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The Pentecostal Message

"Received ye the spirit?" - Galatians 3:2.

WAIT for the promise of the Father, which ye heard from me, for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the holy spirit not many days hence.... Ye shall receive power when the holy spirit is come upon you." It is Jesus who has been speaking to the disciples, having "led them out until they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven." (Luke 24:50-53. A. R. V.) A cloud received him out of their sight, and at the bidding of an angel the little company wended its way over the three-quarters of a mile back to Jerusalem, passing Gethsemane, where forty days before, the One they had just now seen ascend into heaven had first been "lifted up from the earth." There is no record left us of the many questions that were raised in that short journey and in the *days* that followed. But we do read that they "all with *one accord* continued steadfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were *all with one accord in one place*. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder [Margin: parting among them, or distributing themselves], like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were all *filled with the holy spirit*." - Acts 2:1-4.

FORETOLD IN TYPES

"In the passover, we have the death of Christ," Brother Mackintosh writes, "in the sheaf of firstfruits, we have the resurrection of Christ; and in the feast of Pentecost, we have the descent of the holy spirit to form the Church. All this is divinely perfect. The death and resurrection of Christ had to be accomplished, ere the Church could be formed. The sheaf was offered and then the loaves were baked. And, we observe, 'They shall be baked *with leaven*.' Why was this? Because they were intended to foreshadow those who, though filled with the holy spirit, and adorned with his gifts and graces, had, nevertheless, *evil* dwelling in them," and soon that fact came to light in their association.

The brethren who received the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost were those who had become followers of the Lord Jesus before his sacrifice, and therefore before he had appeared in the presence of God for them, and thus before they could be begotten to sonship. John testifies: "The spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 3:39.) While they walked with Jesus he could say to them, "The spirit of truth dwelleth *with* you"; but could promise additionally, "and shall be *in you*," not merely "with" and "upon" you, as was the case with the prophets of the previous Age. (Luke 2:25; John 14:17.) What a misfortune for them and for all of us if he had heeded their desire and stayed with them for the establishment of a merely fleshly government. "It is expedient for you that I go away," are his words; "for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." - John 16:7.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSING THE SPIRIT

The miracle of Pentecost was intended in part to attract the attention of the people in Jerusalem, and to convince those who were in heart condition to believe, as well as to give confidence to those who were already disciples. Evidently the need for such miracles passed with the passing of the Apostles and those upon whom they bestowed the gifts of the spirit, but the need for "full assurance of faith has never ceased. It is therefore of great importance for us to be able to find a convincing statement as to how we may know whether we have been called, have been begotten (have, received the spirit), and are being developed, all by "the self same spirit" that operated both on and in the early disciples. Is it still true that "the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal"? (1 Cor. 12:7, 11.)

The Apostle John writes: "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us riot. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (1 John 4:6.) Attention to the Word of Truth as it came through the Apostles is then a fundamental test as to whether one is being guided of the holy spirit, "the spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive." We can let our light shine upon them, but we cannot give them our oil.

Long ago it was promised that the spirit would have the effect of obedience to the Lord's commands: "I will put my spirit within you [when the stony hearts are removed], and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them." (Ezek. 36:27.) Not the ways or the thinking of our own flesh or of any other natural man will be our guide, for "as for you, the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you [any human intellect, such as the philosophers to whom he refers]; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in him." (1 John 2:27.) Since the spirit cannot contradict itself, the "any one" not needed as a teacher must be outside the Body of Christ, for the spirit had revealed that God had set teachers *within* the Body for its edification. They only can speak according to the spirit, and *should* speak only according to the spirit, as Paul intimates in 1 Corinthians 2:12 and 13: "We received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." "Ye are not in the flesh [or dependent on the flesh] but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwelleth in you." - Rom. 8:9.

A primary step toward the receipt of the holy spirit is repentance, a regret for our former association with things of the world and the flesh and a turning from them with a positive determination they shall no more be permitted to control our lives. The story Brother Blackburn used to tell illustrating this is a very apt one. It was the definition a small child gave: "Repentance is being so sorry, you will never do it again." The message of the early Church was: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the holy spirit," (Acts 2:38) "the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Doubtless thousands who had no right, to do so sent up that cry, but in the context the Apostle indicates what are the credentials of those who can legitimately so address him: "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Rom. 8:14-16.) The direction of its leading is "into all the truth." (John 16:13.) That leading should be a continuous process until that which "is perfect is come" beyond the veil. Then we shall know fully even as we are now fully known by the Father. (1 Cor. 13:9-12.) However, conformity to the spirit's leading can this side the veil have the sealing of the spirit, the stamp of its approval. Paul calls this being "sealed with the spirit of *the* promise, the holy spirit which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of the

acquisition; unto his glorious praise." (Eph. 1:13, 14, *Rotherham.*) It is easy to know this precious promise and to talk fluently about it to every willing ear, and many an unwilling one, too-for this is that promise that takes in "all the families of the earth." But to acquire its spirit is quite a different thing from just talking about it. Having its spirit means to have a love broad enough to take in all the world, our enemies, and all the brethren.

BEGINNING A NEW LIFE

The story of man's creation is simply told: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath [wind, spirit] of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7.) Did the spirit inspire this record so that it would fitly represent how lifeless humans, dead in trespasses and sins, are given life by putting his spirit within them? "Of his own will begat he us with the Word of truth." The result is a spiritual new creature, for "Thy words are spirit and they are life." Such creatures need have no fear of the second death, if they are entirely dependent on that Word as their source of strength, for they have been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." (1 Peter 1:23.) Having been begotten "through the Gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15), "the Gospel preached beforehand unto Abraham," if its work is permitted to continue in us, we will daily have more of its spirit until, marked with its sealing power, the image of our heavenly Father will be indelibly impressed upon this new creation of his. Our Pentecost then will have "fully come" and passed.

PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD NECESSARY

As God created a son "in his own likeness, after his image, so the new creation "which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth," "is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.) Knowledge that does not work to that end will be detrimental, puffing up instead of building up.

