

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## The Ministry and Power of the Holy Spirit

*"But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and remind you of all things which I said to you." - John 14:26, Diaglott.*

THIS prophetic promise of Jesus had its initial fulfillment at Pentecost, and was spoken to the Apostles on the night that he instituted the memorial of his coming death. Manifestly, the words have a direct application to the Apostles, as they were the ones who needed to be reminded of the things Jesus had said to them, not only for their own benefit, but also for the benefit of all for whom they would record them.

Jesus had been their constant companion and teacher for three and a half years. They had learned to rely upon him for guidance in all the affairs of their lives; they felt their utter dependence upon him; and so the news that he was about to leave them and go where they could not follow, had filled them with sorrow and apprehension. Jesus had more than once told them of his' coming sacrifice and death, but their preconceived ideas had apparently made it impossible for them to comprehend. They were looking for a Messiah that would exalt their nation above the nations of earth and would bring the blessings promised by the Prophets, so they were not prepared to believe him. Peter wanted to know why he could not go where his Lord was going. "I will lay *down* my life on your behalf," he said; but as Jesus foretold, the night did not pass before Peter had denied him with cursing.

Unmindful of his own approaching trial and suffering, Jesus, in his realization of the sorrow and need of the Apostles, spent most of the remaining time at his disposal, in ministering to them the assurance that divine power and wisdom would take care of them; that a helper would be with them continually to give them aid and guidance. As our text says, this helper would be the holy spirit which the Father would send in his name or stead; and it would not only constitute their teacher, guiding them in the matter of truth, but would also recall to their minds all the things he had previously said to them.

## JESUS OPERATING THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Greek word that is translated as "helper" in our text, is used only by John. The four times it occurs in his Gospel, it applies to the holy spirit, and is rendered by the various translators as *comforter*, *helper*, and *advocate*. This is also the word that is translated as advocate in First John, chapter two, verse one, where we are told that "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Therefore, the holy spirit which dwells in the mind, and heart of each one whose consecration has been accepted of the Father, operates for them in our, Lord's name or stead, since it was in his name that we received the spirit.

In the Apostle Paul's writings we have a verification of this fact. He does not use the same word that John uses, but a word of similar meaning by which he shows that both our Lord and the holy spirit intercede for us. In Romans 8:26, 27 he says: "In like manner also the spirit assists our weaknesses; for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought; but; the spirit itself intercedes with unspoken groans. And he who searches the hearts, knows what is the mind of the spirit, because according to God it intercedes on behalf of saints." (*Diagott.*) On the other hand, in verse thirty-four we read: "Who is he that: condemn eth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also h maketh *intercession* for us. This is the same word used in connection with the operation of the holy spirit, and so we can see that it operates in full accord with the work of Christ on behalf of saints.

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT**

But what is the holy spirit? And how is it manifested? To other than Bible Students it would be necessary to answer these questions; for the men who translated our King James version of the Bible, believed it to be a person, equal in every respect to the Father and the Son, Therefore, whenever possible, they gave it the name *Ghost*, and designated it by personal pronouns. Brother Russell's exposition of the matter in Volume Five of the Scripture Studies, very fully and definitely shows the fallacy of this view, and he points out, that in those texts where it has been possible to construe it as being a person, it is solely because it reflects the mind, will, power, and influence of the one from whom it emanates. It is holy therefore, because God is holy, and because it is the exercise of his mind, will, power, and influence,, in and for those who are being fitted for the heavenly inheritance.

The literal meaning of the Hebrew "ruach" and the Greek "pneuma" which are often rendered by the word "spirit," is wind or current of air, and we find them translated by the word "wind" more than one hundred times in our King James version. For example, Psalm 1:4 reads: "The chaff which the wind driveth away." The fitness of this translation is readily seen because of the manner in which they at that time threshed their grain. Then again in John 3:8 we read: "The wind bloweth where it listeth." In the context of this latter citation, our Lord gives us an indication of the basic thought underlying the word wherever it occurs; for he says, "Thou hearest the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh or ' whither it goeth." In other words, it is an invisible power or influence and is properly applied to God's mind or power or influence which are invisible.

The theory that only the literal meanings of Hebrew or Greek words are necessary or proper in their translation; is certainly disproven by the variety of ways these two words must be translated to convey the meanings of the texts in which they are found. For example, it would not make very good sense to change the word "mind" to wind or to spirit in Proverbs 29:11, where we read, "A fool uttereth all his mind."

## **MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT**

When the spirit of God "moved" or "brooded upon the face of the waters," it was his power that caused them to bring forth in harmony with his will; and when his holy spirit is received into our lives, it is his influence and power that causes the change that takes place within us. The holy spirit has been manifested in many, many ways; and when we search the Word in an attempt to list these, we very soon come to a realization that there is no intelligence or power that has not come from God; not from the Son, nor from the holy spirit, but from God. Therefore, when our Lord Jesus, in his prehuman existence, exercised authority and power in the creation of all things that were made, it was because the wisdom and power to do this 'was communicated to him by God through the holy spirit. Jesus testified, "I can of mine own self do nothing." (John 5:30.) "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. . . Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." - John 12:49, 50.

Since, as we are told, all things came into being through the Logos, and apart from him nothing has been created (John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6), therefore it was the spirit of God exercised through him that "brooded upon the face of the waters." The skill and intelligence of the workmen that wrought all the various parts and paraphernalia for the tabernacle service, were but the manifestation of God's spirit operating through them, for we read: "Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab and every wise hearted man in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all :manner of work ifor the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded." - Exod. 36:1.

The holy spirit's operation therefore is manifested in the "brooding upon the face of the waters"; the imparting of skill and cunning to craftsmen in fashioning and furnishing the tabernacle; the giving of understanding and ability, to Moses and the Elders of Israel to establish and operate a form of government that has been a criterion for all attempts at righteous government since that day. To the judges and leaders of Israel the holy spirit gave power and wisdom to keep that nation separate from the idolatrous nations all about them. To Joseph and Daniel it gave ability to interpret dreams; and all the true prophets of God were inspired by it to foretell coming events and the out-working of God's plan. But in this case, it was more or less a mechanical operation, for they themselves were not given to understand the things they prophesied. With the coming of our Lord, however, there was a change of operation: Jesus received the spirit without measure. (John 3:34.) This was at the time he symbolized his consecration by water immersion, for John testified saying, "I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode on him. And I knew him not [as the Son of God, the Messiah]: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the holy spirit. And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God." - John 1:32-34.

