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Greetings for the New Year

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." - 2 Thess. 3:18.

AS WE enter upon another year could we do so with better words than these, or words of greater promise? As the old year passes and the new is ushered in, we greet each other with good wishes. Could we do so more fittingly than in the words of our text? The fashion of this world is rapidly passing away. As we face the future and realize life's uncertainties, whether we be young or old, if we take our life thoughtfully, and in a Christian spirit, especially if we have consecrated ourselves to do the Father's will by walking in the footsteps of Jesus to the best of our ability, we feel our need of a higher wisdom, a more pure and enduring energy than our own, to guide our steps, to mould our character, to shape our lot for us; and so we look up to God and ask, both for ourselves and for the whole dear family of God, his benediction for the year which lies ahead of us, his grace upon all our days and on all our ways-grace sufficient for every time of need, teaching us how to make all things contribute to our highest welfare, thus securing alike from the bleak north winds of adversity as from the warm south winds of prosperity real and lasting benefits. - 1 Cor. 7:31; Hebrews 4:16; Romans 8:28; Song of Solomon 4:16.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with *you*." Do not these words meet *your* sense of need, *your* craving for good, *your* hope of a benediction which will make *your* new year bright with the luster of a joyous, holy living? To St. Paul they conveyed and implied so much, they were so bright with hope, that, as another has observed,* "they became his standing good wish for those whom he loved." They appear at the close of nearly all the letters he wrote, in one place reading, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you"; in another, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit"; and here, in our text, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

*For much of the material used in this article, we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to Samuel Cox, an expositor of days gone by.

It is entirely possible, however, that the very frequency with which we meet these words, has served to dull their force and clearness. As another has expressed, "People, in reading the Bible, are often not conscious of the extreme listlessness with which they pass along the familiar and oft repeated words of Scripture, without the impression of their meaning being at all present with the thoughts, -- and how, during the mechanical currency of the verses through their lips, the thinking power is asleep for whole passages together." Perhaps this is true in regard to our text. We may never have asked what the words meant originally, and still mean, what the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was and is, and in what senses that grace may be with us, and be the crown and benediction of our whole life. It will be worth our while therefore, if we meditate on the text long enough to note that the phrase "grace of Christ" would convey at least three ideas to the members of the early Church, and should convey the same ideas to us; and that if the grace of Christ is to "be with us" or "with our spirit" we must in all these senses reproduce it, and make it our own.

THE GRACEFULNESS OR CHARM OF CHRIST

The first thought which this phrase would suggest to St. Paul's readers, especially to his Grecian readers -- and most of them were Greeks -- would be the gracefulness, the charm, of Christ. They would understand the Apostle to refer to that exquisite sensibility to beauty, the beauty of nature and of man, by which Christ was distinguished; that love of all that is fair and pure and good which gave a beauty, a winning charm, an attractiveness, to his person, his character, his manner and bearing, and to his words, which no heart not wholly dead to beauty and goodness was able to resist. Both the Puritan conception and the Monastic, or ascetic, conception of Christ have gone far to hide this thought from us -- so far that it has been argued from such texts as "His face was more marred than that of any man" that they do greatly err who attribute any comeliness to the Man of Sorrows. It is difficult, however, to believe that One born of a pure virgin and begotten of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of goodness and beauty, could be other than the most pure, beautiful, and attractive of men. Who can believe that the one perfect man, he whose majestic bearing was such as to elicit from Pilate the exclamation, "Behold the Man!" was destitute of any outward and visible sign of his inward perfection? A lovely spirit does, indeed, transfigure even the plainest features and lend them a charm beyond that of a simply formal beauty; but a lovely spirit in a lovely form is a still more potent force. And hence the great painters who have invested the face and figure of our Lord with all the perfections of manly beauty, and who have added a pathetic charm to that beauty by depicting the perfect face as worn and wasted with thought, with compassion, with all the toil and burden of his great work of love, have reason on their side, and give us, we may be sure, a far truer conception of him than either the Puritan or the Monk.

For the whole story of his life shows both that he was exquisitely sensitive to beauty in every form, and that he had the still rarer power of reproducing that beauty in his words and ways. The whole world of nature lives again in his discourses and parables, to prove how keen he was to note the loveliness of the world around him; while these same parables and discourses are so perfect, both in substance and in expression, as to prove that he could reproduce this beauty in still more exquisite and enduring forms. And what a keen eye for beauty of character, for a latent unsuspected goodness, must he have possessed, who saw in doubting Nathanael, an Israelite indeed; in fickle and impetuous Peter, a steadfast rock; in timid and halting Nicodemus, and even in the wanton of Samaria, fitting recipients for the deepest truths of his Kingdom; in Mary's waste of ointment, an insight which transcended that of the Apostles; and in the self-humiliation of the woman who was a sinner, a love capable of transforming her into a saint! He who spoke the most beautiful words that have fallen from human lips; he who clothed perfect thoughts in forms so perfect that the noblest spirits of every subsequent age have held them to be "sweeter than honey" and more precious than "much fine gold," and yet in forms so simple that the common people have always heard them gladly; he who was at home with all classes, learned and ignorant, rich

and poor, powerful or enslaved, who saw good even in the worst, and found something to pity, something to love in even the forlornest outcast; he to whom little children ran for a caress, round whom wronged women and outcast men gathered as to a friend -- was there no beauty, no charm, in him? Was there not rather a charm which no open and susceptible heart could withstand?

