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The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard

"But many shall be last that are first; and first that are last." "So the last shall be first, and the first last." - Matt. 19:30; 20:16, Am. R. V.

THIS PARABLE is confessedly one of the most difficult of the New Testament Scriptures. Here are men hired, some at six o'clock in the morning, some at nine o'clock, some at noon; some at three o'clock in the afternoon, some even at five; and yet at six o'clock, when they come to be paid off, they all receive the same wage. Instinctively we feel that that is not fair; we feel that those who had borne the burden and heat of the day should have been better paid than those who entered the vineyard -only in the cool of the evening. As we read this parable we instinctively sympathize, do we not, with those who had borne the heat and burden of the day. It puzzles us as it puzzled them, to know why those who had worked only a single hour in the cool of the evening, should be put on a level with the weary men who had labored through the oppressive heat of the day, and had borne the brunt of the toil. It ought to puzzle us; for next to the quality of love there is nothing in us that is more evidently of God than that deep sense of justice which resents whatever is unfair and inequitable.

Nor is the wrong done to-our sense of justice at all mended, when, to vindicate his conduct, "the goodman of the house" begins to talk of his right to do' what he will with his own, and to declare that it is his will and pleasure to put the last on an equality with, or even before, the first. Indeed, to conceive of God as saying, "May I not do as I will with Mine own?" or "Simply because it pleases Me to do so, I will give unto these last even as unto the first?" -- such a conception of Him is but a new shock to our sense of justice, to our faith in the equity of His rule. Like Abraham of old, we believe that the God of all the earth cannot but do right. We have been taught to conceive of Him as actuated by love, not by caprice; as rewarding our service according to a law divinely just, and not according to the uncertain impulses of an arbitrary self-will; and we are at a loss to know how to attribute such conduct, or defense of His conduct, to the God whom we believe to be absolutely just and full of grace.

There are some people, doubtless, who are not perplexed by the householder's conduct, and his defense of it. Those who find a key to the inequalities of life and providence, in what they are pleased; to call "Divine Sovereignty," those who believe that of His own will God has elected a

few to be saved and doomed the great majority of our race to be eternally tormented, and who believe that He is as truly glorified in the damnation of the many as in the salvation of the few—such, of course, find no difficulty in this parable. A penny more or less means nothing to them. But **we** who believe that God loves all men, and that Christ died for all men, and not merely for the few—we cannot hear this naked assertion of the Divine Sovereignty without perplexity and amazement. We believe not only in God's sovereign power, but in the fact that that power never has nor can be exercised except in accordance with justice and love. To hear **Him** say, "I shall do as I will with Mine own" or "I shall bestow the rewards of My grace as I please," cuts our deepest convictions against the grain. "**He** cannot be less just than we are," we say, "He must be far more just; and therefore there must be a meaning in the words which we have not yet fathomed, a meaning which, when once we find' it, will be seen to be in harmony with our loftiest conceptions of His character." We fully believe that there is such a meaning, and it will be our endeavor in this article so to bring it out as to solve the difficulties which this parable presents.

Two Erroneous Solutions

Two very ingenious, but, to our understanding, erroneous, solutions of these difficulties are worth a moment's attention. The main difficulty of the parable is, of course, the apparent injustice of giving all the laborers the same wage. And to escape this difficulty some of our ablest expositors have assumed, that either those who were first called grew slack and careless, or the last called displayed so extraordinary a diligence that in one hour they did as much as those who had been in the vineyard all day; just, for example, as St. Paul, though the last called of the Apostles, labored more abundantly than they all.

To this interpretation, however, there is one fatal objection. If all the laborers had done an equal stroke of work, how is it that the lord of the vineyard fails to urge so obvious and so complete a vindication of his conduct? Evidently what 'he does say is said in an endeavor to justify himself. When, therefore, his justice was called in question, why did not "the goodman of the house" meet his impugners with the unanswerable reply "Although you were first in the vineyard you have done no more work than those who came last; and as these have done as much as you, it is but fair that they should receive as much." Instead of taking this tone, however, he falls back on his contract with them, and on his power to do as he liked with his own. His very defense implies that the last called had not done as much as the first called, although he chose to give them as much.

Another ingenious interpretation turns on the various kinds and values of the Roman denarius, translated in our Authorized Version, "penny. There were the brass, the silver, and the gold denarius; the double, the treble, the fourfold. -- And the solution is offered that just as in the Kingdom there will be one reward, namely eternal life, and yet this one reward be capable of enjoyment on various planes of being -- the Divine plane, a lower spirit plane, the human plane -- so in the parable each received a denarius, a penny, but the pennies were of different kinds and values.