Jesus, therefore, is the one through whom we receive the baptism of the holy spirit; for just as in the tabernacle picture, the holy anointing oil was all poured upon the head of Aaron by Moses, whence it flowed down to his body members; so, in antitype, God anointed Jesus with the fulness of his own mind, will, power, influence, and Jesus in turn has imparted this holy spirit to his body members in proportion to their capacity and ability to use it.

The amount of the spirit that we individually receive, seems to be in direct proportion to the depth and faithfulness of our consecration. Not that anything less than our all is ever accepted of the Father, but that we differ in what constitutes that all, and in the manner and degree in which we are able to present that all in service.

## **VESSELS IN THE LORD'S SERVICE**

We recall a very forceful illustration of this that was given at a Brooklyn Convention in 1944 by our Brother Sonntag. In effect he said: Just imagine you are viewing a large table on which there is placed a variety of vessels dedicated to the purpose of ministering a very pure, life-giving water. In the center is a tall, gracefully formed vase, beautiful in outline and contour; it indicates refinements, lovely traits and manners, so to speak. Here beside it is another vase, almost as tall but not so well formed: its appearance is not so graceful, and it will not pour as smoothly and easily. Then over on this corner of the table stands a jug. Its capacity is large but it is amore difficult to pour from, as the water is apt to come in blurbs or gurgles. Then here beside the jug is a large pail. Any one attempting to drink from a vessel of this shape is apt to get wet outside as well as inside. There are also a variety of pitchers -- very serviceable vessels -- and bottles, bowls, flasks, beakers, mugs, goblets, glasses, cups, and saucers.

What a conglomeration! But if each and all have been emptied of whatever they may have contained before they were placed on the table, they can all be used to minister the good water to the thirsty. The water will of course conform to the contour of the vessel into which it is poured: but this does not change the water, nor diminish its value to the thirsty, for the water does not obtain its value from the vessel, but from the fountain from which it came. It is evident, too, that some of these vessels have far more capacity than do others, and can therefore be used in a much larger way. The little flat saucer does, not hold much and may often need refilling, but in its very open simplicity it may be just the vessel most suited to minister to some poor, thirsty creature.

Likewise, there is just as great a variety in the human vessels that are filled with the holy spirit, and they differ just as greatly in their capacity and in their outward form and ability to manifest that spirit. The spirit that fills the saucer-like individual is just the same as that which fills the Apostle Paul or John or Peter or whoever it may be; the one is sanctified just as fully as is the other, for the individual does not sanctify the spirit, the spirit sanctifies the individual, and is given as fully as the capacity of the individual will permit.

And so while the illustration is apt in the sense that the Lord accepts us as we are when he cleanses and sanctifies us by his spirit, yet, unless we could think of some magic quality in the water that would gradually change the contour of all those vessels so they would eventually conform to the shape and beauty of the tall vase in the center, it comes short; for the object and work of the holy spirit in us is to transform us into the image of Christ. "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." - Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18.

### **GOD'S WORKMANSHIP THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Do we comprehend the magnitude of this work of the spirit? Do we give it free course in our lives through earnest, whole-hearted submission and prayerful, cooperation? Or do we incline to indifference and slackness in our consecration, permitting the fleshly mind and body to exercise the natural tendencies of self-indulgence, impatience, fault finding, evil surmising, and the many other traits that hinder and strangle the influence of the holy spirit within. When we permit the natural tendencies to take their course, then "we walk after the flesh" - we help to fix and establish ungodly traits; and if we continue in this way, there will come a time when we cannot be changed, when we will lose all desire for change and so shrink from the effort necessary to godliness. Such become "carnally minded," which we are warned will mean death. - Rom. 8:6.

Every time we acquiesce in the evil tendencies of our fallen nature, we "grieve the holy spirit of God, whereby we have been sealed unto the day of deliverance." (Eph. 4:30.) Rather, says Paul, "Let *all* bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you,

with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving, one another *even as God for Christ's sake* hath forgiven you." - Eph. 4:31, 32.

The holy spirit does not coerce our wills; it counsels adherence to God's commands. We have been left free to follow the dictates of our own wills, for the only worship and service accept, able unto the heavenly Father is that which emanates from the heart as a free-will offering. "God is a spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24.) So then, if we give heed to the voice of the spirit beseeching us to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God" (Rom. 12:1), and in doing this become tender hearted, kind and sympathetic, meek and forgiving, not requiting evil with evil nor abuse with abuse, but exercising love toward all, having special consideration for our brethren, since they are the special targets for Satan's venom, then if faithful to the end we can expect to be declared "overcomers."

The ministry and power of the holy spirit in us is then, first of all a work of enlightenment and grace: "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." (Eph. 5:8.) And when we have responded to this enlightenment of the spirit, and have yielded ourselves in full consecration to the doing of God's will, the spirit then becomes the seed of begettal, the start of a new life, the planting of a hope that branches out into heavenly aspirations for spirit-life in union with our Lord.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." - 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

Then following begettal; the spirit becomes the quickening power; it begins the process of our transformation, the changing of our thoughts and impulses from following the unholy, natural tendencies to the cultivation of the fruit of the spirit. The spirit is also the power that causes the fruit to grow; but we have to cooperate by the cultivation of the soil, so to speak; we must keep our hearts free from love of the weeds of self-ease and unholy desires of the flesh, *and* must nurture the spirit's planting. We must "give all diligence in adding to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. For *if these things be in you and abound*, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, he cannot see afar off, and hash forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the father brethren, *give diligence* to make your calling and election sure: for *if ye do these things*, ye shall never fall: for so an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto you into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2. Pet. 1:5-11.)

- John T. Read

## Memories of the Way

*"And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no." -Deuteronomy 8:2.*

The power of memory is lasting and is influential. A kindness done in secret -how often has that seed, dropped into the soil of memory, borne fruitage in the gratitude of years. And again, a harsh word or inflicted injury, flung upon the memory, too often has rankled there into lawlessness and into sin. No man can be solitary who has memory. The poorest of us, if we have memory, is richer than he knows, for by it we can reproduce ourselves, be young even when the limbs are failing, and have all the past: belonging to us when the hair is silvery and the eyes are dim. Oh, it is a rare and divine endowment! This is the faculty which the Jewish lawgiver calls into exercise: "Thou shalt remember."

