Father -- Creator and his love for man, little or nothing of the standards of right-doing which are the laws of creation and by which their lives must henceforward be governed. They will find themselves in a world they never expected to see and for which they are totally unprepared, one in which the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, is supreme and thus acknowledged by those who did know him in the former life. They will be quite unable to join in that acknowledgment and allegiance and worship because they do not know him. This new world into which they have entered will be strange and alien and one for which they are completely unprepared and unfitted. And there is no guarantee that they, or at any rate some of them, are going to be willing to conform to its standards. Unless the man is truly converted and from his heart desires and accepts the ways of God, eternal life in the heavenly world could easily become an intolerable burden.

Faced with this situation in the celestial realm one would expect the company of the redeemed, the community of convinced and faithful Christians who have already attained eternal life, to set out straight away on a massive campaign of evangelising and conversion with the object of enlightening these who had thus been admitted to Heaven on account of ignorance, immaturity or incapacity, without having accepted Christ, that they might eventually yield themselves in intelligent and willing allegiance to him. In fact, if such a company of the unconverted is to be admitted to the heavenly life it cannot be conceived that their unconverted state would be tolerated to all eternity. It surely must be obvious that, if for any reason any did attain the future life without Christ, they would not long be permitted to remain without him; it has to be remembered that in the consummation every knee will bow to Christ and every tongue confess him as Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Christ will be All in All, and will fill all things. That demands that the unconverted and the unregenerate will either become converted and regenerate, or they will not remain there. So, if it is indeed that God relaxes the conditions to allow the ignorant and so on into the heavenly land, it is only because He purposes immediately thereafter to set about their instruction and conversion.

That is hardly the orthodox idea of Heaven. And yet -- is it possible that the instinct of so many good Christian people and serious Christian thinkers is rightly founded, that the all-wise and all-

loving Father of all has provided for the ignorant, the immature, the incapable, whose disabilities are inevitable in the world as it now exists and has been so made by the shortcomings of man, so that even their untimely deaths do not debar them from all hope? Is it possible that the Scriptures do justify the expectation of some such condition of things as has just been described, reconciling Divine insistence that eternal life is only through knowledge and acceptance of Christ with the apparent enigma that God has not ensured that all men are given that knowledge and consequent opportunity in this present life? Is it possible that the Day of Grace in which repentance and conversion and reconciliation with God is possible, ends, not at the close of the individual's life on earth, but at the bar of the final Day of judgment, by which time the individual will have had a further span of experience under conditions which ensure that he receives the knowledge and opportunity which he only partially had, or perhaps never had, during his first earthly life? It has been pointed out by many soundly informed preachers and writers that the eternal destiny of the individual is determined, not at death, but at the Day of judgment; this involves an intermediate period during which repentance and conversion must still be possible. On such basis the problem of who shall be saved ceases to be a problem; the New Testament insistence that salvation is only through acceptance of Christ is upheld and there will not be one of all earth's millions who will not eventually attain to the full knowledge of Christ and make his decision accordingly. If any man fails to enter in at the last, it will not be because of his ignorance or his incapacity to understand, but because after being brought to a full knowledge of the Truth and understanding clearly the issues involved, he deliberately and consciously chooses evil rather than good, and reaps the consequences accordingly.

A leading modern Anglican theologian, R. H. Charles, has said (*Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*) "the idea that forgiveness is impossible in the next life has only to be stated in order to be rejected, for till absolute fixity of character is reached, repentance and forgiveness, being moral acts, must be possible under a perfectly moral Being." This is an important principle; until a man has deliberately rendered himself incapable of repentance . . . there must always remain the possibility, whether death has intervened or not. The love of God and the appeal of the Gospel transcends the grave. It is necessary therefore to distinguish between the position before God of the individual at death and at the final judgment of mankind at the end. This was stressed more than a century ago by the celebrated Methodist theologian, Dr. W. B. Pope, who said "the fixed and unalterable state of man is always associated with the Day of judgment and its issues, and not with the day of death. We must not antedate these issues or interfere with the full work of probation."

When therefore Jesus spoke of the men of Jonah's Nineveh finding things in the Day of judgment "more tolerable" than the unrepentant generation of his own day; when Paul told the men of Athens that God had "looked beyond" the "times of ignorance" and appointed a Day in the which he would judge the world in righteousness; when Peter talked about the coming again of Jesus Christ to institute "times of restitution of all things promised by all the prophets since the world began"; and James at the first Apostolic Conference foresaw the time when the "residue of men, all the nations" would "call upon the name of the Lord," there was being laid the foundations of an understanding of the Divine purpose which envisaged a universal opportunity for the living and the dead to hear of the grace of God in Christ.