But the objection fatal to the previous interpretation is also fatal to this. True and beautiful as the thought is in itself, we have no hint of it in the parable. We have hints that point in an opposite direction. If the wage, though nominally the same were really different, why did not "the goodman" bid the complaining laborers look at their penny, mark that theirs was a gold penny, while that of those taken on at midday was a silver penny, and that of those called late in the afternoon was but a brass penny? With so complete and unanswerable a defense at his command it is simply inconceivable that he should have fallen back on his contract, and his right to do what he would with his own.

We must admit, then, that there was at least an apparent injustice in his dealings. We must admit that those who were really first were put on a level with the last, and that those who were really last were put on a level with the first. We must admit that those who had done most work received no higher wage than those who had done least. In fine, we must admit the inequality of treatment, and learn, if we can, how it is to be explained and justified.

The Rich Young Man Whom Jesus Loved

To understand this parable it must be studied, like all Scripture, with reference to its context. And to do this in the present instance it is necessary to go back to the previous chapter. There we find the circumstances which moved our Lord to utter this parable. Commencing with verse 16 of chapter 19 we read the story of the rich young man whom Jesus loved. A young ruler-rich, learned, and of dignified position, yet modest, humble, sincere, had come to Jesus with every gesture of courtesy and deference, to ask Him how he-might win eternal life. Despite the temptation of luxury, he is pure; despite the temptations of wealth: and reputation he is humble, modest, dissatisfied with his present attainments, eagerly stretching forth to things before. The Lord Jesus bade him, if he would enter life, keep the commandments. This demand the ruler was able to say that he had met. He had kept the commandments.

And Jesus, looking on him, and seeing, we suppose, that on the whole he had been as good as his word, loved him. But the young ruler, emboldened by the grace and love of Christ, reveals the secret ambition of his heart. Mark how pure and lofty that ambition is. He is not content with mere life, even though it be life eternal; he longs to be perfect, perfect in all his relations with God and man. Not content with mere salvation he asks counsel of perfection. And our Lord gives him what he asks. So high and pure an ambition as his can be attained only at the cost of utter self-sacrifice. "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor." It was a difficult demand to make on a young, wealthy, learned man; and all the more difficult because it was sudden and unexpected. For, in all probability, the ruler anticipated nothing more than that he should receive a new and more austere rule of life; that he would be urged to a profounder study of the Law, or a more rigid attendance on the duties of religion. To Bear that he must voluntarily become poor and homeless, that he must part with all he prized and loved, to follow One who had not where to lay His head, must have taken him by surprise. For the moment, the test is too severe. Amiable, modest, with a heart set on the eternal realities, the young man, cursed with great possessions, cannot, all at once, give them up. In his surprise and consternation he finds himself unable to meet the rigorous demand. He goes away sorrowful.

The Master's Gracious Spirit

But if he was sorrowful as he went away, can we suppose that Jesus, who loved him, was not sorrowful to see him go? -- that He did not yearn over him, and pity him, and long to bring him back? We may be sure that He did. For, see, the young ruler, smitten with shame and grief, has no excuse to offer for himself; but Jesus begins to make excuse for him. Turning to His disciples He tells them, lest they should judge the ruler harshly, how hard it is for rich men to enter the Kingdom. It is easier for a loaded camel to push through the Needle-gate, than for a man burdened with wealth to enter the Kingdom of heaven.

Now if Peter and his brethren had been in sympathy with their Master, if they had shared His loving, gracious spirit, what would they have done on., hearing Him speak so tenderly of the young man who had just gone away? Would they not-above and before all would not ardent, impulsive Peter, have run after him, and told him how sorry the Good Master was to lose him, and have-' besought him to come back? But instead of manifesting the Master's spirit of love and tenderness, they are thinking only of themselves. "We have left all, and followed Thee;" cries Peter, "what, then, shall we have." And no words could have more conclusively shown his lack of sympathy with his Master. It is easy to conceive how this boast and question must have jarred on the heart of Christ. He was full of pity for the young man who had won His love, and who loved Him, though as yet he could not leave all for Him. And to see that Peter, instead of sharing His