### REMEMBRANCE OF FAVOR AND OF JOY

And as the people of Israel recalled their history there would be, in the first place, the remembrance of favor and consequently of joy. What a grand history and one rich in instruction was theirs! Jehovah's presence had gone with them through the tangled desert path -by day in guiding cloud, by night in lambent flame; their raiment had not waxed old upon them, neither their foot swelled for forty years. He had spoiled their enemies in their sight. In Egypt they had quailed beneath the very Omnipotence which had delivered them, and they had crouched trembling at the base of Sinai, while ever and anon loomed through the darkness the flashings forth of the Divinity within. From the time when they groaned in bondage and their cry went up unto God until now, when after forty years' vicissitudes, they stood upon the threshold of the land of Canaan, each day had its wonder and its lesson. There could not fail to be great and grateful rejoicing in this remembrance of the loving-kindness of the Lord.

Brethren, our own has also been an instructive history. Do not these "ensamples" refresh our memories? Do we not recall that loving-kindness which compassed us since first we knew the Lord, and of his favor that hath made our "mountain to stand strong" (Ps. 30:7)? Think of the gracious Providence that in your spiritual journey cared for your infancy and prevented your doings in youth; think of the unexpected deliverances, the unlooked-for surprises of blessing with which you have been visited. Pause before the various stones of help which you have erected in the course of your journey. Remember the stores of gladness inexhaustible and constantly operating that have been poured upon you by the bounty of your heavenly Father -the joy of your heart, the joy peculiar to yourselves, the joy of meetings, the sweetness of farewells, and of that which came between, more sweet than each. Remember the joys of the Church: victory over some besetting temptation; glad seasons of Christian fellowship which can never be forgotten; sermons that seemed, in their exquisite adaptedness, as if they had been made for you, to counsel in perplexity, to comfort in trouble.

## REMEMBRANCE OF SIN AND SORROW

Nothing is more remarkable as a fact, and more illustrative of the depravity of the human heart, than the frequency with which the children of Israel sinned. Thus secondly in their history would be the *remembrance of sin, and, by consequence of sin, the remembrance of sorrow*. Only three days after the wonderful interposition at the Red Sea their murmurings began. The miracle at Marah, although it appeased their thirst, failed to inspire their confidence, for they tempted God again at the Waters of Strife. They lusted after the fleshpots of Egypt though the manna fell without ceasing. Their whole history is a record of perpetual sin, a perpetual lapse, now into jealousy, and now into sensualism, now into unbelief, and now, alas, into idolatry. These repeated transgressions of necessity introduced them to sorrow, and they suffered the strokes of Jehovah's displeasure.

And does not memory recall for us a history that has its sorrowful side also? What of unfaithfulness since the Lord called you? Your indulgence since your conversion in things you dared not have done while you were seeking mercy? Your cherishing of some secret idol; your forbearance to deliver them that were drawn to death; your efforts for your own aggrandizement and pleasure while the house of God lay waste? What of that terrible callousness which could so unfeelingly trample the honest convictions of a fellow in Christ because they differed from your own; that cruel lack of concern for a brother or sister in the Lord who so much needed the word in season you could have given and did not because "they walked not with you"? And what of that blindness, that unreasoning over-zealousness, which could overstep the Lord's specific injunction, "Judgment is mine," and would condemn another as "out of the truth," whether by direct words or by innuendo; that sly suggestion of moral error within as the only explanation for mental differences without? What of that smug complacency in the holding of the letter of God's Word while the spirit thereof was violated? Call up these memories; do not disguise them; they are necessary to bow us in humility before God.

## PURPOSES OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Let us, secondly, notice the purposes of divine Providence in the journey. These are stated to be three: "To humble thee and to prove thee"; "to know what was in thine heart"; and "whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no." We thus recognize that in all God's dealings with the children of Israel, there were purposes at work -- purposes of spiritual discipline, intended to induce self-searching and the improvement of their hearts and lives.

The first purpose that is spoken of is to induce *humility* -- "to humble thee." Everything in their experience taught them their dependence upon God. Every event, alike in their deliverance from Egypt and in their passage through the wilderness, was calculated to show them their own feebleness. What could human might have effected for them in the way of securing their deliverance from Egypt? Their spirits were broken by long years of slavery; the iron had not only chained their limbs, it had entered into their soul. They had not the heart to strike for freedom; and if they had meditated an uprising, they were a people of such divided counsels and so distrustful of each other, that it would have been but a paroxysm of frantic rebellion which would have riveted upon themselves the yoke of a more bitter bondage. What could human might have availed for them when on the borders of the Red Sea the giant waves barred their progress while a host of relentless enemies pressed behind?

Brethren, the dealings of Providence with ourselves are intended to show us our dependence upon God and to humble us in the dust under his mighty hand. We are proud, sometimes, and we talk about our endowments, and we boast largely of what we have done and what we intend to do; but

we can do absolutely nothing. The athletic frame -how soon can he bring it down! The well-endowed heritage-how soon can he scatter it! The mental glance, keen and piercing -how soon can he bring upon it the dimness and bewilderment of years! We cannot, any one of us, bring ourselves into being; we cannot, any one of us, sustain ourselves in being for a moment.

And so it is with all matters of human glory. The strong man rejoiceth in his strength, but the Lord hath made him strong; the wise man glorifieth himself in his intellect and fluent utterance, but these are the bestowments of God. Ah! why will men "sacrifice to their own net, and burn incense to their own drag" (Hab. 1:16), when they have absolutely nothing which they have not received; and when every gift cometh "from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17) ?

And in the realm of morals and in our spiritual life, our feebleness is the same. Have you learned this lesson, this deep, hard lesson of humility?

Oh! how this lesson must come home to us now, we who have partaken of the message of Present Truth, as we remember the former days -- the days of outward spiritual prosperity as through the ministrations of a man of God we absorbed the letter of the Word spread so abundantly. Yes, there was growth, but alas, how much of it was a delusive growth, a growth of form and not of spirit, the growth of a plant and not of an oak. Enduring things take long to grow and must be deep-rooted; no mushroom like growths can endure the tests of faith. How we needed to receive the chastisements of the Lord that we might learn of the delusiveness of a growth which was so much dependent on a constant learning of some new thing; a spiritual prosperity so dependent upon the presence of a servant of the Lord. But true individual faith could not thrive under those circumstances and how needful it was, as we all realize now, that the Lord separate our hand from the one in whose we had placed it, that the succeeding experiences develop in us *a reliance on Christ alone*. How painful has been the road, and how humbling to our former spirit of overconfidence and leaning on the arm of flesh. Yet how far more spiritually healthful has been the atmosphere of reliance and trust in His strength and presence alone. Yes, we remember the Valley of Humiliation. God has indeed humbled us and thereby made us strong.