The Question Box

Matthew 10:28

Question:

Will you please explain Matthew 10:28, where we read:

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

If we are a soul and do not possess a soul, how are we to understand the use of "body" and "soul" in this Scripture?

Answer:

For a proper understanding of this text we must first ascertain the Bible answer to the question: "What is man?"

There are two general views on this subject which, while each contains elements of truth, are, on the whole, misleading. One is the so-called orthodox view; the other, the so-called scientific view. Neither represents the Bible viewpoint, and those who hold either are thereby prevented from securing the benefit which the Bible teaching would have on their hearts and lives.

The position of orthodox theology, briefly stated, is that man is a composite being of three parts—body, spirit, and soul. The body, it is believed, is born after the usual manner of animal birth, except that at the time of birth God interposes and, in some inscrutable manner, implants in the body a spirit and a soul which, being parts of God himself, are indestructible, and therefore can never die. These two parts, spirit and soul, orthodoxy is unable to separate and distinguish, and hence uses the terms interchangeably.

Scientists answer the question, "What is man?" by stating that man is an animal of the highest type yet developed. They offer no suggestion as to a future life for any individual, but, believing they can trace an evolutionary development of mankind in past ages, are disposed to the view that the race may by natural processes (and apart from the power and purpose of a personal God) yet be developed into a superior condition to that of the present.

The Bible answer to the question recognizes man as composed of two elements, body and spirit. By body is meant the physical organism; by spirit, the animating power—the breath of life. The union of these two elements produces the man himself, the sentient being -- the soul. As we read in Genesis 2:7: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

The Greek word twice rendered "soul" in our text is *psuche*. It is frequently translated "life" and indeed is so translated a little later in this same discourse of our Lord. "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (v. 39). This variation in translation has served to confuse, creating the impression that "life" is one thing and "soul" another, and that a man might lose his life without losing his soul. Such confusion is particularly noticeable in Mark 8:35-37: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his

soul?" In this passage the word *psuche* is twice translated "life" and twice "soul." Had the word been uniformly translated the truth would not have been obscured.

In the light of the foregoing discussion let us return to Matthew 10:28. What does our Lord mean when he says: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul?" Does he mean that when the body is killed there is a mysterious, invisible something called a soul, which men are not able to kill, and which, therefore, escapes death at their hands and continues to live on apart from the body? Such is the orthodox view, which, as we have indicated, we cannot share. But even those who hold it should be on guard against embracing the further error of supposing that such an escaped soul is possessed of the quality of immortality -- deathlessness. The closing words of this very verse make that plain. They speak of one (God himself) who has the power to destroy both soul and body.

But, if the orthodox view be wrong, what is the proper one? I answer: Our Lord well knew that when men killed the body, they then and there destroyed also the present life, the soul, the sentient being. He was not denying this obvious fact. The disciples, however, had hope of a future life--a life beyond the power of the killer to harm, much less to destroy. This hope of life came to them through the Gospel--came as the result of the redemption provided by God himself, through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus. This hope of a future life was shortly to be confirmed to them by our Lord's resurrection from the dead. Because he lived they would have grounds for believing that they, too, would live.

The present life they would lose, whether men killed their body or not--they would lose it in old age if not sooner. But their future life, their prospect for eternity--this lay in the power of God. He it is, then, and not men, whom they should fear.

Benjamin Wilson, in the *Emphatic Diaglott* translation, by using the word "life" and by supplying the word "future" has given us what we cannot but believe is the true meaning of our Lord's words. We close this discussion by quoting his translation, which reads as follows:

"Be not afraid of those who kill the body, but cannot destroy the (future) life; but rather fear him who can utterly destroy both life and body in Gehenna."

- P. L. Read

Entered Into Rest

Alfred B. Dickey, Upland, Cal.

Earl K. Frey, Baltimore, Md.

Lawrence P. Kirkpatrick, Taos, N.M.

Thomas Olesiak, Chicago, Ill.

John P. Richardson, Denver, Colo.

Howard Trevarrow, Alamo, Tex.

Madeleine C. Webster, Madison, Wis.

Stephanie Wnorowski, Winter Park, Fla.