pity, instead of being moved with regret for a man who had had so heavy a trial to meet, was pluming himself on, his superior virtue; to hear him exalting himself over the modest, refined, meditative ruler, who had just gone away sorrowful, with scalding tears of shame at his own weakness -- this, we may be sure was hard for Christ to bear. Christ was mourning that a man of a disposition so lovable, with a heart bent toward the loftiest aims should miss the high mark of perfection; and Peter breaks in on His tender, wistful, reverie with: "Never mind him, Lord; **He** won't come. But **we**, we have left all to follow Thee." We like to think that Peter's words here were not entirely selfish; that in his rough, blundering way, he meant to console Jesus, and to remind him that, if some went away from Him, others were ready to cleave to Him; but his very attempt at consolation must have been a new wound to Christ. For He loved Peter as well as the young ruler, and would be grieved at his boastfulness, and selfishness. Yet with what infinite grace He responds to his selfish demand. There is an infinite grace, but also, we think, a little weariness and conscious patience in the words: "No man hath left all for My sake and the Gospel's but shall receive an hundred-fold, now in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting." But it would not be for Peter's highest good that his selfishness, his lack of sympathy with his Master, his want of pity of the young ruler, should escape without rebuke. And so our Lord follows up His gracious promise with a warning and a parable "No man hath left all for My sake and the Gospel's but shall receive an hundred-fold now, and by and by life everlasting, but many first shall be last, and last first." There is the warning appended to His gracious promise. And then to make the matter plain our Lord proceeds to relate the parable of the laborers in the vineyard: "But many first shall be last and last first, for the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that was a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." Then comes the story of some laborers who, though called into the vineyard at the eleventh hour of the day received an equal wage with those who had been called at the first hour. What did the warning mean but this -- that though Peter and the other disciples had been the first to respond to Christ's call, others might yet be called who would rank before them; that though they were the first they might become the last, and were in danger of becoming the last so long as they could boast of their superior fidelity or show a selfish and unloving spirit?

Many First Shall be Last

In this warning and parable it was as though our Lord had said to Peter: "You and your brethren have indeed left all to follow Me. Have no fear of your reward. You shall receive it to the uttermost farthing. You were amongst the first to enter the vineyard, and you work in it as well as you know how. You have done much and well. You are bearing the burden and heat of the day, and when evening comes, you shall in no wise lose your reward. You shall have a full day's wage. But while you labor in My Father's vineyard and employ your time and talents in His service and Mine, are you thinking only of reward? only of how much you may get by serving Me? Well, you shall have even more than you hope. But there are many not called yet who will come to Me by and by. These may show a nobler spirit. They may serve from love, and not merely because it is part of the contract. And these last-will it not be just that they should be put on a level with you, or even be preferred before you, if you retain your mercenary and servile disposition?"

That this warning, that many first shall be last and last first, is the key with which to unlock the teaching of this parable is, we think, abundantly clear from the fact that after relating the parable, our Lord repeats the warning: "So" says He, "the last shall be first and the first last." We may be sure that in these two sentences, or rather in this one sentence with which the parable both opens and closes, we have its key, or our Lord Jesus would neither have laid it so conveniently to our hands, nor so emphatically called it to our attention.

(To be continued)

- P. L. Read

Thy Will Be Done

My Lord, Thy will not mine be done:
Whatever path Thy love shall choose for me,
Through desert sands, or if beside the sea, --
Thy will be done!

Oh may Thy will in me be done:
Should "harvest" labor be for me
Thy will, Or if I may but suffer and be still, --
Thy will be done!

My Father, let Thy will be done:
If *sweet* the cup Thou pourest for me to drink,
I'll praise Thee, but if *bitter*, I'll not shrink, --
Thy will be done!

Forever may Thy will be done:
I would not choose, I leave it all with Thee, --
The pilgrimage, if short or long it be, --
Thy will be done!

A Legend of Service

"I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." - Isaiah 6:8.

It pleased the Lord of Angels (praise his name!),
To hear one day, report from those who came
With pitying sorrow, or exultant joy,
To tell of earthly tasks in his employ;
For some were sorry when they saw how slow
The streams of heavenly love on earth did flow;
And some were glad because their eyes had seen
Along its banks, fresh flowers and living green.
So, at a certain hour before the throne
The youngest angel, Asmiel, stood alone;
Nor glad, nor sad, but full of earnest thought,
And thus his tidings to the Master brought:
"Lord, in the City Lupon I have found
Three servants of thy holy name renowned
Above their fellows: one is very wise,
With thoughts that ever range above the skies;
And one is gifted with the golden speech
That makes men glad to hear when he will teach;
And one, with no rare gift or grace endued,
Has won the people's love by doing good.
With three such saints Lupon is trebly blessed;
But, Lord, I fain would know which loves thee best."

Then spake the Lord of Angels, to whose look
The hearts of all are like an open book;
"In every soul, the secret thought I read,
And well I know who loves me best indeed,
But every life has pages vacant still
Whereon a man may write the thing he will;
Therefore, I read in silence day by day
And wait for hearts untaught to learn my way.
But thou shalt go to Lupon, to the three
Who serve me there, and take this word from me:
Tell each of them his Master bids him go
Alone to Spiran's huts across the snow;
There he shall find a certain task for me,
But what, I do not tell to them nor thee,
Give thou the message, make my word the test,
And crown for me the one who answers best."