### **THE JOURNEY ALSO PROVES US**

The second purpose of God's Providence in the journey is to *prove us*. There were many testing circumstances in the history of the children of Israel. They were tested by their mercies, as when, feeling the manna insipid, they lusted after the fleshpots of Egypt; they were tested by their duties; they were tested by their calamities, as at the Red Sea and in the conflicts with the hosts of Amalek. They were tested by their companions, as when they formed unholy league with Midianite idolaters and brought upon themselves that swift destruction which Balak wished for, but which the cowardly Balaam dared not for his life invoke.

Brethren, God has his crucible still. As we look back upon our past lives, we shall find circumstances that have tried us, and we shall remember the results of the trial sometimes with devout gratitude, oftener with unfeigned shame. Our afflictions have tried us, and we thought we did well to be angry; we have arraigned the proceedings of God at the bar of our limited reason (solemn mockery of judicature!) when the reflection of tomorrow would have approved what the distrust of today was so ready to condemn.

Our duties have tried us. We have felt the shrinking of the flesh, and the result has been sometimes their reluctant and sometimes their spiritless discharge. Or people have been unjust or unkind to us: we have met with ingratitude or with treachery; our own familiar one, in whom we



trusted, has betrayed us; slander has been busy belching out her calumnies against our fair fame; all these things have tested our patience, our endurance, our meekness, our long-suffering, and, like Moses, we have spoken unadvisedly, or, like the disciples, we have had to pray, "Lord, increase our faith," before we could grasp the large and princely idea of forgiveness to seventy times seven.

Often companionships have tried us, and we have shown how small has been our self-reliance, and how easily we have taken the hue and mold of the society in which we were thrown, and how a pointed finger, or a sarcastic laugh, or a lip scornfully curled, can shame the manhood out of us, and make us very cowards in resisting evil, or in bearing witness for God.

Thus have we been, thus has God proved us in the wilderness, and if we are in earnest for heaven, and if we have in any measure profited by the discipline, we shall be thankful for the trial. Placed as we are in a sinful world, exposed to its everyday influences, whether of good or evil, we need a piety which can maintain itself in all circumstances, so we can say with David, "Thou has proved mine heart; and thou hast visited me in the night; thou has tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress. Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer" (Ps. 17:3, 4).

### **"KEEP THY HEART WITH ALL DILIGENCE"**

And then the third purpose of Providence in the journey is *"to know what was in thine heart -- whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no."* Human knowledge can give us very little acquaintance with the heart; such knowledge is too wonderful for man; it is high, and he cannot attain to it. But there is One who knows it, and knows all its tortuous policy, and all its sinister motive, and he is anxious that we should know it too, and one purpose of his providential dealings with us is that we may know what is in our heart.

But whether it be from the deceitfulness of the object of study, or whether it be from the morbid reluctance, almost amounting to fear, with which men shrink from acquaintance with themselves, there are few that have the bravery to pray, "Lord, make me to know myself." Indeed, it were a hideous picture if it were suddenly unveiled in the presence of us all. When the Lord would show Ezekiel the abominations of Jerusalem, he led him through successive chambers of imagery, upon the walls of which were portrayed their loathsome and unworthy doings. Ah! if our weakness were to be thus tapestried in our sight, who of us could bear the disclosure?

There was deep self-knowledge and deep humility in the word of the old reformer, who, when he saw a criminal led off amid the jeers of the multitude to be hanged, turned around sighing, and said, "There, but for the grace of God, goes old John Bradford." There is a very affecting illustration of what can lurk unsuspected in the human heart, in the eighth chapter of the second Book of Kings. Hazael, the messenger from the king of Syria, is shocked at the bare mention of the atrocities Elisha prophesies he shall commit, and in indignation remonstrates with the Prophet. And yet as one has quaintly observed, "The dog did it after all."

Brethren, "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). There lurks this danger in us all; there is no superiority of character in ourselves; there is no firmer power of resistance to evil. In our unaided strength we are no better fortified against the evil about us than are our fellowmen. From a thousand causes of disaster and of shame with which our experience can furnish us, and which we read in the history of everyday life, it becomes us, with godly jealousy watching over our own hearts, to guard against the beginnings of evil.

## USES OF THE MEMORY

If these have been your experience in the way that you have trodden, there will be many *uses* of the memory of the way. You will know more of God at its conclusion than you did at its commencement. You will behold both the goodness and the severity of God - the severity which punishes sin wherever it is to be found, the goodness which itself provides a substitute and finds a Savior. Where do you not find him rather? There was the stream gushing forth from the smitten rock, and the perishing and thirsty Israelites were happy. "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10: 4). There was the brazen serpent, the symbol of accepted propitiation in the wilderness of sin. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:14, 15).

Oh, as you gather up these memories -the memory of joy, the memory of sorrow, the memory of sin; as you remember the goodness and the lovingkindness of the Lord, his faithfulness to fulfill his promises, his tenderness, which your repeated rebellions have not caused to fail, gather up yourself in one earnest reconsecration of flesh and spirit, that you may be in truth living temples now and eventually pillars in the house of God, that shall go no more out forever.

"Ye have seen ... how I bare *you* on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will *obey my* voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:4-6).

- *W. J. Siekman*

## **"Underneath Are the Everlasting Arms"**

*"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." - Deuteronomy 33:27.*

The words of our text are the words wherewith Moses, the man of God, blessed the children of Israel just before his death. However, in an important sense, *they constitute God's message*, not only to Israel then, but *to all mankind* today.

According to the Genesis account, man was created "in the image of God," that is, with similar mental powers of reason, memory, judgment and will, and moral qualities of justice, benevolence and love; not with a mere first glimmer of moral sense as claimed by Evolutionists.

Moreover, at the time of his creation there was implanted in him the ability to appreciate, and the desire to worship, and to, have communion with, his Creator. Even today, after six thousand years of sin in the earth, there are times in the lives of most men when their minds reach out, instinctively, however vaguely, to their Creator. Without this relationship with God man is incomplete. In confirmation of this note the words of the Apostle Paul to the people of Athens, in that wonderful speech of his on Mars Hill. Declaring to them the Unknown God, Paul says that he "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:26-28).

Moreover, these words were spoken, not to Christians, but to pagans. Today, among the so-called "enlightened" nations (which is another way of saying those more scientifically advanced) there is a marked tendency to deny the existence of God, or of any superior intelligent authority in the universe. The belief is widespread that man came into existence by pure chance, by a process of evolution, and is, or will shortly become, entirely self-sufficient.