This all makes it very clear why the Bible lays its great stress on knowing God, and how irreparable the loss to those who are content just to know about him and his Plan. Also it is clear that the distinction between the two classes will be that the one will be sealed with his spirit, while the other company are those who are marked with Babylon's method of thinking, following the guidance of the intellect instead of the spirit, and contented to rely upon works instead of growth into his likeness.

Jesus finished his course at the cross. We begin ours there. Before the cross our condition was "dead in sin since the cross, "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 6:11.) Babylon and its, spirit hopes for life because of penances, book selling, and other substitutes for the cross on which Christ died for our sins and on which the world is crucified unto us and we unto the world. But this is not accomplished without the guidance and assistance of the spirit. "If ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8:13.) "Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh." That is the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that hath made us free from the law of sin and death." - Rom. 8:2.

"The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming [Literally: in the presence] of our Lord. Jesus Christ," "to "present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." - 1 Thess. 5:23; Jude 24.

- P. E. Thomson

Be Ye Transformed

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." - Romans 12:2.

THE Greek word here translated "transformed" is *metamorphoo*. In the English dictionary there is a very similar word "*metamorphosis*," and the following definition is given in Nuttall's edition: "Transformation, as the chrysalis into a winged insect." A very familiar winged insect to us is the butterfly.

The change from caterpillar to butterfly, is not direct. There is that intermediate state, the chrysalis, and the seeming deathlike condition is the remarkable phenomena wherein the caterpillar existence is put to death, incapacitating the creature for a continuance of its previous existence, while at the same time preparing for a future life.

How well this illustrates the experience of a true Christian. Each consecrated child of God has been selected from a fallen sinful race, but the "old creature," is being put to death, and a new nature -- begotten by the holy spirit -- is being developed. We are to be transformed, day by day; rising up and up until -- our resurrection completed, the work of transformation fully accomplished--we are exalted in the First Resurrection to heights unimaginable, even to the Divine nature, privileged then to reign with our Lord Jesus, during the complete establishment of God's glorious Kingdom in the earth.

A NEW CREATION

Our present privileged position is being "in Christ," and if any man be in Christ, he is-not the same old creature, but, "a new creature." We are being transformed by the renewing of our mind. A new mind is being formed--a new mind, begotten not of the will of man, but of God. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." (James 1:18.) There is a special spiritual treasure being developed in an earthen vessel; and the earth bound, grub-like tendencies are to be put to death. "Put off, according to the former course of life, that old man, corrupted by deceitful desires ... be you clothed with that new man, who, according to God, has been formed in righteousness and holiness of the truth." - Eph. 4:22, 24, Diaglott.

During the chrysalis state, the caterpillar existence is put to death, and at the same time there is a preparation for a new, and quite different future existence. How forceful are the words, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13). Repression, mortification, death, must be going on all the time respecting the fleshly mind, the human will, the earthbound tendencies, so that the spiritual life, the new nature, the new creature, may be made manifest. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3). Our Father in heaven asks of us a full surrender; full consecration, non-conformity to this world, and a transforming to the Kingdom requirements; because then, God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can shine in our hearts, to give the light of the *knowledge* of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This knowledge is completely beyond the comprehension of the spirit of man or the spirit of the world. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). The veil of human mindedness in the natural man hangs between him and the most sacred

things, and the only way to set it aside is to consecrate and sacrifice wholly, the human will and nature. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." - Gal. 5:24.

OUR PRIVILEGED CONDITION TYPIFIED IN TABERNACLE

In 1 Corinthians 2:12 the Apostle states, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." It is in the glorious and privileged condition-typified by the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of old -- that the consecrated children of God, although still in the flesh, have their real, inner, life and walk, with God; quite beyond the intellectual sight of the world. And this is where we are taught of God, "not in words taught by human wisdom, but by the teachings of the Spirit; unfolding spiritual things to spiritual persons" (1 Cor. 2:13, *Diaglott*). We are experiencing literal metamorphosis, in the "Holy Place," and during this process we are learning the things of God; also proving the Will of God. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). The Greek word here translated "prove" (*dokimazo*) has been much used in olden times in connection with the testing of metals, and means to investigate, discern, ascertain, explore, examine, try, and test. By careful and exacting tests, under close examination and observation the metal is proved. Something is done with the metal; and in our proving the will of God, we have to do something with the will of God.

This sounds like a big experience, and it is interesting to note *Weymouth's* translation of Romans 12:2: ". . . be transformed by the entire renewal of your minds, so that you may learn *by experience* what God's will is ... " Jesus learned something by experience; and by experience we learn. By experience, we prove, investigate, discern, ascertain, explore, examine, try, and test the will of God. Our Father wills to be a God of love, and surely we are daily proving this to be true. "The Father himself loveth you" (John 16:27). In our experiences day by day have we not also proved this to be true? -- "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). And again, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6) -- in all thy ways (not merely some of them) acknowledge -- discern, consider, know-him, and he shall direct thy paths. All such Scriptures are very precious, and are proved by the Lord's people. We are to "walk as children of light, proving what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:8, 10); *Weymouth* translates this: "Live and act as sons of light, and learn in your own experiences what is fully pleasing to the Lord."

GOING ON UNTO COMPLETENESS

"Put off the old man with his deeds; ... put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:9, 10). Here is the transformation process again. And this metamorphosis must not slacken, it is a wonderful process. Regarding the chrysalis, there is the complete surrender of the caterpillar existence. This is essential, in order that the mysterious transformation may take place. Consider our complete surrender, "My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" (Prov. 23:26). The heart, the will, thus given over to God, seeks to know the Divine will, and to obey it in a word and deed. Respecting the chrysalis metamorphosis, it is a complete mystery to the world. So is our metamorphosis or transforming process, and the Apostle in Colossians 1:27 speaks of the riches of the glory of this *mystery* which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Christ is being formed in us (Gal. 4:19). We of ourselves are nothing, but Christ is expressing himself through us. According to Romans 8:29 we are being conformed to the image of God's Son. We are being "changed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). We cannot effect this change by ourselves, "for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). And if we are "workers together

with him" (2 Cor. 6:1), he will produce in us, "that which is well-pleasing in his sight" (Heb. 13:21). The writer to the Hebrews further exhorts us to "go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1). The Greek word *teleiotes*, here translated "perfection" actually means completeness, and during this experience we discern what elevates and purifies, what draws us closer and closer to the heart of our Father, and to the Lord Jesus Christ. We also learn what qualities hinder us in our Christian walk. Yes, as children of God, it has been our experience to have failings and shortcomings of our own revealed to us. And so surely as the Lord is making us see our faults and failings, in the light of his glorious countenance, so surely has he gracious purposes of mercy towards us (Ps. 90:8). "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). The "transforming" life means this, and the Lord Jesus sits as a refiner to remove the dross of self-will, until he can see his own glorious image reflected in us. This refining, this cleansing, this transformation must continue. We are to go on unto completeness. "Walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with all humility, and gentleness; with patience, sustaining each other in love; using diligence to preserve the unity of the spirit by the uniting bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3, *Diaglott*).