Silent the angel stood with folded hands
To take the imprint of his Lord's commands;
Then drew one breath, obedient and elate,
And passed the selfsame hour through Lupon's gate.
First to the temple door he made his way,
And there, because it was a holy day,
He saw the folk by thousands thronging, stirred
By ardent thirst, to hear the preacher's word.
Then, while the echoes murmured Bernol's name,
Through aisles that hushed behind him, Bernol came;
Strung to the keenest pitch of conscious might,
With lips prepared and firm, and eyes alight,
One moment at the pulpit's steps he knelt
In silent prayer and on his shoulder felt
The angel's hand: "The Master bids thee go
Alone to Spiran's huts across the snow,
To serve him there." Then Bernol's hidden face
Went white as death, and for about the space
Of ten slow heartbeats there was no reply
Till Bernol looked around and whispered, "*Why?*"
But answer to his question came there none.
The angel sighed, and with a sigh was gone.

Within the humble home, where Malvin spent
His studious years, on holy things intent,
Sweet stillness reigned, and there the angel found
The saintly sage immersed in thought profound,
Weaving with patient toil and willing care
A web of wisdom, wonderful and fair;
A beauteous robe for truth's fair bridal meet,
And needing but one thread to be complete.
Then Asmiel touched his hand and broke the thread
Of finespun thought, and very gently said,
"The One of whom thou thinkest bids thee go
Alone to Spiran's huts, across the snow,
To serve him there." With sorrow and surprise
Malvin looked up, reluctance in his eyes.
The broken thread, the strangeness of the call,
The perilous passage through the mountain wall,
The solitary journey and the length
Of way unknown, too great for his frail strength,
Appalled him; with doubtful brow
He scanned the doubtful task, and muttered, "*How?*"
But Asmiel answered, as he turned to go,
With cold disheartened voice, "I do not know."

Now as he went, with fading hope, to seek
The third and last to whom God bade him speak,
Scarce twenty steps away whom should he meet
But Fermor, hurrying cheerfully down the street,
With ready step that faced his work like play,
And joyed to find it greater every day;
Then Asmiel stopped him with uplifted hand,
And gave without delay, his Lord's command:
"Him whom thou servest here, would have thee go
Alone to Spiran's huts across the snow
To serve him there." Ere Asmiel breathed again,
The eager answer leaped to meet him, "*When?*"
The angel's face with inward joy grew bright,
And all his figure glowed with heavenly light;
He took the golden circlet from his brow
And gave the crown to Fermor, answering, "Now,
For thou hast met the Master's hidden test,
And I have found the man who loves him best.
Not thine, nor mine, to question or reply
When he commands, answering, how? or why?
He knows the cause; his ways are wise and just;
Who serves the King must serve with perfect trust!"

Ten Visions of Christ Triumphant

Visions 4 & 5 -- "With Christ in the Heavens"

THE vision of the 8th chapter of Revelation goes back into the doctrinal field. It begins to look at the effect of Jesus' death in the world here and now. It combines two related themes; Divine acceptance of those who take their stand with Christ and dedicate their lives to him in whole-hearted consecration of all their energies and gifts and talents, and Divine judgment upon those who reject and oppose the goodness of God because their hearts are evil and they "will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). Both acceptance and judgment have to be viewed against the wider canvas of God's redemptive plan for all mankind; these relate only to the outworking of that plan so far as this present Age is concerned. There is another, the Messianic, to follow when the position of all who have not become Christ's in the present will be reviewed so that the judgments of this Age are not irrevocable. Revelation 8 is largely a chapter of judgment, judgment upon those of successive generations throughout the Age who have knowingly and consciously opposed Christ. It is not the final judgment because their rejection of Christ is not final. It is a picture of the present Age as respects the attitude men take towards Christ and his Church and the consequences which that attitude brings upon them.

VISION No. 4

"Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne" (Rev. 8:1).

There is only one altar in the symbolic visions of Revelation, standing before the Heavenly Throne in the sight of God, and that altar corresponds to the golden incense altar in the Holy of the Tabernacle and Temple, standing before the veil which shrouded the Most Holy wherein dwelt the Majesty of the Most High. The other altar of the Levitical ritual, the Brazen Altar of sacrifice in the outer court, would be manifestly improper in these visions, for the sacrifice Jesus made when He suffered death on the Cross was over and done with and He is now officiating in the presence of the Father on behalf of his Church. So the angel standing at the altar is Christ in his post-resurrection status, bringing to the Father the offerings of his Church. This does picture, more eloquently than can Leviticus, an essential part of the Levitical ritual. Following the sacrifice of the sin-offering on the Brazen Altar in the Court, it was the duty of the High Priest to take a censer of burning, coals, with incense, into the Holy with him when he carried the blood of the sin-offering to sprinkle on the Mercy-Seat. He could not enter the Most Holy with that blood until he had first offered incense on the Golden Altar in the Holy. With that cloud of "sweet smelling savour" preceding him into the presence of God, he could pass within the Veil and present the blood of the sin-offering in confidence that it would be accepted.