### **IS PEACE OF MIND EXPERIENCED IN A LIFE LIVED APART FROM GOD? WHAT SAY THE PSYCHIATRISTS?**

But we know that man was not created to exist independently of his Creator. As the result of thus seeking to live apart from God, has man found satisfaction? No. Indeed! We are informed that today fifty percent of our hospitals are occupied by people with one kind or another of mental disorder, and that every second person outside the hospitals is taking drugs or tranquillizers of some description. Psychiatry was practically unknown fifty years ago; today there are thousands of practicing psychiatrists.

It was recently reported, in the *Readers' Digest*, that a leading American psychiatrist who always keeps a Bible on his desk, when asked, "Do you, a psychiatrist, read the Bible?" replied: "I not only read it, I study it. If people would just absorb its message, a lot of us psychiatrists could close our offices." This psychiatrist endeavors to persuade his patients to memorize and absorb what he considers to be *the message* contained in the Scriptures, namely, "*Underneath are the everlasting arms.*" He said that the thought of a pair of loving arms, sustaining and eternal, was an answer to the yearning in every human being to "feel safe," to find security, and that this is essential to everyone who values his mental health. Man was not created with the power to be completely independent and self-sufficient.

Some time ago in an interview in New York, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick\* made the following observation: "Does any intelligent being really think that the cosmic scheme of things is mindless and purposeless, without meaning or destiny? To explain the law and abiding order of the world, the nobility of the human character at its best, as mere happenstance, is like saying that the letters of the alphabet were blown together by a chance wind to form the works of Shakespeare."

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\*Dr. Fosdick died in October 1969 at the age of 91. - *Ed. Com.*

### **IS SATANIC INFLUENCE BEHIND THE CURRENT CRIME WAVE?**

It may be asked: Why is it, in an age when we know more of the wonders of creation than ever before, there is such widespread unbelief among otherwise intelligent people? Some think that the answer might well be that Satan, the god of this world, together with his angels, is especially busy at this crucial end-of-the-age period, blinding the minds of the people as never before. A leading English judge stated, in a recent interview, that his experience in the courts had led him to believe that there was a Satanic power behind much of the present wave of crime, and that it was necessary for judges, lawyers, and all concerned with the administration of law, to devise better ways of dealing with this extraordinary state of affairs.

Occupied, as we all are, with the daily round of pressing duties, we may fail to notice the downward trend in the world's affairs; possibly, too, it is because we have become inured to wars and rumors of wars and crime in general. Nevertheless it is true that humanity is rushing headlong to the final trouble of the age. Serious statesmen do not hesitate to warn us that unless a way is found to avert it, the worst phase of that trouble will be upon us before another ten years have passed.

### **HOPE NOT ONLY FOR THE CHURCH BUT FOR ALL MANKIND**

It is natural that, in the present condition of world affairs, the thoughts of the Church should be chiefly directed to the consummation of their hopes, of being "caught up . . . to meet the Lord in the air" and of being forever with the Lord, but with that hope for ourselves, let us always associate the great blessings to follow, which will be for all mankind. Let us link 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 with John 3:16 and Acts 3:19-21.

As a matter of fact, does not our personal happiness depend on this universality of God's love? Could we be content to be among the few who are saved in this age if we did not know that God's plan includes the salvation of our fathers and mothers, brothers, and sisters and indeed, of all mankind in due time; all, that is to say, except those who, with full light and understanding willfully reject God's favor. It was this very knowledge that an opportunity would be granted to all, that attracted us in the first place to what we often refer to as "The Truth." How privileged we are to understand God's Plan, as graciously revealed in his Word! Otherwise, how difficult it would be to live with the sickness, pain, and death which daily surround us, the disasters and calamities which so frequently occur. And so our daily prayer is "Thy kingdom come, O God; thy rule, O Christ, begin."

### **STEPHEN'S NOBLE EXAMPLE**

What an example of this confidence in God's protection we have in Stephen! We read of him in Acts 6:8 that he was "full of faith and power," and when the Jews brought false witnesses against

him and condemned him to death, not for a moment did he lose confidence in the care of his Father, but rather used the occasion to give a witness to those condemning him. We are told how a vision was given to this first Christian martyr, which undoubtedly helped to sustain him and we read that Stephen "being full of the holy spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). The record is that a little later, just before he expired from the stones thrown at him, he called upon God in full assurance of faith saying "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" and "lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:59-60).

### **PAUL - AT THE END OF THE JOURNEY**

We note also the supreme confidence of the Apostle Paul that "*underneath are the everlasting arms,*" in spite of all the hunger, privation, imprisonment, and countless trials that came his way. In his second letter to Timothy he showed that he had complete assurance that he was in God's hand and that no one could pluck him out. Moreover, he showed this not only when all was well with him from an earthly standpoint, but when the opposite conditions prevailed. To quote his own words: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

### **ACCORDING TO OUR FAITH**

Meantime, how is it with us, we who not only believe in God, but have entered into special relationship with him as sons; we who have been given his holy spirit, and who may and do address him as our Father? As we pass through the trials, sicknesses and sorrows of life, have we the faith, the assurance in our hearts and minds, that for us, also, it is true that "*Underneath are the everlasting arms?*"

However, it is not only at a time of extreme crisis or approaching death that we should have this confidence, but also in our daily experiences. The peace and tranquility we enjoy as we journey through life will be in proportion to our faith. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isa. 26:3). "Faith gives substance to our hopes, and makes us certain of realities we do not see," as the writer to the Hebrews states (Heb. 11:1; N.E.B.). The greater our faith the greater our peace of mind; the closer our communion with the Father and our Lord Jesus in prayer, the less our anxieties about the things of this life.

We are urged to bring our burdens to the Lord and the result should be as described in verses 6 and 7 of Philippians 4 (Phil. 4:6-7 N.E.B.): "Have no anxiety, but in everything make your requests known to God in prayer and petition with thanksgiving. Then the peace of God, which is beyond our utmost understanding, will keep guard over your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus." Note particularly the words "with thanksgiving." It is only as we come to the throne of grace with thankful hearts for what we have, and for what God has already done for us, that we can expect peace of mind.

"Count your many blessings,  
Name them one by one,  
And it *will* surprise you,  
What the Lord hath done."

## THE SECRET OF CONTENTMENT

Paul had found peace because, as he explains in verses 11 and 12 of Philippians 4 (N.E.B.): "I have been very thoroughly initiated into the human lot with all its ups and downs -- fullness and hunger, plenty and want." He had learned, he tells us in verse 11 "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." And the secret of his contentment? Very simple: his mind and heart were set on heavenly riches and not on the things this world has to offer. His advice to Timothy, given in 1 Timothy 6:6-9 reads: "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare."