FULL SURRENDER

The true spiritual life, the metamorphosis or transforming process, is one long series of surrenderings to the will of God. During this process of pressing on to completeness, to the finish, to the end, we are having a great and wonderful experience. For not only are we putting into practice during metamorphosis, our Father's will in this respect, but we are also proving, investigating, discerning, ascertaining, exploring, examining, trying and testing, in a more and more intimate sense, the progressive developing revelation of the Divine will. It is our joy and privilege to personally put what our Father has said, to the test, and he desires us to do this prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal: 3:10). We are to prove him and his will, and as a counter measure the Lord will prove us, "for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deut. 10:3). "*For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried*" (Ps. 66:10). And we prove ourselves ". . . let a man examine [prove] himself ... " (1 Cor. 11:28). What a great experience! God proving us, and we proving ourselves, and him; also what his will is. In all this, the holy spirit guides, directs, and instructs, always in accordance with the Scriptures, and never contrary to them. And, as in the volume of the Book it is written concerning the true Church, what the Church is to do, and what not to do, so we examine, investigate and prove our part in the gracious Divine Purpose, and act accordingly, exclaiming whole-heartedly "I delight to do thy will, O my God." - Ps. 40:8.

Therefore let our steps be guided by such truth as we have attained (Phil. 3:16, *Moffatt*), and press on by the Lord's help to completeness; fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; doing the will of God from the heart and in prayer persevering that the transforming work continues. "Be ye transformed."

- J. H. Murray, *Eng.*

Scarlet and Crimson

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" - Isa. 1:18.

OUR text suggests two questions: what is the difference between scarlet and crimson? and, does this have reference to the sacrifice of Christ?

Israel, as a nation, was in unique relationship with the Eternal. Only with Israel, as his chosen, had he covenanted to be their God, and they his peculiar people (Exod. 19:5). They were God's treasure, a favored nation; but presuming on this they considered themselves God's favorites -- a wholly different thing.

Because of their unbelief at Kadesh-Barnea, Israel failed to possess the land which God had unconditionally promised Abraham that his seed should have as an inheritance (Gen. 13:14, 15; Num. 13-14). Consequently they stayed forty years in the desert before they finally entered Canaan. However, God never gave Israel this land, even though they dwelt there for many centuries: "The land shall not be sold forever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me." - Lev. 25:23.

Before their eventual entrance into Canaan, while Moses was still with them, God made clear to Israel that their continuance in the land was contingent on their hearkening "diligently unto the voice of the Lord" (Deut. 28:3). Obedience would bring blessings; disobedience cursings. All of Deuteronomy 27-30 should be read in connection with this, for they are the whole of a special covenant arrangement by which Israel inhabited Canaan. "These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, *beside* the covenant which he made with them in Horeb" (Deut. 29:1). This is sometimes referred to as the Palestinian or Moabic covenant.

Reading Isaiah 1:2-8, it is apparent that the Lord through Isaiah was bringing to the attention of the people that they were experiencing the curses of the covenant (Deut. 28:45-52), and setting before them the possibility of finding their way back to the condition of blessedness by a full wholehearted repentance and turning again to obedience: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 1:19, 20). Do we ask, Where had the Lord spoken it? In Deuteronomy 28-30.

Coming now to Isaiah 1:18, when it is said, "Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord," this is more than an invitation; it is an appeal. God does not even suggest that he might be influenced by their reasoning. Certainly not! What He does mean is that they should hearken to his voice: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:16, 17). If they do thus with willing obedience, Jehovah, their covenant God, will turn away the curses and restore to them the blessings: "Ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa. 1:19). The Lord will do this even though their sins, as a nation, be as scarlet, though they be red like crimson. That is, if they will thoroughly repent, he will treat them as though their sins had not been.

According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance the word "crimson" (# SH8438) is "*towla ... a maggot; spec. (often with ellips. of # SH8144) the crimson-grub, but used only (in this connection) of the color from it, and cloths dyed therewith.*" The word rendered "scarlet" (# SH8144) is "*shaniy*" "of uncertain derivation; *crimson*: prop. the insect or its color, also stuff dyed with it." Young's Analytical Concordance says that the words are interchangeable, sometimes crimson, sometimes scarlet. The Portable Commentary (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown) reads: "Hebrew for 'scarlet' radically means *double-dyed*; so the *deep fixed permanency* of sin in the heart, which no mere tears can wash away." Repentance is presupposed before sins can be made 'white as snow'; 'as wool' -- restored to its original undyed whiteness."

We might paraphrase Isaiah 1:18 somewhat, to make it read, "Though your sins be double-dyed, they shall be as white as fresh fallen snow; though they be red like the crimson grub, they shall be as the undyed wool."

The messages of the prophets were, for the most part, directed to the nation as a whole. "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Isa. 1:4). As the nation was but people in the aggregate, the national conscience could be expected to respond to the appeal of Isa. 1:16-19 only to the degree that individuals heeded it.

Isaiah had no hope of a true national repentance and conversion, for at the time of his call to the prophetic office, as recorded in the sixth chapter, his commission was "go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed." When Isaiah inquired as to how long this condition was to last, the answer was, "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land" (Isa. 6:9-12). They had gone too far into evil to be touched by the gracious and generous appeal of Isaiah 1:16-19.