This beauty, this charm, this gracefulness, is to be with us, is to be ours, if "the grace of Christ" is to be with us. That is to say, the wish, the benediction of our text summons us to cultivate the love of all that is fair, all that is good--all that is fair in nature, all that is good in men; and to reproduce it, so far as we may, in our words, in our manner, in our lives. We are not to be content with being sourly or austere good, but to aim at being winningly and attractively good. The beautiful mind, the beautiful manner, of Christ, the charm of his character, his speech, his dealings and intercourse with men, be with us all -- this is part of what our new year's wish implies.

THE GRACIOUSNESS, THE GENIAL FRIENDLINESS, OF CHRIST

But graceful manners soon break down under the strain of change, familiarity, or time, unless they spring from and express a gracious heart. And hence we must be reminded of the second meaning latent in our text. For, if "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" would suggest gracefulness to a Greek, to a Jew it would suggest graciousness, a willing, friendly, genial spirit; not righteousness simply, but a genial righteousness; not beneficence simply, but a friendly beneficence.

There are men who are weighted all their lives by an unwilling, a reluctant, an unsympathetic temperament. They do not easily consent to what is proposed to them; their first impulse is to say *no* rather than *yes*. Not courtesy alone is difficult to them, but thoughtfulness for others, consideration for their wishes, a lenient judgment of their faults, a kindly interest in that which interests *them*. Their instinct is to differ rather than to concur, to wrangle rather than to assent, to criticize and condemn rather than to work with their neighbors and yield to their influence. And hence, strive as they will -- and few but themselves know how hard and bitter the strife sometimes is -- they lack the friendly tone, the genial manner, which commands confidence and love, and even when they do good are apt to do it awkwardly and in a way which hurts or offends even those whom they help. They do not give *themselves* with their gifts.

But we find no trace of this stiff, reluctant, self-contained disposition in Jesus Christ. Little though he had to give as the world counts gifts, the world has never seen a benefactor to be compared with him. Not only did he give himself for us all, but he gave *himself* with all his gifts, gave all he had, or all they could take, to every man or woman who approached him. There was nothing he could do which he was not prepared to do for any who asked his help. So gracious was he, so steadfastly did his will stand at the yielding or giving point, that virtue went out of him without any conscious exercise of will, whenever the hand of faith or need was laid upon him. And how interested he was in all who spoke with him, however ignorant or faulty they might be! How deeply he looked into their hearts; how he drew them on, and drew them out, till they had told him their inmost secret, till they had relieved their bosoms of the perilous stuff hidden there; and then how wisely and delicately he adapted his words and gifts to their needs; as, for example, when he talked with the woman of Samaria by the well! How ready he was to love them, or any trace of good in them, till they rose "to match the promise in his eyes"; as, for instance, in the faith of the Syrophenician woman! How much good he saw in them which the world could not see, and of which they themselves had lost sight; as, for example, in Zaccheus, that true son (if Abraham, whom the Pharisees mistook for a child of the devil, and in the woman who bathed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head! How quick he was to detect any

moment of weakness in those who had a little faith in him but held it with a feeble grasp, and how prompt to strengthen them against any sudden pressure of unbelief; as, for example, when he said to the faltering ruler of the synagogue, "Only believe; all things are possible to him that believeth"!

But space does not permit, -- we should have to go through the whole story of his life,--even to allude to the innumerable proofs of his graciousness, of his willing and friendly heart; the graciousness which enabled him to give so much, though of outward good he had so little to give, and which made his every gift a charm, an elevating and abiding power, to those who received it, or who listened to the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And yet, with all this graciousness, there was no softness, no weakness, no insincerity, such as is often found associated with a kindly temperament; there was nothing inconsiderate, or indiscriminate, in his boundless charity; no yielding at a single point at which it would have been wrong to yield; no want of faithfulness, or even of severity where severity was needed. He was sincere as he was sympathetic, rare as that combination is. He who said to a sinful woman, "Neither do I condemn thee," said also, "From henceforth sin no more." And he who cured a sinful man of the paralysis induced by vice, also warned him, "Sin no more, lest a worst thing come upon thee."

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all in this sense also. May his graciousness, his kindly consideration for others, his genial, warm manner, his friendly tone, be ours.

THE FAVOR, THE REDEEMING LOVE OF CHRIST

But perhaps one who has read thus far is saying to himself, "Well, if the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ means gracefulness and graciousness, then I am afraid it is impossible for me. For I am neither very graceful nor very gracious; and while I am learning to appreciate better all that is lovely and fair, both in nature and in men, to reproduce such loveliness in my own thoughts and words and deeds is another matter, and as for being gracious, that does not come at all easily to me."

Ah! beloved reader, if the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ meant only his gracefulness or his graciousness, we would all be in great discouragement. But the word has another, a third, meaning, one with which we have long been familiar. The Apostle reminds us of this meaning in 2 Corinthians 8:9: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." Yes, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ means also his favor, his active, redeeming, and renewing love, freely bestowed upon us, and because of this we may entertain high hopes of having his grace, in the other two meanings of the word, fulfilled in us also.

In the New Testament, as every student of that blessed volume must know, the grace of Christ is constantly used in this third sense, far more commonly in this sense than in any other. Its most frequent use denotes a divine and loving energy or quality which not only forgives, but also cleanses us from, our iniquity; which not only pardons, but redeems us from, our faults and sins; an energy which attends us through our whole career to guard us against temptation or make us strong enough to resist temptation; as able to change, elevate, and purify our whole character and disposition, and to recreate us in its own likeness.