Godliness with contentment should be the aim of every one of us. Moreover, if we do, indeed, attain this state in any measure, it should be manifest at least to some extent in the attitude we display towards the difficulties of life. This brings us back again to Philippians 4. In verse 4 Paul says "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." We should have the confidence in our Father's care for us, in all the circumstances of life, that is expressed so beautifully in Psalm 23. "Have faith in God," said Jesus (Mark 11:22). Have such faith in him that you will be able to face up to all the changing scenes of life with an inner peace of mind, a realization that whatever happens "*underneath are the everlasting arms,*" protecting, sustaining you.

- G. B. Chapman, England

## **"Even at the Doors"**

*"What will be the sign of thy presence, and of the consummation of the age?" - Matthew 24:3 (Diaglott).*

*"When ye shall see all these things, know that he is near." -Matthew 24:33 (margin).*

OF ALL the gracious words which proceeded out of the mouth of him who spake as never man spake, perhaps none have had a more powerful influence in the history of the Church than those uttered by the Master just as his earthly career was ending: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). Nor can we think of any more calculated to inspire hope in his waiting followers today, or more calculated to renew their courage. How much this promise means to us can be best estimated by contrasting the poverty of spirit which would be ours if it had never been vouchsafed to us, or if there were a question as to its fulfillment. How dark our gloom would then be, how forlorn our state, how void of all good cheer our prospects! Thank God for "that blessed hope" and for the purifying effect it has had, and, please God, yet will have, in our lives (Titus 2:13; 1 John 3:3).

### **OCCUPY TILL I COME**

Since the fruition of all our hopes, both for the Church and for the world, is intimately associated with the return of our Lord, it would be strange indeed if we were not possessed of an eagerness to learn the time when this long-looked-for event might be expected. If the inquiry of the Apostles, "What will be the sign of thy presence?" was a proper one then, it would seem to be still more appropriate today when the evidences that we have reached "the consummation of the Age" are multiplied. Indeed, far from rebuking this spirit of inquiry, our Lord, both by parable and direct exhortation, sought to encourage it. True, they were to be occupied, not idle, during his absence, but it was to be only "till he come." Till then they were to be diligently engaged in his business, each occupied with the special task to which he had been assigned. But while thus occupied, their whole attitude was to be one of joyful expectancy, of eager watchfulness for his return. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh." And it is not difficult to see that this attitude of joyful expectancy would indicate at once the method and the spirit of their service. They were not to be as drudges, who have no pleasure in their labor, nor as hirelings, who care only for their wages, On the contrary, their labor was to be bright with hope, with the hope of a great happiness to come. They were to do all they did as in the sight of a Master who, though absent from them for a time, was sure to return, and who, meanwhile, would be present with them in spirit, and much concerned in the success of their labors (Luke 19:13; Mark 13:33-37).

## THE GLORIOUS HOPE OBSCURED

Those of our readers who are at all acquainted with the pages of history are aware that after the Apostles fell asleep the Adversary succeeded in obscuring this glorious hope. The effect on the life and health of the Church, as might have been expected, was most disastrous, and it was not until the doctrine of our Lord's Second Advent was restored to a foremost place in its preaching and teaching that the Church began to recover from the state of apostasy into which, except for a few devout souls, it fell. As we ponder the record of those times we may see that the Adversary did not accomplish this beclouding of the Church's brightest hope by means of a direct attack -- an open denial of the fact that our Lord would return -- but rather by an indirect method, by an undermining of the doctrine. He allowed the doctrine to remain, but twisted its import and so corrupted its meaning as to rob it of its power. Under his leadership, questions were raised as to the *object* of our Lord's return, and after awhile the glorious hope was changed into a dreadful fear. Instead of a joyful, longing, expectancy for her beloved Bridegroom to return to claim her for his own, and thereafter to introduce "times of refreshing," those times of restitution" spoken by the mouth of all God's holy Prophets since the world began, the Church was filled with grave forebodings. Symbolic Scriptures were so wrested and misapplied that the precious promise seemed to take on the character of a dire threat. Under the circumstances we do not wonder that instead of cherishing it in their hearts, men did their best to forget it. Thank God for the light now shining which enables us to look for the return of the Lord with the same exultation of spirit that is manifest in the prophetic utterance of David:

"Let the heavens be glad,  
And let the earth rejoice;  
And let men say among the nations,  
Jehovah reigneth.  
Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; Let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.  
Then shall the trees of the wood sing aloud  
At the presence of Jehovah,  
Because he cometh to judge the earth.  
O give thanks unto Jehovah, for he is good;  
For his mercy endureth forever."  
- 1 Chronicles 16:31-34.

If there is any lingering doubt in the mind of any of our readers as to the magnificent *object* of our Lord's return we suggest a re-reading of the sixth chapter of "*The Divine Plan of the Ages.*" Indeed, we believe that all who have not read that chapter in recent months would be advantaged in doing so now, in connection with this article. There the evidence is conclusively shown that our Lord's return is "manifestly the hope of the Church and the world."

## THE GLORIOUS HOPE RESTORED

Once the truth concerning the object of our Lord's Second Advent was regained by the Church, the old fervency of desire for its speedy accomplishment was restored. St. John's plea, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," well expressed the sentiment which again prevailed, and the old spirit of inquiry as to *how* and *when* was revived. Much searching of the Scriptures ensued, and light was granted on various matters. The whole story of those thrilling days cannot be told here. Those who would learn it, or those who would refresh their memory concerning it, are referred to Brother Russell's luminous expositions in the six volumes of *Scripture Studies* and the *Reprints*. Here we must content ourselves with noting three outstanding convictions resulting from those Bible studies.



One of these was the realization that our Lord is no longer a man; that while he had been put to death flesh (a flesh being) he had been raised spirit (a spirit being), and it was therefore not as a man but as a spirit being, a spirit being, moreover, of the highest order, the divine, that we should look for him (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17; Heb. 9:28; Phil. 2:9; 1 Tim. 6:16). A natural corollary to this thought was that he would be invisible to our physical eyes, since as human beings we could not look on a spirit being except by a miracle.