The law made provision for the judicial covering of Israel's sins by sacrifices and offerings. These they had not forsaken. On the contrary, it seems from Isaiah 1:11-14 that they were profuse in offering sacrifices and oblations. But these were "vain oblations," as the keeping of ordinances was put in the place of "doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God." - Micah 6:6-8; Hosea 6:6.

If Isaiah 1:18 does look forward to the great sin-offering sacrifice of Jesus, it has no direct reference to it. Nor is it quoted by any New Testament writer.

A few thoughts in extension seem to be called for. Reading all of Isaiah chapter one in connection with Deuteronomy chapters 27-30, it is apparent that the appeal and promise of Isaiah 1:16-18 was given to Israel as a nation; and has to do with God's governmental dealings with them. Israel was delivered from Egypt and set apart as a special people for particular purposes in the outworking of the divine program, and as such was a holy nation (Exod. 19:6). But, as individuals within that nation, they were "children of wrath, even as others." Sin reigned in their mortal bodies the same as in the noncovenant people-the Gentiles.

In a sense, the promise of Isaiah 1:16-18 still holds true; it was based on the previous covenant of Deuteronomy 30:1-10: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing [for obedience] and the curse [for disobedience] which I have set before thee" [as

foretold in Deuteronomy chapters 27, 28], "and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God ... that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee ... and the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

The first part of this covenant promise, the regathering, we have seen in process of fulfillment; the latter part, the "circumcising of their hearts," awaits the national mourning for their sin in rejecting their long-promised Messiah (Zech. 12:10), and the consequent opening for them the fountain for sin and for uncleanness (Zech. 13:1). Then will be fulfilled for Israel what was spoken by Peter, as recorded in Acts 3:19. Peter had accused them of having denied the Holy One and the just, and of having killed the Prince of life: "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out; so that seasons of refreshment [Diaglott] may come from the presence of the Lord."

Although the "fountain for sin and uncleanness" has been open to individuals of faith ever since Pentecost, its being available to Israel as a nation awaits the completion of the high-calling of this age; "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved [from their blindness and ungodliness]; as it is written. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. 11:25-27; see also Isa. 59:20, 21). "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34). "Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!" - Psalm 14:7.

So, although the promises of Isaiah 1:18, 19 have no direct reference to the blood of Christ, yet, as another has said, "All the promises to Israel are to become effective by virtue of the atoning death of Christ."

-F. A. Essler

Christian Baptism

"Can ye . . . be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" - Mark 10:38.

The searching question of our text, which Jesus put to two of his disciples, reveals much concerning the privilege and cost of discipleship. So also his words on another occasion: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50). To better understand the significance of our Lord's baptism, however, and of our own privilege of sharing therein, it will be helpful if we first consider the baptism of John.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN

John was the last of the prophets. ("The law and the prophets were until John. " - Luke 16:16). His mission and baptism concerned only Israel. They were a people in covenant relationship with God, but a most decadent and corrupt condition had set in, affecting all classes of the people. John's work was to induce a state of repentance in Israel, so that their covenant relationship with God might be retained and maintained, and they be prepared for the greatest event in their history, the advent of the long promised Messiah. John introduced the rite of baptism to illustrate this repentance, figuratively washing away their sins, as we read: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matt. 3:5, 6.) And again, John's own words "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. " - Matt. 3:11.

Prior to his imprisonment the Baptist spoke also of a baptism of fire. Continuing the quotation given above: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me . . . shall baptize you with holy spirit, and with fire. Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." - Matt. 3:11, 12.

In these words the Baptist speaks of the Jewish nation of his day as being composed of two classes, wheat and chaff, the one to be gathered into the garner, the other to be burnt with fire. Fire is usually symbolic of destruction, and the context shows it has that significance here. For the chaff to be burnt up with fire would mean that its destruction would be complete, no one would be able to extinguish the fire until it had done its work. The fulfillment of this part of the prophecy occurred in A.D. 70, when the fire of trouble destroyed the Jewish polity.

From this we may see how mistaken are those Christians who pray for baptisms of fire. The immersion of the nation in the fire of destruction was a punishment, not a blessing, the result of their unfaithfulness. The wheat element, however, the faithful remnant who accepted Christ, received the other baptism, the baptism of the holy spirit, which came upon them at Pentecost, as we will note in a subsequent paragraph.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BAPTISM PRACTICED BY OUR LORD'S DISCIPLES PRIOR TO PENTECOST

That repentance was also the significance of the baptism practiced by our Lord's disciples prior to Pentecost may be seen by reference to Matt. 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When, therefore, we read (as we do in John 4:1, 2) that the Lord employed, in his ministry, the symbol of baptism, we must understand such

baptism had the same significance as John's baptism. Jesus was continuing the work begun by John, who was now in prison. (Matt. 4:12). The baptism enjoined on his disciples after his resurrection (Matt. 28:19) had a very different significance, as we shall see.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

In what does Christian baptism consist? To this question we would reply: "Complete surrender of our own will, and entire consecration of our lives -- all that we are and have; all that we hope to be or possess; -- to the will of God, even unto death."

Was not this the case with Jesus, our great Forerunner? His complete submission to the Father's will was foretold in the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets. The Psalmist had foretold his ready acquiescence: "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Psa. 40:7, 8). The writer to the Hebrews quotes these words, and applies them to our Lord, when, at his first advent, he came to offer himself as the efficacious antitypical sacrifice. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:4-7).

We who are following in the footsteps of Jesus realize that this same truth has a secondary application to us. The volume of the book reveals that the seed of Abraham is composite, "a secret hidden from ages and generations but now made manifest to the saints." (Col. 1:26.) The course marked out for Jesus is the one his footstep followers must also traverse for, as a class, they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. Each one whose eyes have been opened to see this great and high calling may say, indeed *must* say, with due reverence and humility, but nevertheless in fulness of faith, "in the volume of the book it is written of *me*." Gladly I respond to thy gracious invitation "Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God." Indeed, to the question in the text quoted at the head of this article, did not our Lord himself say to his disciples, and through them to us "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." - Matt. 20:23.