And who dare say that, with this giving, and forgiving energy, this redeeming and renewing grace, ever at work upon and in him, he cannot become pure, friendly, and gracious in heart, and, therefore, simple, courteous, and even graceful in manner and in speech? Who dare despair of himself, or give up self-culture as hopeless, if the strong Son of God is ever waiting to come to

his help, ever seeking to bestow his gracefulness, his graciousness, to exert his forgiving and redeeming power upon us, to recast our mind, our character, our disposition, our temperament, on the larger, fairer, lines of his own?

"The grace of our Lord Jesus, Christ be with us all"; the grace which redeems, renews, recreates the inward man of the heart, and so clothes even the outward man of behavior with a new and friendlier charm. Amen -- so let it be.

- P. L Read

"We Shall Be Like Him"

We shall be like Him. O, how rich the promise!
What greater could our Father's love prepare?
Few are the words, and softly are they spoken,
But who shall tell the glories hidden there?

We shall be like Him, for we'll have His nature,
He'll lift us up and with His glory bless;
He took our sin, O wondrous condescension!
That He might clothe us in His righteousness.

We shall be like Him, raised above all weakness,
Forever past all weariness and pain;
Even death itself shall have no power to touch us,
When like our risen Lord with Him we reign.

While now in gracious love He calls us brethren,
And we His spotless robe with gladness wear,
Faith grasps the promise of the glorious future
"We shall be like Him when He shall appear."

- *S. M. Hodgdon*

Ye Are the Light of the World

"A city set on a hill cannot be hid." - Matthew 5:14

IN MATTHEW 5:14 the symbols of light and salt are used connectedly: "Ye are the light of the world; ye are the salt of the earth"; as light to show the contrast to moral darkness; as salt to hold back the spread of moral pollution. The action of salt is hidden and pervasive; that of light being open and manifest.

When Jesus added, "Let your light so shine before men," he had more in mind than bearing witness to the divine plans and purposes. Surely the disciples were commissioned to do that; but disciples are not to be bearers of the gospel message by tongue and pen only; they are to be interpreters of that gospel by a life. By word of mouth and by printed page many conflicting doctrines have been promulgated which only confuse, and in effect, becloud the true doctrine of Christ; but not so with a life openly seen as reflecting the beatitude teachings.

By setting the virtues of the beatitudes in contrast to their opposite characteristics, the blessedness of which Jesus speaks, may be seen:

- 1) Poor in spirit; humility; self-emptiness; versus haughtiness; self-assertiveness; arrogance.
- 2) Mourning; deeply affected by the ravages of sin in self and others; versus coldness; heartlessness; unmoved.
- 3) Meekness; gentleness; teachableness; versus pride; argumentativeness; opinionated.
- 4) Hungering and thirsting after righteousness; a discontent with everything not godly; versus unjust dealings; unfair practices; wicked deeds; licentiousness.
- 5) Merciful; compassionate; sympathetic with the distress of others; versus hardness; cruelty; sadism; unmoved by the distress of others.
- 6) Pure in heart; without duplicity; of unsullied principles; genuineness; versus hypocrisy; deceit; double dealing; a masked personality.
- 7) Peacemakers; intercessors between opposing parties that they may see things in the light of divine truth; versus sowers of discord, strife, sedition; agitators; fomentors; inciters to riot; war makers.
- 8) Persecuted for righteousness' sake; for the decision to violate neither conscience nor the understood will of God; versus suffering the consequences of unrighteous and unlawful deeds; "as a murderer, or a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." - 1 Peter 4:15.

Thus the exhortation of Jesus to his disciples, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works" - that they may see these eternal principles, the beatitudes, in operation, and not merely hear them as declamations. Disciples are to be more than doctrinaires.

ISRAEL'S FAILURE

Israel at Sinai had entered into a covenant relationship with their God to do whatever they were commanded. In Deuteronomy 4:58, we have Moses' exhortation: "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments . . . keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great who bath God so nigh unto them

Israel, the covenanted nation, was entrusted with a revelation from God in terms of commandments, statutes, and judgments, by the keeping of which they were to be the manifestation of godliness, an object lesson to all nations with whom they were to come into contact. Instead, they rested in the mere possession of those laws, at best only halfheartedly observing them. They were confident that they were indeed a special people unto Jehovah, inasmuch as only with them had Jehovah entered into covenant relationship. All other people were gentiles, non-covenant people (Eph. 2:11, 12). By their high claim to be the chosen people of God, the depository of his laws, their failure to observe those laws constituted them blasphemers among the unenlightened gentiles. So writes Paul in Romans 2:4. They compromised their being witnesses to the holiness and righteousness of God by their conduct unbecoming such profession.

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition . . ." - 1 Cor. 10:1-10.

LIGHT HIDDEN OR SHINING

Light under a bushel is a light that may be hidden and eventually snuffed out by being held in subordination to expedience, such as fear of ridicule; or for the sake of a measure of peace in family relationship; or in business or workday association. A city set on a hill is a life elevated above its surroundings, "known and read of all men." We might illustrate this by the contrast between the situations of Jerusalem, set on a hill, and Las Cruces, New Mexico, which is in a valley. Approaching Las Cruces from the west there is a sign, "Las Cruces 12 miles." Visibility was twenty-five to fifty miles, but the city of ten thousand inhabitants was not in view. Farther on, yet another sign, "Las Cruces 5 miles." Still no city in sight. But eventually, descending by degrees into a valley, there lay Las Cruces. How different Jerusalem, "a city on a hill"; "beautiful for situation." A city that cannot be hidden. And thus it is with a life elevated above its surroundings: it cannot be hidden.