Another conviction reached was in regard to the sign which would acquaint the watchers of the Lord's presence. Whatever that sign should prove to be they became convinced that its signification would be twofold: it would indicate both that the Lord had returned and that the consummation of the Age had been reached. In other words, they were not to look for one sign or series of signs to indicate the Lord's presence and another sign or series of signs to tell them that the end of the Age had been reached, but that the two events (or, as they later came to understand them, the two eras) would synchronize, and one sign or series of signs announce them both. If, therefore, they should recognize a sign or signs that the Lord was present, they might understand also that the end of the Age had been reached, and conversely, and most important to notice here, if they should become aware of signs pointing unmistakably to the fact that the end of the Age had been reached, they might know also that the Lord was present.

A third conviction, closely related to the other two above mentioned, was that there were already signs sufficient to satisfy them that these two long-looked-for events (eras) had arrived -- the consummation of the Age had been reached, and they were living in the days of the second presence of the Son of Man. True to these convictions the *Watch Tower* carried as its subtitle:

### **HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE**

As time went on and studies progressed, the thought did not seem unreasonable that the Scriptures might contain sufficient data to enable the watchers to determine when our invisible Lord would shine forth in such a way that *every* eye would see him -- they also which pierced him. They knew, too, that when *that* event should occur their own pilgrimage here must of necessity be ended, for when Christ who is our life shall be *thus* manifested, then shall we also be manifested with him in glory (Col. 3:4). Such a reflection could not but add to, rather than detract from the zest with which this line of study was pursued. All are aware that the conclusions reached pointed to 1914 as the year in which the glorification of the Church might be reasonably expected. All are aware, too, that this expectation was not realized. To quote from Brother Russell: "Our thought was purely an inference, and now [Sept. 1916] we see that it was an unjustified one" (*Reprints Vol. 7*, page R5950). Since that time various further attempts have been made to determine the date of the glorification of the Church, but all have thus far proved futile.

### **CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE**

Naturally this continual failure has been disappointing to many, and some, unable to understand why their expectations have failed to eventuate, have begun to question if they may not have erred also in their former conclusions as to the return of the Lord. In view of this it has more than once been suggested to us that if a candid review of the subject were presented in these pages, it could not fail to be of interest and profit to our readers. Acting in accordance with this suggestion, we have, from time to time, reexamined the evidences which have hitherto seemed to us to point to our Lord's presence and to the consummation of the Age.

We did so in 1936, in 1948, and again in 1961. Today, in view of the fact that our list of *Herald* subscribers includes so many new readers who do not have access to those back numbers of our journal; in view, also, of the timeliness of the subject; in view, too, of the increasing light which unfolding events shed upon our pathway, it has been urged that yet another review be undertaken at this time. This we propose to do now. We trust to make such review in the spirit of discipleship -- the spirit of a learner not that of a master -- and while presenting our own conclusions, to do so in a, spirit of loving consideration of the views of any who may differ with us, and whose fellowship we would cultivate rather than mar. Let us then unite our prayers to this end. Then surely it shall come to pass that, whether or not we shall see eye to eye at the conclusion of our study, none of us will be without the blessed realization that our study was characterized by the spirit of love, without which though we have all knowledge, on this as on any subject, we shall be as nothing.

### **DOES CHRIST COME BEFORE OR AFTER MILLENNIUM?**

The importance of a doctrine may be judged to some extent by the proportionate space and prominence given to it in the New Testament. Measured by this standard, the theme of Christ's coming is second only to the Atonement, in the claim which it makes upon our consideration.

Would that such a theme might be divested of all controversial aspects! But here, as everywhere, there are schools of interpretation between which one finds himself obliged, whether he will or not, to choose. Premillennial or Postmillennial advent -- Christ's coming before the Millennium or after the Millennium -- is the issue which divides two great parties of Biblical students.

With only kindly thoughts for those who differ with us, we humbly, but nevertheless firmly, hold with the first school on this question. To our understanding the Scriptures present clear and convincing testimony that Christ comes not after but before the Millennium, that he comes to introduce that glorious Age.

### **HAS ANTICHRIST COME OR IS HE YET TO APPEAR?**

Premillenarians, again, are divided into two schools, the Futurist and the Historical; the former of whom holds that Antichrist is yet to appear and that the greater part of the prophecies in the Book of Revelation awaits fulfillment; the latter maintains, with the Reformers and the expositors of the early post-reformation era, as well as outstanding preachers of more recent times, including our own dear Brother Russell, that Antichrist has already come in the bloody and blasphemous system of the Papacy, and that the visions of the Apocalypse have been continuously meeting fulfillment from the time of our Lord's ascension to the present day.

Here, again, we hold in very high esteem many of those who take the Futurist viewpoint, and freely concede their right to hold and express their views. If we cannot share them, but on the contrary express our firm adherence to the Historical interpretation, it is only because we believe the latter is more Scriptural and rests upon the more obvious and simple interpretation of the Word; and also because we find that it has such verifications in fulfilled history and chronology as to compel even some of its strongest opponents to admit that it is a true interpretation -- although they do not think it the complete and final one.

*(Continued in next issue)*

- P. L. Read

## Life's Empty Victories

The following article was written, just prior to his death, by a regular contributor to a secular newspaper, namely "The Minneapolis Tribune" (December 19, 1932). It is commended to the thoughtful consideration of our readers as full of heavenly counsel.

AS A MAN grows older, yet has not reached extreme old age, when, presumably, all his past is mellowed and softened in the pleasant, tranquil light of sunset and both mistakes and right acts are equally overspread by the thought that nothing has mattered much, since the whole thing will be soon over; when he arrives at the stage in life's journey where he reviews the past, not alone for the gentle pleasure of reminiscence, but also to seek guidance for his remaining future, and while he still imagines that it is possible for him to mold his character into the secret ideal which he has all along vainly struggled to perfect, there comes, at least to the man of the average temperament, in this pause of review, this moment of rest before he completes his destiny, the thought of how much happier, and better and altogether pleasanter his life might have been had he avoided as he might easily have done, certain complications and conflicts which, at the time, seemed to him mightily important.

When they occurred, he was absolutely certain that the triumph of his opinion was a matter of tremendous consequence; it was essential that he should override the opposition and impress upon his opponent the pre-eminent truth and right of his position; and so he went at him, hard and strong, and in the heat of the controversy, which ripened into a feud and perhaps ended in the permanent estrangement of one who might once have been counted a friend, he said or did things which were hard and bitter, and better left unsaid or undone.

Perhaps he gained his point; beat down his antagonist and sent him, humbled and mortified, from the contest, to nurse his grievance ever after, and nourish to the end of his days a smouldering hate of the man who got the better of him; or worse, to cherish the feeling that he had been hardly used.

Strange it should be that, in his later years, the outcome does not seem to have been of very great consequence. What remains permanently is the memory of the incident, and a regret that it should have occurred.