THREE ASPECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

While there is but the one true baptism for Christians, ("One Lord, one faith, one baptism, " - Eph. 4 5), this baptism may be regarded from three aspects:

1) Baptism into the body of Christ

2) Baptism into Christ's death

3) Baptism into holy spirit

The first of these aspects is mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 27, where he writes: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body ... Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

The second aspect is brought to our attention in Rom. 6:3, 4, where the apostle asks: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? "

Moreover, he goes on to say: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

A much misunderstood passage may be appropriately noted here. It appears in 1 Cor. 15:29, which reads: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?"

During the Dark Ages there arose the idea of substitutionary baptism. Christians whose friends had died without being baptized were baptized for them representatively. Authority for this practice was claimed to be based on this verse. This, however, is a misunderstanding of the passage.

The theme of the fifteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians is the resurrection of the dead. This fundamental doctrine was being denied by many, and the Apostle is arguing in its defense. Verse 29 is merely one more argument in support of the doctrine. Of what use would be their consecration to death, to be dead with Christ, to participate with him in the great atonement sacrifice *on behalf of the dead world*, -- what value would this be if so be that the dead rise not? *That is* his question -- and the implied answer, of course, is that it would be of no use at all. Participation in such a baptism would benefit no one, if the dead rise not. In verse 30 he presses his point still further: If the dead rise not, "why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"

In the Diaglott, Benjamin Wilson, in a footnote to verse 29, furnishes an illuminating exposition from the pen of the noted Bible commentator, Adam Clarke. We quote:

"If there be no resurrection of the dead, those who, in becoming Christians, expose themselves to all manner of privations, crosses, severe sufferings, and a violent death, can have no reward, nor any motive sufficient to induce them to expose themselves to such miseries. But as they receive baptism as an emblem of *death*, in voluntarily going under the water, so they receive it as an emblem of the *resurrection* unto eternal *life*, in coming up out of the water. Thus they are *baptized for the dead*, in perfect faith of the resurrection. The three following verses seem to confirm this sense."

The Master himself draws our attention to the third aspect from which the one true baptism for Christians may be regarded, in Acts 1:5: "John, indeed, immersed in water, but you will be immersed in holy spirit, after a few days." - Diaglott.

The "few days" soon passed and then, "when the day of Pentecost had fully come," the promise of the Father, to endue them with power from on high, was fulfilled. - Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 37-41.

It will be remembered that, at Pentecost, there were only Jewish believers. However, three and a half years later, the Apostle Peter, to whom had been given the keys of the kingdom, (Matt. 16:19) and who had used one of those keys at Pentecost, to open the door of the Gospel Dispensation to the Jews, used the other (there were only two) to open the door to the Gentiles. Readers will recall the account of the experience which Peter had in connection with Cornelius and other consecrated Gentile believers. (Acts 10.) It was on this occasion that Peter "remembered" the Lord's word, recorded in Acts 1:5, quoted above. - See Acts 11:15, 16.

TWO PHASES OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

It is apparent that Christian baptism has two phases:

1) Instantaneous, or initial

2) Gradual

In the case of our Lord, as soon as he became a man (which, under Jewish law was when he became thirty) he presented himself to John at Jordan; -- not, indeed, confessing his sins, for he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," but to symbolize, in water, that which had already taken place in his heart, namely, his complete consecration to do the Father's will, in harmony with Psa 40:7, 8, and Heb. 10:7 previously noted.

This might be said to represent the instantaneous or initial phase in his case. But this was not the end -- it was only the beginning. His words "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50) were spoken three and a half years later, as he was nearing the cross. Between Jordan and Calvary he was experiencing the gradual phase of his baptism; -- dying daily, pouring out his life, doing the Father's will until, on the cross his baptism into death was complete.

Thus it is with Christ's footstep followers. The instantaneous or initial phase has reference to the early experiences of our life of consecration, when we vowed to be dead with Christ, and received in place of the human life forfeited, the commencement of a new spiritual life, the begetting of the spirit.

The gradual phase consists in the outworking and completion of our covenant of sacrifice in the daily life, our little all being kept on the altar until it is finally consumed.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM DISTINGUISHED FROM JOHN'S BAPTISM

Foregoing we have seen that, whereas John's baptism was for Jews only, and symbolized repentance from sins, Christian baptism is for both Jews and Gentiles (as many as the Lord our God shall call. - Acts 2:39). In the case of our Lord Jesus it signified the immersion into the will of God of a sinless one, and, in the case of his followers, the immersion of men and women reckoned sinless -- their faith being counted to them for righteousness. - Rom. 4:3, 23-25.

This distinction between John's baptism and Christian baptism is shown in Acts 19:1-7: "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus and finding certain disciples, he said unto them; Have ye received the holy spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him: We have not so much as heard whether there be any holy spirit. And he said unto them Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said: Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the holy spirit came on them."

WATER BAPTISM

In our discussion thus far, we have said nothing about baptism (or immersion) in water. Our remarks have been confined to an explanation of the real baptism which we have considered from various points of view. However, water baptism does have a place in the consecrated believer's experience. Properly understood, it is seen to be a divinely appointed symbol of the real baptism.

Unless the real baptism into Christ has taken place, water baptism has no more significance than a bath. We do not enter the church by means of water baptism, but by immersion into Christ, of which immersion water baptism is but a figure. However, if the true baptism has taken place in our lives, it should be easy to understand how aptly water baptism illustrates it. As the candidate is lowered backward into the water, it is a beautiful picture of surrender -- he is entirely in the hands of the immerser. As the water closes over him, the picture is one of death and burial; dead with Christ, and buried with him. As he is raised out of the water, so is represented his resurrection from the dead, in due time, and resurrection power granted him now, to walk in newness of life.

REASONS FOR OBSERVING SYMBOLIC BAPTISM

In the case of our Lord Jesus, the real baptism having taken place in his heart, he hastened to symbolize it in the waters of Jordan. To the Baptist's remonstrance: "I have need to be baptized of thee and comest thou to me?" Jesus replied "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matt. 3:14, 15). If it was becoming in our Lord, it could hardly be considered unbecoming in his footstep followers.