This is a picture of Jesus the Church's High Priest in the doctrinal aspect, officiating in , the presentation of the sin-offering which is the means of removing sin from the world. Here again Hebrews 2 comes in. *"In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17).* That is what the angel is doing here at the altar. The Ransom has been given; the man Christ Jesus has given his life on the Cross and the way is legally clear for all men to return from the grave and stand trial for life. But that of itself does not give them reconciliation to God. There is a long story yet to tell before that blessed outcome can

be proclaimed. And the first step in the programme is the selection of those who, like their Master, are prepared to pour out their own lives unto death in a daily dying, as did He.

The prayers of saints, ascending up as incense before God out of the angel's hand, picture the whole offering of all who during this Age come to God in consecration and give their lives to be buried with Christ by baptism into his death. There is nothing indefinite about this. The members of the Body yield their earthly lives and all their endeavors on behalf of the world's reconciliation to God just as truly as did Jesus. Their offering is accepted by God and ultimately is used by him, in a manner we cannot hope to understand, as a means to the salvation of the world. In some way there is a power generated by those lives of devotion and self-sacrifice, which can have a profound influence on the minds and hearts of men and play some very essential part in the conversion of the hearts of stone to the hearts of flesh (Ezek. 36:26). Jesus, having already offered up the fruits of his own three-and-a-half years of human life to be used in the interests of mankind's reconciliation, now offers up the prospective fruits of all the consecrated lives of all his followers for the same purpose. And the Father accepts the offering. Henceforth it is true that "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Having thus laid down the basis for the ultimate reconciliation of "whosoever will," the angel turns, filling the censer now with fiery coals alone, no more with incense, and casts it into the earth, and the consequence of that action is the progressive sounding of the seven trumpets, each with its tale of judgment upon an unbelieving world.

This casting of the censer into the earth is for judgment. "I am come to send fire on the earth" said Jesus "and what will I, if it be already kindled?" (Luke 12:49). He knew, none better, that many who should have recognized his Messiahship would reject him, and He knew also that nothing now could save judgment coming upon that godless generation-as it did when the Romans destroyed their city and nationhood less than forty years later. This same symbol was presented to the prophet Ezekiel at another time of judgment upon Israel-the Babylonian captivity. He was to go in between the cherubim and take coals of fire therefrom, and scatter them towards the doomed city (Ezek. 10). Jerusalem was destroyed then, and it was destroyed again in the days of Jesus.

That, after all, is what Jesus foretold. "I am not come to bring peace, but a sword." He knew that the message he brought to earth would be rejected by many, and since the hearing of the message brings responsibility, the rejection of the message can bring naught else but judgment. The judgment came first and heavily upon the people who first rejected Christ, the Jewish nation. Hail and fire, mingled with blood, came to the earth, and the Jewish world was destroyed.

So the trumpets sounded, one after another, each one heralding another phase of the judgment as the Age progressed, until at last the seventh angel sounded, and the judgments ended, for the kingdoms of this world had given place to the kingdom of Christ, who will reign throughout that Messianic era when all men shall learn of his righteousness and make their final decision for eternal life. But although it is true that God hath appointed that future day in which He will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31) the fact cannot be ignored that there is a responsibility upon men now to do what in their hearts they know to be right. Every rejection of the wise counsel of God brings corresponding penalty, every persecution of those who do serve God involves retribution. The world today has departed from right principles to a greater extent than ever before in its history, the time of the Flood perhaps excepted; and the world's trouble is greater in consequence than has ever before been known. "A time of trouble" said the angel to Daniel "such as was not since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1). But after judgment comes blessing, an opportunity to learn the lessons pointed by the judgment, and after this, the greatest judgment of all, comes the greatest blessing for mankind. It is then that the fruits of the "prayers of saints" offered to God with the incense of Christ's own sacrificial life will become the means of

leading men in right ways and bringing forth further fruits in turn in their lives to the everlasting glory of God.