Looking back, he realizes the exact moment when he might have refrained from pressing his man to the limit, have perhaps sufficiently satisfied his self-respect and vindicated the justness of his contention without sacrificing a possible friend. Probably it would puzzle him now to state exactly what it was all about then, this famous victory, but he remembers it was a great fight and he was in it and he is sorry.

Not sorry that he stood up stoutly in defense of his positive convictions; no man ever regrets that, but sorry that he should have esteemed it necessary to go to such lengths in pursuit of his ends that it put reconciliation and ultimate restoration of friendship beyond the bounds of the possible. He remembers these incidents with a vague discomfort. No matter which of the two was in the wrong, he holds himself responsible for the outcome.

Did he convince the other of his error? Scarcely. "He that complies against his will is of his own opinion still." Did the encounter seriously contribute to the upbuilding of his own character? Hardly, unless it was desirable to encourage in himself the love of fighting for the fight's sake. His later calm and deliberate conviction is that it was not worth while, and he grudges the vitality

and energy he put into it, which might well have been conserved to later, more mature and far better use.

The thing the man remembers at this particular point in his life with the most satisfaction is not such a fruitless contest, but rather the time when, by conceding a point, by some exercise of forbearance in pressing an advantage, he made a friend of his opponent, although they differed irreconcilably. Touching these other encounters, which at the moment it seemed so necessary to win, but which in the end were so barren of real gain, he says, somewhat sorely, "Let them be forgotten and forgiven."

He recalls with secret gratification not his paltry and vainglorious victories, but his flabby and perhaps sentimental concessions: the small foolish, kindly things that he did, rare enough, he admits, but fruitful in pleasing memories. For, after all, we are men tarred with the same stick; more or less good, bad or indifferent, as the case may be, yet all capable of doing something kind for each other. He draws from his past the lesson of tolerance, for the future that is left to him, and resolves, perhaps vainly, but at least, for the moment, sincerely, that henceforth, while he may never falter in defense of a principle, he will try hard to so moderate his attacks upon the other man as to leave no sting past healing.

The assets he counts up with the most satisfaction are the friends he finds about him. What they may expect of him is the animus of his future. He will endeavor to be true to them and to his own convictions, but he will avoid the useless multiplication of enemies. This is his hope, as he takes stock of what lies before him.

Perhaps the writer could offer no suggestion to his readers, touching the form which good resolves, customary at this season of the year, should take, that would be better for ourselves and for the world we live in, than that we will lead kindlier lives; that we will be less sure and less harsh in our judgments; that we will refrain as far as in us lies from giving the other man "a piece of our minds;" that we will leave room for him to be convinced of his error, if he be wrong and we right, not through the might of our pounding, but rather through the gradual change in his own convictions; that we will finally try to, proceed on the way that we esteem the right and only one with less friction, believing that which is true and right will prevail anyhow, and the surer and swifter if it be not enforced by contention.

In a word, to resolve to make friends, not at the sacrifice of conviction or principle, but by conceding to others the simple right of learning the truth in their own time and in their own way, helped perhaps by our, of course, pre-eminently wise suggestion and example, if truly they be such, but at least not hindered by our overemphatic dictum.

## Notes on Chronology

TO THE day of his death (October 31, 1916) Pastor Russell believed and taught that October 1914 marked the close of the Times of the Gentiles, and that the period of our Lord's second advent began forty years before. However, as he himself stated, "There is enough uncertainty about the matter of chronology to make it a matter of faith rather than of positive knowledge" (*Reprints, R5336*).

Because of this measure of uncertainty, when, in 1912, he listed various items of his faith, and unqualifiedly affirmed them, in some instances challenging statements to the contrary as unscriptural, he was careful to state his belief as to the date of our Lord's return in much more guarded phrase: "We do not affirm, dogmatically, that he came in 1874, but we say that to us it is the evident teaching of the Scriptures" (*Reprints R4956*).

Would that some of his overzealous followers could learn from his wise and faithful example here! Moreover, in the Foreword to S. S., Vol. II, written October 1, 1916, still more light was beginning to break through, as his keen, spiritual mind pondered the unfolding scene: "We could not, of course, know in 1889, whether the date 1914, so clearly marked in the Bible as the end of the Gentile lease of power or permission to rule the world, would mean that they would be fully out of power at that time, or whether, their lease expiring, their eviction would begin. The latter we perceive to be the Lord's program; and promptly in August 1914, the Gentile kingdoms referred to in the prophecy began the present great struggle, which, according to the Bible, will culminate in the complete overthrow of all human government, opening the way for the full establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son. "

Subsequent to writing *The Time Is at Hand*, the author was led to see that the harvest of the Gospel Age extended beyond forty years and that there is no way of determining its exact length. Under the caption, "Our Mistake Respecting the Harvest," he wrote (September 1, 1916): "We imagined that the harvest work of gathering the Church would be accomplished before the end of the Gentile Times; but nothing in the Bible so said. Our thought was purely an inference, and now we see that it was an unjustified one" (*Reprints R5950*).

## 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 2, 1979, at 11:00 a.m. in West Suffield, Connecticut, 145 N. Grand Street.

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, Timothy Thomassen and Earl R. Villman have also been nominated.

## **The Glorious Prospect**

What a glorious prospect the new dispensation will present when fully inaugurated! The changes from one dispensation to another in the past have been marked and prominent, but this change will be the most eventful of all.

Now wonder that the thought of such a spectacle -- of a whole race returning to God with songs of praise and everlasting joy upon their heads -- should seem almost too good to believe; but he who has promised is able also to perform all his good pleasure. Though sorrow and sighing seem almost inseparable from our being, yet sorrow and sighing shall flee away; though weeping in sackcloth and ashes has endured throughout the long night of the dominion of sin and death, yet joy awaits the Millennial morning, and all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and beauty shall be given for ashes, and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness.

- C. T. Russell.

## **Entered Into Rest**

Doris Gayton, England  
Florence Gowgiel, Chicago, Ill.  
Janet Guy, England  
Margaret Hamilton, Valparaiso, Ind.  
Sis. I. Hills, England  
Raymond G. Jolly, Chester Springs, Pa.  
Edith Lardent, England  
Maria Moore, England  
Ada Morris, Morro Bay, Cal.  
Stanley Novak, Clearwater, Fla.  
Alice Powell, Seymour, Wis.  
Gladys Sreeves, England  
Florence Weyhe, Arlington, Mass.  
Kathryn Zdeb, Abrams, Wis.