To this most important reason for symbolizing, in water, the real baptism which has previously taken place in the consecrated believer's heart, there must be added another, namely, that of witnessing. By undergoing water immersion, he witnesses, both to the other members of the church, and to any of the general public who may be present, the fact that he has given his heart to God. That which has taken place in the secret chamber, between himself and God, is here expressed, in a divinely appointed symbol, in the presence of God's people and of the world.

In order to make this witness as effective as possible, it is customary to ask the candidates a few simple questions, in the presence of their brethren. This enables them to confess with their lips, as well as by this symbolic act, the faith and consecration which is in their hearts.

THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

On the basis of this confession, and before the water immersion takes place, the right hand of fellowship is extended by the immerser, or by other representative brethren.

It is always a source of encouragement to the Lord's people when they behold others thus publicly declaring their consecration unto God. We truly rejoice with those who have come to know Jesus not only as their Saviour, but also as their Head, who have responded to the solemn invitation, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" by saying in simple, trustful faith, "Yea Lord, we are able, not in our own strength but in thine." This strength he will supply. He will never leave or forsake us. Nothing will ever be able to separate us from his undying love, nor pluck us from his protecting hand. Moreover Jesus said, "My Father is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:29.) Thus in this twofold clasp of the Son and the Father, this twofold embrace of love divine, we- are absolutely safe, no power in heaven or earth, except the reassertion of our own selfwill, can separate us from "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." Therefore let us "keep ourselves in the love of God." - Jude 21.

- *Thomas W. Watson -- Eng.*

Joy and Patience That Conquer

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials]; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." - James 1:2-4.

THE Greek word for "fall" means to fall into something that is all around, that is, to "light among" or "upon"; to be surrounded with. In this scripture, then, James is saying: Consider it a joy when you are surrounded with trials.

Perhaps James was thinking of our Lord's words: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." - Matthew 5:10-12.

The Apostle Paul was a prime example of such an attitude and disposition. His feelings were expressed by the following: "Most gladly will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12:9, 10.). The literal translation of 2 Cor. 12:10 is more forceful: "Therefore I take pleasure in being without strength, in insults, in arrests, in being chased about, in being cooped up in a corner for Christ's sake; for when I am without strength, then am I *dynamite*."

Here is the secret of Divine all sufficiency. To "come to the end of our rope," and when we reach this place, to seek no sympathy because of our hard situation. For we should recognize *these* things as the very conditions of our blessing, and turn from them *to* God and find in them a claim upon him.

Peter adds: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." - 1 Peter 4:12.

Two points should be noted in these citations. First, that we are to be *joyful* in our troubles and difficulties. Take pleasure in them as necessary to our development. It is not unusual that we experience these things since our Master and Lord partook of the same. Indeed, we should be concerned if this were *not* the case. Jesus said: "Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." John 15:20.

The second point tells us that we should rejoice when we experience these things *for Christ's sake*. We do not rejoice because of our own foolishness or man-made ordeals. True, these may serve as valuable lessons and we should profit from them for experience is often the best teacher. But only persecutions and difficulties for *righteousness* sake should be counted as joy. Though they be not pleasant we are to consider them as such. "Out of the bitter can come forth sweetness."

If we apply these exhortations we will be optimists in the true sense of the word. We will always look for the bright side of things. Winston Churchill once said that an optimist sees an opportunity in every calamity, but a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity. Someone has defined a pessimist as a person who takes life with a grain of sulk. There is also the story about two pessimists who met at the grocery store. Instead of shaking hands, they just shook their heads.

Brethren, what is our outlook on life? Do we look for opportunities in our reversals and distresses? Can we say with Paul: "None of these things move me." Can we offer this response to trials and difficulties we encounter at our work, in our home, in our ecclesia, or elsewhere? In the life of Paul we find a wonderful paradox; bonds, afflictions, tribulations, imprisonment -- sufferings of all kinds -- and even death. Yet he looked forward to it all with joy. How irrational this seems when judged by ordinary standards! Having suffering and pain and finding joy in it!

Returning to the words of James, we find that the trying of our faith is for a good reason. It is necessary because, when rightly exercised, our faith produces patience. According to the Greek, the word patience signifies cheerful endurance, constancy or patient continuance. Rotherham translates James 1:3, 4 as follows: "Taking note that the proving of your faith worketh out endurance. But let your endurance have mature work, that ye may be mature and complete. *In nothing* coming short."

"If our faith stand the trial, it will work this character of patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the Kingdom." Therefore Christian maturity cannot be reached suddenly. The step of repentance from sin to justification is only the beginning and not the end of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this is also far from the end. Not only must we go on to the attainment of faith, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must *patiently endure*. We must run with patience the race set before us.

The Christian's race may be likened to the famous Marathon. This is a strenuous and grueling 26-mile run. It is a painful test of physical conditioning, endurance and patience. The origin of this race dates back to 490 B.C. At that time, the city-state of Athens saw its warriors, some 9,000 strong, march to meet the invading Persians. It was a bleak march. The Athenians and their allies were outnumbered by the Persians ten to one. But on the plain of Marathon, where the armies collided, the Greeks launched a furious phalanx attack which broke the foe and won the day. As the Persians ran for their ships, the Greek military leader called for the famed Athenian runner, Pheidippides, to carry the news to the agora in Athens, where a distraught populace waited word on the battle. Athens lay 25 miles southwest of Marathon. Pheidippides, who had taken part in the battle that day, shed his armor. Stripping to loin cloth, he set his face toward the westerly sun and began to run.

What happened to his body on that torturous run we can only conjecture. No camera recorded the event. No pathologist's report exists. But it is almost certain that Pheidippides ran himself to death. Pacing along the rocky land, up hill and down, he began to draw deeply upon his body's energy reserves. His heart, normally pumping five quarts of blood per minute, raced to 30 per minute. His respiratory rate soared as his lungs fought to expel the enormous quantities of carbon dioxide carried to them by the blood. His muscles, exhausting every available molecule of oxygen, drew upon anaerobic sources and began to pour acid wastes into the bloodstream. Muscle aches gave way to raw pain. It grew in intensity, searing through him like molten iron. Every cell cried for surcease, yet he forced himself to run on, spurred by the message of the incredible

Athenian victory. He had been running almost three hours. Ahead lay the Acropolis. A great throng waited in fear and expectation as the word was passed that a runner approached. Pheidippides, his mouth parched, his lungs heaving, his feet bleeding, staggered toward the Athenian elders and blurted out his message, "Rejoice, we conquer!" A thousand arms reached toward him as he fell, exhausted. But his heart, deprived of oxygen, began to beat wildly, and Pheidippides died.