THE TRUE LIGHT

The ministry of Jesus, both by his words and his deeds, was but an expression of his inner life of holiness and light (John 1:4-14). "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." As John further writes, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The law defined life in terms of commandments, but no one had ever seen such a life manifested. Thus it is written of Jesus that "he brought life and incorruptibility to light ... " (2 Tim. 1:10). This is in harmony with what was prophesied in Isaiah 9:2, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light."

Consider the claim of Jesus as recorded in John 8:12: "I am the light of the world ... he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." The possession of the Christ life is light. Life is experience, continuity. A West Point graduate may have learned the theory of war in all its phases, but he knows nothing of the reality until, having left the halls of

learning, he is confronted in combat with a sworn enemy who is already an experienced antagonist. Then, and only then, comes the test as to how deeply ingrained has been his learning; how has it affected the quality of his being as a military man. So with the professing disciple: he may have much of the light of truth without its being seen as a directing force in his everyday contacts with this hostile world, as well as with other foes -- the flesh nature and the hosts of spiritual wickedness. More than the light of truth, he must have the light of life. Life (cause) is light (effect). As another has written: "Light can guide the natural man, but cannot give life. The disciple is light, not because of what he knows, but by his possession of eternal life he reflects the glory of God, as did Jesus." The purpose of the receiving of the light of life is that it should "shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." - Matthew 5:16.

A NEW CREATION

According to our natural birth we are "dead in trespasses and sins" and are prone to "the works of the flesh." How then can we be light? How is it that we can be delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of light (Col. 1:12, 13)? When Nicodemus came to Jesus saying, "We know that you are a teacher sent from God," he was indirectly asking Jesus to explain to him the secret of his ministry. Rather than responding to the implied request, Jesus said to him, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." A new begettal is the answer. Why should this be so? Because "the natural man receives not the things of the spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). "Whosoever believeth may have everlasting life" (John 3:15). In other words, Jesus is Lord of a new life, and what Jesus is outlining in the beatitudes is the evidence of this new life. It is the living in the newness of life that constitutes us light.

As we have received our first life from our natural fathers, so the new life is received from our heavenly Father. This is as real and actual as the first begettal. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). To this agree the testimonies of other Apostles: "Being begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever" (1 Pet. 1:23); "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." - James 1:18.

When Jesus speaks of life he has more in mind than what the world calls life. To him the term means that in which there is no seed of decay; and which for this reason is eternal. This life cannot be other than a rebuke to that which is dependent on thrills, excitement, material possessions, and satisfaction of worldly pride. It is in contrast to debasing tendencies and practices; a rebuke to the ungodly by the whole of life-its attitudes, its hopes its conformity to the revealed will of God. As Peter writes, "Live honorable lives among the gentiles, in order that, although they speak against you as evildoers, from your good deeds they may witness your character and may glorify God ..." - 1 Peter 2:12.

TAKE HEED

It is by taking heed to what we hear, to what understanding is given to us by the holy spirit, that we become light. "We do well to take heed to the sure word of prophecy as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Pet. 1: 19). The day star arising in the heart is when the Christ life begins to be in control of our being, our whole being. Paul's exhortation is, "You were once darkness, but now are you light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. For the fruit of light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, --

proving what is acceptable to the Lord" (Eph. 5:8-10). "Proving" has the thought of putting to the test; proving not by argument but by demonstration.

A SPECTACLE TO MEN AND TO ANGELS

"We are made a spectacle to men and to angels." So says Paul. Whether we are aware of it or not, and whether those who regard us are aware of their doing so or not, it is true that we who profess Christ are constantly under the critical gaze of others. Live honest devoted lives for years, but make one misstep and we come under the scorn and condemnation of those we never thought were critically observing us -- but they were. In this world of sinful and degrading tendencies, how great is the need for true Christian witness by life and conduct. The professing church, for the most part, has lost its sense of discipleship. The prophetic word concerning Israel was fulfilled; but it is still true that "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." May the truth shine out from us, individually and collectively, that we may continue to be "the light of the world" until it comes to pass what is written of Israel: "Arise and shine, for thy light is come, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." - Isaiah 60:1.

In Philippians 2:13-16 we read: "For it is God who worketh in you both the willing and the working of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings, that you may be harmless and simple, irreproachable children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; among whom you shine as light in the world, holding forth the word of life ... " It is the living exhibition of godliness that makes one a luminary. The holding forth the word of life includes the presenting of it in obedience, the day by day living in the will of God -- the mystery, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 2:25-27). As Christ is manifested in us, and only as Christ is seen in us, are we light.

- F. A. Essler

The Yielded Life

What is a Yielded Life?

'Tis one at God's command,
For Him to mold, to form, to use
Or do with it as He may choose,
Resistless in His Hand.

What is a Yielded Life?

A life whose only *will*,
When into blest subjection brought --
In every deed and aim and thought,
Seeks just to do His Will.

What is a Yielded Life?

A life which love has won,
And in surrender full, complete,
Lays all with gladness at the feet
Of God's most holy Son.