VISION NO. 5

A completely different setting is afforded by the presentation of the fifth vision. *"I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven ... and I heard harpers ... and they sang a new song before the throne ... and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth (Rev. 14:1-3).* Mount Zion (Greek form of Hebrew Zion) in Jerusalem was the seat of royalty. The king's palace was on Mount Zion and so poetically it became a symbol of Jerusalem the royal city. "Beautiful for situation the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Ps. 48:2). Hence the Lamb standing on Mount Zion with his redeemed Church around him, and the sound of music and sacred song, speaks of a King and his followers who have overcome the enemy, gained the victory, and are resting in peace and quietude and unchallenged security. This is a state which is enjoyed to a degree by the Church whilst still in the flesh; they are "seated with Christ in the heavenlies" (Eph. 2:6) and so are able to rise above the troubles and anxieties of this world. It is also the state which will be true of the Church at the end of the Age when the Lord gathers to himself his own but before He comes to reveal himself to the world. In a sense therefore this picture of Christ and his Church gathered together on Mount Zion is a link between those earlier visions which depict our Lord's work for his Church from his resurrection and onward through this present Age and the later five visions which depict the varied phases of his revelation to the world in the Messianic Age, when his Church will be with him.

Chapter 14 goes on to speak of things that definitely have their place at various times during the Christian Age, from the proclamation of the everlasting gospel at its beginning to the treading of the winepress at its end. In great measure it parallels the fifth chapter and the breaking of the seals, but whereas the events of chapter 5 are those of the social order, these in chapter 14 are those of the ecclesiastical order. Naturally enough, therefore, the vision of chapter 14 has to do chiefly with those who at least have named the name of Christ, and it is out of such that the members of the "hundred and forty-four thousand" are drawn. Hence the insistence of verse 4 that these on the Mount Zion are *"they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."* In the Epistle to the Hebrews a pointer to this vision is given in chapter 3 vs. 6. *"Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end"* This company on Mount Zion is a house over which Christ is the head; the fact that they stand on Mount Zion is a symbol of their being overcomers, and the whole picture is a foreview of what will come at the end when the Church of Christ has completed its earthly course and has been translated to the heavens and united for all eternity to the Head.

But this 14th chapter has a present application which is very real. The Lamb standing on Mount Zion, surrounded by the Church, immediately prior to the message of the everlasting gospel and the doom of Babylon, pictures the commissioning of all consecrated disciples, of whatever period of the Age, to undertake their life's work. To some, especially in the early centuries, it was to go out proclaiming the everlasting gospel. To others, in later times, it was to witness against the falsity of great Babylon and warn the faithful against any kind of alliance with, or sympathy for, the apostate systems of men. Still later it was to proclaim the imminent presence of the Son of Man, returning in spiritual glory to gather his saints to himself, and finally it was to witness to the inevitability of Divine judgment upon a guilty world. These early verses of chapter 14, picturing a radiant and joyful company standing on Mount Zion, the royal mountain of Jerusalem, are

paralleled by the declaration of Hebrews 12:22: *"Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven. "* This is a present achievement and not a future state. We have now come to. Mount Sion and we now stand upon it, secure in the knowledge that our Lord will never fail us, and therefore if we maintain our faith we are surely saved. As the same writer shows so plainly in Hebrews 4:9: *"there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works. "* If we have fully measured up to all our privileges we will have come into the secret place of the Most High and received that God-given peace which in very truth puts us upon the Mount Sion. We can sing the song which none but the redeemed can sing; we have come into a world apart from this present world, a condition of existence in which old things are passed away and all things are become new.

This Mount Sion, then, is the state of perfect peace and confidence into which all of the consecrated should pass when they accept the leadership of Jesus in their hearts and lives. No matter what may be our position in the everyday world, no matter how hard the circumstances or how trying our environment, no matter how near the world, the flesh, and the devil, and how far away those Divine ideals toward which we seek to approach, we can all the time be on Mount Sion singing the new song and rejoicing in the constant spiritual presence of our Lord with each. Even although all this is a matter of the heart and mind it is no less real. It is this standing on Mount Sion in company with each other and the Lamb that is steadily taking us more and more out of accord with the things of this world and bringing us more and more into harmony with the things of the spirit. *"We all, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image."*

Of these five glimpses of Jesus and his work at his First Advent and during this Age on behalf of his Church, surely none is more appealing and soul-inspiring than this one which tells us what is to be the glorious outcome of it all. *'In their mouths was found no guile: for they are without fault. "*That is the intent and purpose of this Christian Age, to develop and perfect a company devoted to God and his purposes, and of whom it will be declared, when that development is completed, that "they are without fault."

Glorious, not only for themselves, but for all the world, for if God can so work upon the hearts of these weak and imperfect creatures to render them without fault before his glorious majesty in the courts of heaven, He can surely do the same with all the sons of men "whomsoever will," in the coming Millennial Day upon the earth. If Jesus can so work on the hearts of these few during the Christian Age, surely He can do the same for others in the next Age. The work of the Good Shepherd with the Church now is an earnest of what He will do with the world later on. The High Priest standing now in the midst of the seven lampstands ministering to his beloved, will come forth with them in the blazing glory of meridian sunlight to extend the blessings of his loving care and shepherd rule to all the nations.