Once the Christian starts his "running," he too must strip himself of every *weight* and *sin* which cling so closely and run with perseverance the race that is set before him (Heb. 12:1, R. S. V.). In a literal sense, "*weight*" can refer to excess flesh produced by eating rich foods, which the trained runner will not allow. Figuratively speaking, it can mean the extra things that we carry which can slow us down. "*Sin*" is likened to a flowing garment which tangles the runner's legs or that which distracts or diverts us from the course.

What are some weights and sins? Generally speaking, we would suggest the following: too much attention to earthly things, a lack of enthusiasm for things of the spirit, a love of ease, the refusal of the flesh to sacrifice or endure hardness, pride, self-indulgence, hatred, bitterness, envy, jealousy, and the mixing of truth and error.

As long as the runner is standing still, the weights will be scarcely noticeable. But let him begin to run in earnest and the excess baggage and the clinging garments will make their presence known. It is then that the Christian realizes how much of a deterrent these weights are; and the necessity for casting them off becomes ever more obvious.

Looking at Hebrews 12:1 a bit closer, we find some other significant and helpful points. This verse tells us to "lay" aside the weights and sin. Rotherham's translation puts it this way: "stripping off every encumbrance and the easily entangling sin." This adds more force to the illustration and seems to be closer to the thought intended. Strong's Concordance translates the word "lay" as a "casting off," or "putting away." It says that the word usually denotes separation, departure, cessation, completion or reversal. Thus we see that there must be a complete separation from the encumbrances that entangle us.

Jesus said: take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be *weighed down* with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life (Luke 21:34, R. S. V.) The word "dissipation" gives us the thought of wasteful expenditure and idle or harmful diversion.

If we are to lay aside or separate ourselves from encumbrances, what is it that we should seize or take hold of? Paul tells us: "Fight [or as the margin reads: struggle, agonize in] the good fight of faith, *lay* hold on eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:12). In verse nine, he declares: "they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all evil [margin: all the evils]; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." It has been said that some people wreck their health to get riches; then they spend their wealth trying to recover their health.

The Christian must cast off the things that have only temporary satisfaction and seize upon those things that will enable him to inherit lasting life. Our Master's life was the supreme example of this. That He requires us to do the same is evident by his teachings. We remember His instruction: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where

neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." - Matthew 6:19-21.

All runners in this Christian race begin in joyous devotion. But for some the early vision fades. The race is long. Obstacles block the way. They notice the diversions at the side; the race slows to a walk. It may even end before the finish line has been crossed. Hence, without patient endurance, the Christian would be ill equipped to sustain the pain and overcome the obstacles of the race course. His hope and confidence must remain strong. Paul says that one should rejoice in hope. Also: "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." - Romans 8:24, 25.

Jesus taught the necessity of having patience: "In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19). The Diaglott translates this: "By your patient endurance preserve your lives." Our faith and our trust in the Lord and his promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the opposition of the world, of Satan's blinded servants, and of our own sinful nature. So strong should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these opposing forces will be recognized and rejoiced in as God's travel agencies in assisting us to successfully complete our journey.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and possess our souls, our lives, as new creatures, even amidst tribulation, with cheerful endurance. How important this grace is seen to be in light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be cheerful. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father would be pleased with his children, if they endured affliction but did so in an impatient, dissatisfied, or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who have kept the Lord's word of patient endurance, who have sought from him the wisdom from on high, which, says James, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits, have learned that he has *a due time* in which his purposes shall be accomplished and they are willing to abide his time patiently, knowing that it is best. They have learned that "God's plans, like lilies white, unfold. We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart. *Time* will reveal the hidden heart of gold."

How often have we, amidst pain, struggles and distress, desired or even attempted to cut short the discipline and be delivered. Yet how short-sighted is this action. How do we know that even one of these pains could be spared? The far-sighted, perfect love that seeks perfection, does not weakly hide from present passing suffering. Our Heavenly Father's love is too true to be weak. Because He loves his children, he chastises them that they may be partakers of his holiness. With this glorious end in view, He spares not for their crying. Made perfect through sufferings, as their Master and forerunner was, the sons of God are instructed in obedience and brought to glory through much tribulation.

James tells us that "blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12). To this, add the words of the Revelator: "Be thou faithful unto death [that is, to the end of the race], and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Yes, our Marathon ends in death, too. But a crown of life awaits us if we are faithful.

May these words be our portion when we get to the end of the way: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your Master."

Rejoice, brethren! With the Lord's help, we shall overcome. We shall conquer!

-T. Thomassen

Purity

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God:" - Matt. 5:8.

ONE OF the great things in life is purity. We look for this quality as we go along life's way. We may tolerate a muddy stream, but we do not love it. We may even resent it. Somehow we feel that it has no right to be muddy. When one beholds a clear stream, where he can look down many feet and see the bottom, he never forgets it. John Burroughs, the naturalist, says: "When one looks upon such a stream, he feels that he would like to turn it into his mind and heart and let it run through him. If he reads it aright, he will in a sense receive it and experience its salutary ministrations."

Purity is suggested by many things in nature, as for instance, the blueness of the sky, the greenness of the grass and trees. Nature itself preaches a sermon of purity. There is no impure element in the birdsongs, nor even in the chorus of the frogs. There is a poem in the eternal hills, and every true poem is pure.

One day as we set down some' fancies of the mind, our dog lay watching us. What wonderful brown eyes he had; what purity in their depths. We felt sure that lie didn't have a single unkind or impure thought. Did he see God? Probably he did, but his god was man.

Out on the bank of a stream there stands a huge willow. It is nearly dead, for impurity got into its heart. Its branches are withered and it is fast fading away. The tree will soon be gone, for when impurity gets into the heart of a thing, that thing is doomed.