The Messianic Kingdom

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 seventh of a series of seven articles excerpted from that book.

- Editorial Committee

"Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). That heart-felt expression of an age-old hope was first spoken by Jesus when He laid down the principles of devotional and supplicatory prayer for all time. Every generation since then has reiterated this plea for the coming of the Divine Kingdom upon earth when evil will be eliminated from the hearts of men, and all, to use the language of the old prophets, will know God, from the least to the greatest. That a time is to come in history when the kingdoms of this world give place to the kingdom of God, and the nations of earth walk and live their lives in the light of that kingdom (Rev. 11:15; Rev. 21:24), is implicit in New Testament theology and in the Christian faith. Those early Christians, and their fellows of generations following, faithful to their calling in the hope of attaining the spiritual conditions of the celestial world to "be with Christ," understood clearly that by virtue of their experience and training they were to be leaders and teachers of all men in this new Age, to bring men to ultimate reconciliation with God. So they interpreted our Lord's assurances and the visions of the Revelator concerning the reign of the saints as depicting such a season of service and labor in the proclamation of the Gospel and encouragement to conversion and reformation.

That this is to be the privilege and duty of the Church during that momentous period has been stressed repeatedly by reflective thinkers. Said Dr. Cox, in "*Salvator Mundi*" "When the Gospel is preached again, it may be that Christ will not be the preacher, or not the only preacher.... If we are of those who have been chosen and redeemed, it may be that *we* shall be the happy messengers of God's love and mercy to those who are still being purged from their sins ... thus entering at once into the eternal passion of God and into the redeeming work of Christ; being afflicted, like the Father, in all the sins and afflictions of the unrighteous ... if by any means we may save some. It may be through our ministry that the purpose of God will be accomplished, that all Israel will be saved and the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in. God grant that it may be so; for that surely would be an infinitely diviner service and reward than to sit, clothed in white raiment, striking harps of gold."

Another well-known and well loved minister, Dr. F. B. Meyer, (1847-1929) once wrote "We are to be priests and kings. There are vast spaces in the universe that may have to be evangelized or ruled or influenced for righteousness. It may be that important spheres of ministry are needing those to fill them who have learned the secret of victory over materialism on the one hand, and over the power of Satan on the other.... Therefore earth may be the school, the training ground, the testing place for the servants and soldiers of the hereafter. This thought need not be in conflict with the ideals of rest and worship which we are wont to associate with the future life. Eternity will give opportunities for all. But, if it became him of whom and through whom are all things to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through the suffering of temptation, it stands to reason

that his comrades and soldiers must pass through the same, that they may become more than conquerors, and having overcome, may sit with him on his Throne, as he overcame and is set down with his Father on His Throne."

The Messianic Age is known also as the Millennium, a word meaning a thousand years, from its use in the Book of Revelation. Although the Day of Judgment, the Millennium is also in a very real sense part of the Day of Grace. Opportunity for repentance and conversion is not ended, nor indeed could be while any human soul lacks full enlightenment on the issues of right and wrong or knowledge of Christ and the life that can come only through him, or is capable of benefiting by the lessons and experiences of past life, or by the evangel of Christ which will then be so vigorously and powerfully proclaimed. It might almost be said that there is a vital association between the two terms, that Grace and judgment go ahead together. From Pentecost to the end of the Millennium, there has been and will be opportunity to repent and convert and be accepted into God's family. From Pentecost to the end of the Millennium, judgment has been and will be in operation, every deliberately and knowingly good or evil deed shaping and forming the character in the direction either of the good or the bad, in so doing rendering attainment of the Divine ideal a little easier or a little more difficult in the future. The man who returns from the dead at the commencement of the Millennium after a woefully misspent life will find that he has a lot of leeway to make up; even although repentance and conversion and acceptance of Christ as Lord will win him the condition of reconciliation with God; he still has to attain Godlikeness in his character and that can only be reached by development. The revealing angel, talking of that day to the prophet Daniel (Dan. 12:2) spoke of some who awake to enduring life and others to shame and enduring contempt. The Millennium therefore is a time of mixed dark and light, but nevertheless a time in which the darkness is being progressively swallowed up by the light, so that, to quote Zechariah, "at evening time it shall be light." At the end of this great Day of Grace and Judgment the dark shadow of evil will have flown, never to return.

The contemporary view of the Millennial reign of Christ, in those quarters in which his premillennial Advent is accepted and expected, all too often falls short by picturing it as an extension of the present world order even though under Divine sovereignty. Thus, it is thought, life and death will go on much as now except that the normal human lifespan will be considerably increased; evil and the practice of evil will be progressively eliminated and generation will follow generation, each born into a world which is becoming steadily more godlike until at the end will come the Day of judgment when the dead will be raised and all earthly affairs wound up. But there is much more to the Millennium than this. In the first place, and as a matter of basic principle, this coming Age of righteousness is not an extension of the present world order at all; it is a completely new start. Peter terms it a "heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13) in contrast to the "present evil world" which is to pass away. The existing world order, with all its powers, authorities, standards, and practices which support and further the domination of evil over mankind, is to be brought to an end and a new and Divinely-sustained system take its place under which the reconciling work of Christ and his Church will proceed. Because it is the final and most momentous phase of the Day of Grace, in the which the issue as to worthiness or otherwise of eternal life for every individual is to be decided, the resurrection of the dead takes place, not at the end, but during the opening stages, of the period, so that all men of all generations back to the beginning may have a full and free opportunity to learn fully of the grace of God in Christ and make their eternal decision. Thus what might be termed "Adamic death," the death that normally comes upon all men born in Adam (Rom. 5:12-19), will end with the inception of that Age and men will live in a time of new life, which is the literal implication of Jesus' reference in Matthew 19:28 to "the regeneration" when He assumes rulership of the world. Men will not die as they die today; if they are already Christ's, or if they at that time do yield themselves unreservedly to him, they go on into everlasting life and the destiny God has