Something of that is what is forth shown in the remaining five visions, all of which picture in vivid symbol the varied factors contained in that sequence of events which together make up what is implied by the fulfillment of his promise "I will come again," the Second Advent.

(To be continued.)

- A. O. Hudson

Be Thou Faithful Unto Death

Faithful when with tears thine eyes are dim,
Faithful when joy's cup o'erflows its brim;
Faithful when God seems to veil His face,
Faithful when He crowns thy work with grace.
Faithful, though thy loved ones turn aside,
Lips that praised thee once, in harshness chide;
Faithful, though success enwreathes thy brow,
Faithful, should the world before thee bow.
Faithful till hath fled life's fleeting breath,
Eager hands lie folded still in death.

"Faithful unto death!" Lord, day by day,
Help me thus to keep the narrow way!
Strengthen me to bear the scorn and shame --
Portion of all those who take Thy name.
"Faithful unto death!" When all is done,
Cross is changed to Crown, the victory won,
Let me hear Thee say, O blessed Lord,
"Child, come enter into thy reward!
Faithful thou hast been, come share with Me
Glory, Honor, Immortality!"

The Reward of the Inheritance

"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?" - Mark 8:36 (NAS).

AMONG the kings of Israel, from Solomon's time onward, perhaps none was as notorious as Ahab, son of Omri. The Scriptures state that "Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him" (1 Kings 16:33).

An indication of Ahab's heart condition is revealed in the twenty first chapter of First Kings. The Revised Standard Version renders verses one through four as follows:

Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. And after this Ahab said to Naboth, 'Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money.' But Naboth said to Ahab, 'The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.' And Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him; ... And he lay down on his 'bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food.

On the surface, Ahab's request seemed to be a reasonable one. His willingness to give Naboth an even better vineyard in exchange or pay him its nominal worth is commendable. After all, one might argue that a subject should be willing to accommodate his king, even if it meant something of a personal sacrifice.

However, there was more at stake than any of this. The vineyard was Naboth's inheritance from his fathers, the hereditary property of his family. It did not therefore belong to Naboth, but to his whole family, past and yet to be born. He was perfectly within his rights in refusing to part with the property. Indeed, he could not do otherwise; neither was any other plot of land a suitable exchange.

Ahab found himself in conflict with ancient custom and the rights of Israelites from times past. As he should have known, it is written in Numbers 36:7: "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers."

It was not any rudeness or disrespect that made Ahab heavy of heart and displeased. Nevertheless, his immature behavior demonstrated a spirit of selfishness that was determined to receive the cherished object. He turned away his face, either to conceal from his attendants his true feelings, or, by assuming an air of sorrow, arouse them to devise some way to accomplish his goal.

Of course, it was Jezebel who achieved this very thing. After upbraiding Ahab for failure to use his royal power, she unmercifully disposed of Naboth by manufacturing false charges against him. As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he arose to take possession of the vineyard.

Ahab's actions did not escape the Divine eyesight, however. The Lord instructed Elijah to inform Ahab that he would be punished. However, his subsequent humble repentance earned for him a postponement of the sentence. But God's judgment eventually came upon Ahab's house as a result of his transgressions.

WELLS WITHOUT WATER

The lust for material wealth and its fleeting pleasures has made fools of many men and lured them to their doom. Earthly possessions can never bring lasting joy to the human soul. The Apostle Paul wrote: "But they who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful covetings, the which sink men into ruin and destruction. For a root of all the vices is the love of money, which some being eager for have been seduced from the faith, and have pierced themselves about with many pangs" (1 Tim. 6:9, 10, Rotherham).

A story is told of a cemetery in England in which stands a grave marker with this inscription: SHE DIED FOR WANT OF THINGS. Alongside that stone is another which reads: HE DIED TRYING TO GIVE THEM TO HER. In a humorous-yet tragic-manner these epitaphs suggest the folly of living and working only for what this world offers. Whenever someone is enamored of earthly allurements that acquiring them becomes his primary goal, he encounters frustration goal, Earthly things simply don't satisfy. Often times, the more a man gets, the more he wants. Many people seem determined not to be content with their lot until it's a lot more. And even then they are not happy.

THE BEST GIFTS

Jesus warned his disciples to beware of greed. He further stated that a man's life did not consist of the abundance of the things which he possessed (Luke 12:15). The only covetousness encouraged by the Bible is that commanded by the Apostle Paul: "Covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. 12:3 1). These are gifts of divine grace, which neither rob others, nor make God the poorer. Rather, their effect is to benefit everyone with whom contact is made.

The follower of the Lord is governed by the law of love which works no ill to his neighbor. "Love is so patient and so kind; Love never boils with jealousy; It never boasts, is never puffed with pride; It does not act with rudeness, or insist upon its rights; It never gets provoked, it never harbors evil thoughts; is never glad when wrong is done, but always glad when truth prevails" (1 Corinthians 13:4-6, Williams).