Man loves purity in the diamond, in gold, in food products. At a time when nearly everything is adulterated, he especially appreciates purity. He is willing to pay a good price for it. The upright mind seeks for it in art, in music, in society, in all things. It becomes a desideratum of the highest value, while its opposite is to be shunned and abhorred.

The world is full of impurity. Who would say that any governmental system is quite pure? Politics is terribly corrupt. Prostitution of public officials is much in evidence. The worship of money and of material effects is an impurity. There is a kind of art that reeks of impurity. He who looks for purity has a big quest on his hands. The world fairly shrieks in the clutch of a thousand forms of corruption and vice.

GOD REQUIRES PURITY

Impurity has been the cause of the disintegration of great dynasties in the past. When Jesus came to earth Rome festered with impurity. All the wealth was in the hands of a few thousand Patricians. The Plebians were a useless lot. There were millions of slaves who did the work. While the Romans had many gods, money was their real god, just as it is the world's real god today.

Purity has eternally existed in the divine mind. God wants this quality to exist in full measure in the hearts of all His intelligent creatures throughout the confines of His vast universe. His dealings with men have been calculated to develop purity. Because of impurity in men and in angels He destroyed the first world. Because the systems of today are impure, God will overthrow them. His own government will be altogether pure, for it is alluded to as "a great white throne" --

that is a pure righteous rule. The corrupt systems of the earth (the symbolic heavens and the earth) are said to flee away, because they cannot stand before such righteous purity. - Rev. 20.

Jesus was pure in heart. That is to say, all his intentions and motives were pure. He was exactly what He claimed to be, nothing more and nothing less. He did not claim to be His Father, for He said, "My Father is greater than I." So pure and intense was His desire to please God that "He made Himself -of no reputation, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Wherefore some day the world will acknowledge the purity of His' motives and His actions; for "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

The story that pervades the Bible is pure. It is pure because it deals with simple facts in a true and simple way. It does not hide the shame of vice. It shows up both good and evil in their true light. Therefore this story appeals to the pure in heart and has no appeal to the impure. Just as surely as the magnet attracts particles of steel, even so does the Bible message attract those for whom it is designed during the present Age.

There is a quality in real Scriptural liberty that spells purity. Unless one has a free and unrestricted flow of thought, how can his thoughts run pure? Dam up a stream and it will flow over the land and draw sediment into itself. Thought must be like a running brook, not like a frog pond with frogs croaking in its muddy waters. Jesus spoke of the water of truth as that which springs up unto everlasting life. If truth springs up in the believer's mind and heart, that means that his thoughts also spring up. They also spring forth. Tennyson said, "The minds of men are broadened with the process of the suns." Actually, however, this is not true. But it might well be true. In the mind of the Christian it ought to be true. Truth with all its amplitude must surely broaden the mind, a thing which error cannot do. And truth, being pure, must daily exercise a purifying influence upon those who have come under its power.

Purity is the first great quality that attracts to the higher life. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure." God's counsel has been pure from the beginning. The Christian must keep his heart pure. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." If a ship's compass should deflect from the magnetic north, there would be danger to all on board. One time a large steamer went down in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. It was claimed that magnetic iron ore on a certain island which the steamer had to pass deflected the ship's needle, and in the dark night she ran ashore. The heart of the Christian must point to the true north-right up to God.

The pure in heart see God in His Word. From the Scriptures they extract those elements of nutriment that build up and strengthen their quality of purity. The purity of the life of Jesus uplifts them with tremendous power. To them the cross of Christ is essentially pure. So also is the resurrection of our Lord. So is the call of the Church. So is dispensational truth. The entire Plan of the Ages appeals to them as being pure in the highest degree, and it manifests the purity of God's purpose from the beginning. Ah yes, they see God in His Word.

The hope of the Christian is a pure hope. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure," wrote the Apostle. While people of this world are for the most part hoping to increase in wealth and enjoyment here below, the man of God has a hope which is as "an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." His hope is that he may be found faithful even unto death and worthy of a place in the "first resurrection," so that he may reign with Christ for a thousand years, to lift the world out of sin and sorrow and death.

The pure in heart see God in their hours of meditation. That is, they see what He stands for. They see the way that He has led them. They behold the power of His guiding hand. They realize that as He delivered His servants of old, so He can deliver them. They see the rainbow tints of His divine covenant of promise. They see just what He is doing for them; and thus, through the medium of truth, they see God.

And then the pure-minded ones will see God in the future life. This will be a literal seeing of Him, whom, having not (literally) seen here, they have loved.' That future literal seeing of Him, and the great Head of the Church, will be contingent on their prefigurative seeing of God in the present life just what the future seeing of the Eternal One will mean we do not know, for it will be far beyond anything that we can conceive of at the present time.

- *Walter Sargeant.*

Notice of Annual Meeting

As announced in our March-April issue, the Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., is scheduled to be held (D.V.) Saturday, June 4, at 11:00 a.m., in Agawam, Mass., 218 Shoemaker Lane.

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

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

The seven brethren now serving as directors are candidates for reelection. Brothers Julius L Buss, Loyal Petran and Edward Zielinski have also been nominated.

Entered Into Rest

William V. Anderson, Cranston, R.I.
John Bacher, Kansas City, Mo.
Stella Chapman, Downers Grove, Ill.
Doris Gayton, Sheepy, Eng.
Roy D. Goodrich, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
Helen Johnston, Chicago, Ill.
Anna Koterba, Los Gatos, Cal.
John M. Landells, Rugby, Eng.
Kathryn Marshall, Chagrin Falls, Ohio
Norma M. McGarry, S. Burnaby, B.C.
Horace B. Norris, Pontypool, Wales
Lewis I. Pierson, Estill, S.C.
Frank B. Quennell, Cheshire, Eng.
Agnes Sadlack, Germany
Mary Schutte, Mpls., Minn.
Nellie Watson, Ilford, Eng.
Travis W. Watson, Lamesa, Tex.
Bazil Wend, Chicago, Ill.
J. Frank Whitaker, Sunset, Tex.