appointed for them. If they have become so wedded to evil that there is no capacity left to repent and they are impervious to the appeal of the Saviour then here remains nothing but the loss of the life that is in them, for there can be no continuing life without God. So Jesus said on one memorable occasion "the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done admirable things to a resurrection of life and they that have done worthless things to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28, 29). This is where the Divine law of retribution comes into full effect; "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Every man awakens to a resurrection "according to his works" - a phrase which occurs seven or eight times in the Scriptures in this connection. There will be abundant opportunity and every encouragement for repentance and conversion and cleansing from the effects of the past, but even so every man is awakened with the character and disposition which was his when he died, and the vicious, the immoral, the depraved, will find themselves saddled with a task of reformation and rehabilitation if they would attain to life which will be no less a "resurrection of judgment" for the fact that they will not be finally condemned without first having the opportunity of reformation. A profound thinker long ago laid down the maxim "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14). Many have deluded themselves into thinking that they have escaped the force of that law but in the coming Age they will find it is not so; the deeds of the past accuse them and from the effects of those deeds they must find release. The way back may be painful and arduous, the more so since their oft-times secret sins and unpublished wrongful actions will be open to the day. That is why the revealing angel, speaking to Daniel of this same time and this same thing, used an almost identical phrase to that of Jesus; "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to enduring life, and some to shame and enduring contempt" (Dan. 12:2). It was in this same connection that Jesus spoke of the relative positions before God of the unbelieving people of his own day and the men of Sodom and Gomorrah and Nineveh of ancient times who were destroyed because of their depravity. If the mighty works which He performed in the towns of Galilee had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah and Tyre and Sidon, they "would have repented" and would "have remained to this day," He told them. Therefore, He went on, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, for Tyre and Sidon, in the day of judgment, than for them (Matt. 11:20-24; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12-14). In Jesus' view the abhorred inhabitants of the Cities of the Plain were not so culpable as the unbelieving Jews to whom He came; in the Millennial judgment they will not find the going so hard as will those Jews. Depraved as they were-a depravity largely the fruit of ignorance-their characters were not so resolutely set against righteousness as the later unbelievers, and they will therefore find it that much easier to respond to the appeal of the Gospel when it is presented to them. Jesus said they would have repented had his message been preached to them-a remark which leads inevitably to the question; if the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah would have repented had the Gospel been preached to them, why was it not so preached? The only answer consistent with any real belief in both the love and justice of God is that the Gospel is to be preached to them before opportunity is ended. The fact that it comes after the catastrophic happening which ended their first earthly life is irrelevant. They will return, and under the beneficent and righteous rule of Christ will hear the message they had not heard and face up to the issue which in those far-off days had not even been placed before them.

There is, therefore, a First and a Second Resurrection. The First Resurrection is that of the Church (Rev. 20:4-6) who are raised to life in the celestial world and association with their Lord in his coming work for mankind. We have therefore to postulate the members of the resurrected Church administering the affairs of the kingdom upon earth whilst their own home is in the heavenly sphere. The Second Resurrection is that of the remainder of mankind, restored to life upon earth in newly-created human bodies, taking up the thread of existence where it had been dropped in death, and responding, or not, as the case may be, to the opportunity for life which will then be

extended. It has to be accepted that the majority of these resurrected ones will have never heard of Christ in the former life, or at any rate only have received a grossly distorted conception of his Person and message and of the purposes of God. Hence the inception of the Millennium and the, probably, progressive, appearance upon earth of generation after' generation from the past, will involve a colossal work of evangelism such as the world has never before seen.

With the ending of the Messianic Age comes the end of the Day of Grace. Every possible aid to the enlightenment of all men in the basic principles of truth and goodness will have been given. Christ will have been preached and no one will be able to claim ignorance. The lives of men will be passed in an environment that is completely conducive to right doing. None can plead the force of unfavorable circumstances as justification for failure to accept the Saviour. The offer of life will be extended with every possible encouragement to accept. God will in very truth bend down from Heaven to save all who can possibly be saved. In the inspired imagery of the Book of Revelation "the dwelling-place of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." - Rev. 21:3, 4.

Of the many pen-pictures of that coming Age which have been drawn perhaps none is so appealing and eloquent as a passage in C. T. Russell's *"Divine Plan of the Ages"*:

"It is this portion that God has elected to give to the human race. And what a glorious portion! Close your eyes for a moment to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow, that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word; love, welling up from every heart, meets a kindred response in every other heart, and benevolence marks every act. There sickness shall be no more; not an ache nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay -- not even the fear of such things. Think of all the pictures of comparative health and beauty of human form and feature that you have ever seen, and know that perfect humanity will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be, and weeping bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away, when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

"And this is the change in human society only. We call to mind also that the earth, which was 'made to be inhabited' by such a race of beings, is to be a fit and pleasing abode for them. Paradise shall be restored. The earth shall no more bring forth thorns and briers, and require the sweat of man's face to yield his bread, but 'the earth shall yield her increase.' 'The desert shall blossom as the rose.' Nature with all its pleasing variety will call to man from every direction to seek and know the glory and power and love of God; and mind and heart will rejoice in him."

Watchman, What Hour of the Night?

"The prophets . . . searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto . . . which things angels desire to look into." - Isa. 21:11; 1 Pet. 1:10-12, A.R.V.

IT WAS the duty of the watchman in an ancient city to call the hours. The question heard by Isaiah suggests that the watchman had been silent. Perhaps the city was in fear of an enemy -- of an attack at dawn. The night was dark -- the stars, by which the time might be told, were hidden in the clouds. A citizen, roused from sleep by he knows not what, calls to the watchman in the street or on the wall, literally: "Watchman, what from off the night?" *"Watchman, how far gone is the night?" - Rotherham.*

The Scriptures picture the symbolic earth, the social order, as being in darkness, and most of mankind lying in a heavy sleep (Isa. 60:2; Isa. 29:9-12; et al.). But some individuals have been wakeful; and from the prophets and servants of God, as well as from Seir and other godless sources, has often come the ancient question: *"What time is it?"*

Thus the Psalmist, David, asked: "O Jehovah, how long shall the wicked, *how long* shall the wicked triumph?" Again he inquires, saying: "Our own signs have we not seen -- there is no longer a prophet -- neither is there one with us who knoweth how long! How long, O God, shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy revile thy name perpetually?" In the prophecy of Daniel the repeated inquiry is found concerning the symbolic time-measures given him: *"How long* shall be the vision?" "What shall be the issue of these things?" The disciples asked of the Lord: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign ... ?" And after the resurrection: "Dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?"

The demons also, having a deep personal interest in the matter, demanded of Jesus: "Art thou come hither to torment [restrain] *us before the time?*" (Psa. 94:3; Psa. 74:9, 10; Isa. 21:11; Dan. 8:13; Dan. 12:8; Matt. 24:3; Acts 1:6; Matt. 8:29).

The interest today, among the wakeful, is no less intense. The "Worldly Wisemen" are anxiously seeking to penetrate the future; and many modern Bible students are searching the Scriptures, as did the holy men of old, to discover if it may be, "What time or what manner of time" the prophecies signify. The *Herald* is constantly receiving, from earnest and zealous brethren, manuscripts, charts, pamphlets, and books on various features of "the chronology." These usually "correct" one or two alleged mistakes of past writers and often contain helpful suggestions, but as these correspondents are not in collaboration, their conclusions are not in harmony. Not *only* so, but related Scriptures are often overlooked or ignored, which would modify or contradict their findings.

The Bible chronology, as it has been constructed by many generations of investigators throughout the Gospel Age, is not readily corrected in detail; if it is to be changed, it must be revised with full regard for interrelated prophetic time periods, and with familiarity with the vast and invaluable researches of previous chronologers. From time to time the *Herald* has sought to aid in clarifying the subject by a restatement of some of its underlying principles and requirements, and a review of the conclusions and unanswered questions left to us by the ablest of modern investigators in this field, and thus help those continuing prophetic research to harmonize their findings.

It is evident that the question before us is essentially identical with the one that St. Peter declares was in the minds of the prophets themselves--yes, even in the minds of angels (1 Pet. 1:10-12; Dan. 8:13), viz., What time-periods, or what manner (kind) of time-periods, does the Spirit signify, in the prophecies of Scripture which obviously indicate a fixed and definite period of suffering for God's

people, of both the Old and the New Dispensations, to be followed by an equally definite period of exaltation and glory in the "Age to come wherein dwelleth righteousness"?

St. Peter says it was revealed to the Prophets that they were not to understand the meaning of these prophecies, but that *this understanding was reserved for "us"*; and he exhorts us to "gird up the loins of your mind, and be sober, and [with the aid of these prophecies] hope completely [fully] for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ..." (1 Pet. 1:12, 13). Accordingly we honor those brethren who are giving thought and time, labor and their means, in the endeavor to solve the ancient mystery.

Those to *whom* the Apostle refers as "us" are the ones to whom he addresses his Epistle: ". . . the elect . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (verses 1-3). We therefore ask, Have all these been fully aware of the time-significance of the prophecies; of the dates of the beginnings and endings of the periods; of "what time and what manner of time" was meant? The answer of course is No, all have not been so aware; it would therefore appear that some other feature of the prophecies was intended for *all* the Church -- the "us" class.

It may well be argued that, though veritably of this class, we may never know the exact lengths or dates of the prophetic periods; but we may know of a surety that these prophecies have their fulfillment in Christ, and if we are joined to him we may with equal assurance make application of their promises of blessings to ourselves: for "If we suffer [with him] we shall also reign with him"; and "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory" (2 Tim. 2:12; Col. 3:4). Certainly it is far more important for us to know that we may participate in the prophesied blessings than to know just when those blessings are to come.

It is apparent that partial knowledge and even misunderstanding of the time prophecies has been stimulating to Christian living in all periods of the Age. Because the meaning of these prophecies has been hidden and obscure, yet their promises so attractive and their terms so urgent, each zealous investigator has been prompted to apply them to his own times. Constant expectation of impending dissolution of the present evil order has contributed in an important measure to holy living by the believer in every stage of the Church, as Peter seems to imply further along in this very passage: "Wherefore ... set your hope completely on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ ... like as he is holy ... *be ye yourselves also holy.*" And the Apostle makes his thought still more clear in his second Epistle: "Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be *in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God ...?*" (1 Pet. 1:13-16; 2 Pet. 3: 11-13).

However, the earnest Bible student can never be satisfied with an incomplete or inaccurate understanding of Scripture. He cannot admit that the Bible statements of time-periods should be considered impossible of complete interpretation and understanding. He refuses to relinquish hope of an ultimate solution; hence he never ceases his efforts to solve the puzzles connected with these time features, and is ever on the lookout for hints from any source that may prove helpful in his quest.

Figures are exact; "seventy sevens" are 490, not 491, or 489; "seven times" (if we understand the numerical system correctly) are 2520 years, not 2520 plus 40, or some other figure. The time periods of prophecy must have a definite ending, marked by some definite event, or their significance and authority are greatly weakened. The fact that previous interpreters obviously have erred in their conclusions should not have a deterrent or discouraging effect, but rather a stimulating influence, on the "searchers" and "examiners" of the Scriptures. There is the gold of further truth yet to be discovered, if we are willing to "search for it as for hid treasure." Through the Prophet Habbakuk the assurance is given: "The vision is yet for the appointed time . though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay" beyond the "appointed time" (Prov. 2:1-5; Hab. 2:3).

Daniel, who asked for an understanding of the time prophecies given him, was told: "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end ... none of the wicked shall understand, but they that are wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:9, 10). This expression, "time of the end," clearly indicates *a period* of time. The Prophet employs quite another word to indicate a *point* of time. The latter is found in Dan. 2:8, 9, 16 (see A.R.V. and Rotherham); Dan. 4:36; Dan. 7:22.

Similarly, Daniel distinguishes between a terminating period and a complete end, although the Authorized Version does not, translating both original words as "end." A final end is indicated in Dan. 1:5, 15, 18; Dan. 4:29, 34; and Dan. 9:24 (a still different word).

Daniel was told that "the vision belongeth to the time of the end" (Dan. 8:17, A.R.V.). Strong defines the word "vision" as "a view, the act of seeing." Again, the Prophet was told to "seal the book to the time of the end." Before that time, "some of them that are wise" -- Rotherham's footnote says "the instructors," and refers to Dan. 8:33, "they who make the people wise" -- "shall fall, to refine them, and to purify and to make them white, even to the time of the end; because it is yet for the time appointed." The American Revised Version also has footnotes giving the meaning of "instructors" to "the wise of chapters 11 and 12. Perhaps this (Dan. 11:35, quoted above) has particular reference to the many sincere but premature and erroneous interpretations of "the vision" by "the teachers of the people." It is encouraging to believe that even our honest errors may "refine, purify and make us white," by humbling and warning us (Dan. 11:33, 35).

"The words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end. . . . None of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:9, 10). Whether this promise means that during the end-period the "wise" shall come to a complete understanding of all of the time-prophecies, or to the particular one or ones given through Daniel, or merely that the "wise" shall know in a general way that it is the time of the end, and that the prophecies are being, or are about to be, fulfilled, is for each sincere and honest examiner of the sacred records to conclude for himself. The writer holds the former view. He believes that it would be more to the glory of God and the vindication of his Word for some, at least, of his "little ones" to arrive at "an exact knowledge of the truth" in this respect as in others, during the due time -- the time-period of the end. Such an understanding would demonstrate not only God's foreknowledge, but his ability to forestall events in such a way as that, hidden until the "time-lock" is released, even poor human intelligence, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, may share the foreknowledge in all its exactness. "The path of the righteous is as the light of dawn, going on and brightening, unto meridian day" (Prov. 4:18, Rotherham).

As Bible students we therefore may say: "We know the solution of the mystery is there, hidden in his Word. We do not yet fully understand, but we shall understand in God's due time, or when we have worked hard enough on the problem to merit its unfolding to us. We will not be discouraged either by past mistakes and disappointments, or by the difficulties that lie before us. We will remember the intense interest and labors to understand on the part of the angels, of the prophets, and of our brethren of the Church who have preceded us; and calling to mind the promises of ultimate understanding given through Daniel, Habakkuk, and others of the Prophets and the Apostles, we will follow on in full expectation of eventually coming to "know even as we are known."

"We shall know as we are known,
When the shadows flee away,
We shall see Him as He is
And be like Him in that day;
Let us, then, with such a hope
Live as children of the day;
Till the dawn of heav'n shall break,
And the shadows flee away."

- H. E. Hollister

Immanuel's Land

The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks,
The summer morn I've sighed for --
The fair, sweet morn awakes.
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,
But dayspring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

O, Christ He is the fountain,
The deep, sweet well of love!
The streams on earth I've tasted,
More deep I'll drink above:
There, to an ocean fulness,
His mercy doth expand;
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

The Bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face:
I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace --
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land.

With mercy and with judgment
My web of time He wove,
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lusted by His love.
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll praise the heart that planned,
When throned where glory dwelleth,
In Immanuel's land.

- *Mrs. A. R. Cousin*

Entered Into Rest

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Marie Copeland, E. Rutherford, NJ.

Naomi Glass, Glen Ellyn, Ill.

Walter L. Hake, Abbotsford, Wis.

Elizabeth B. Hall, Edgewood, R.I.

Leon Norby, Patterson, NJ.

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