We would all do well to better attend to the verse of a familiar hymn: "My soul, be on thy guard, ten thousand foes arise. The hosts of sin are pressing hard, to draw thee from the prize."

And what is that prize? The Apostle supplies the answer: ". . . but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14). Therefore, beloved friends, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men [including yourself]; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve" (Col. 3:23, 24, NAS).

Yes, we like Naboth of old, have been begotten to an inheritance. But ours is not of the type and substance of which Naboth's consisted. His was earthy, while ours is incorruptible and undefiled. It is one that will not fade away, reserved in heaven for those who love the Lord supremely and are faithful unto death (1 Peter 1:4).

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). Brethren, let no man or thing deprive us of our inheritance.

- T. Thomassen

Gethsemane

In golden youth, when seems the earth
A summer land of songs and mirth,
And not a shadow lurks in sight,
We do not know it, but there lies,
Serene beneath the evening skies,
A Garden all must sometime see,
Gethsemane!

Somewhere there lies Gethsemane!
With joyous steps we go our ways,
Love lends a halo to the days,
Light sorrows sail like clouds afar,

We laugh and say, "How strong we are!
We hurry on, and hurrying go
Close to the border land of woe,
That waits for you and waits for me;
Gethsemane,
Forever waits Gethsemane!

Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,
Bridged over by our broken dreams,
Behind the misty cape of years,
Close to the great salt-font of tears,
The Garden lies; strive as you may,
You cannot miss it in your way,
All paths that have been or shall be
Pass sometime through Gethsemane.
Gethsemane,
All roads pass through Gethsemane.

All those who journey, soon or late,
Must pass within the Garden's gate,
Must kneel alone in darkness there
And battle with some fierce despair.
God pity those who cannot say,
"Not mine, but thine," who only pray,
"Let this cup pass!" and cannot see
His purpose in Gethsemane.
Gethsemane,
God help us in Gethsemane!

"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).*

TWO brief articles introducing this discussion have already appeared in this journal. (See the January-February and March-April issues.) In both we sought to make it clear that the views expressed in this series, while representing our deep conviction, were not presented in any spirit of dogmatism or strife toward those of our brethren who might hold differing views. On the contrary the right of such to hold and teach the same was freely conceded.

SIGNS AT HIS FIRST ADVENT

We next inquire: What occasioned this question on the part of the disciples? Why did they seek a sign in connection with his return? To us it seems that they recognized a possibility that *he might be present without their knowing it*. This had been the case with many at his first advent -- had been true, even, of themselves, and was still true of the great majority of their own nation, the leaders of which were at the very time plotting his destruction. They themselves had had doubts and fears as to his Messiahship for a long time. In fact, when at length Peter progressed to the point where he was able to confess: "Thou art the Christ [the Messiah], the Son of the Living God," it was not without divine aid. "Flesh and blood," exclaimed our Lord, "hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:16, 17).

At his first advent our Lord gave many signs in evidence of his Messiahship. St. John records seven of them in his Gospel. First, the water turned into wine (John 2:1-11); second, the nobleman's son healed (John 4:46-54); third, the man with infirmity thirty-eight years healed (John 5:1-9); fourth, feeding of the five thousand (John 6:1-14); fifth, walking on the water (6:15-21); sixth, blind man given sight (John 9:1-7); seventh, Lazarus raised from the dead (John 11:1-46). We pause a moment here to consider how eloquently these signs revealed the presence not only of the Man Jesus, but of the Messiah, the Sent of God.

WATER TURNED INTO WINE

In the turning of water into wine may first be seen the change which comes into the heart and life of a believer during this Gospel Age, when, having heard the story of the Savior's love, and realized what a restoration to human life-rights and privileges this means to him, he consecrates all these and gladly yields himself to do the Father's will -- to walk in the footsteps of Jesus even unto the end. What a transformation takes place in that one's life as the Father honors him with the spirit of sonship! Then, too, what gladness of heart such will experience when at the commencement of Messiah's reign the marriage of the Lamb takes place, and we with our Lord partake of that which the fruit of the vine, the wine, typifies -- the Kingdom joys and honors. And what new life will be imparted to this world as it partakes of the rich fruitage of love which the true vine, and its true branches, our Lord Jesus and his faithful Church have borne!

"This beginning of miracles [this first of the signs] did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and *manifested forth* [thereby] his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (John 2:11). Yes, Jesus, Master, Lord, this sign alone convinces us; this sign which caused some to hate thee, which caused some to despise and reject thee, causes us, thy true disciples to exclaim, with heartfelt devotion and joy:

My Lord and my God! It satisfies our heads and rejoices our hearts, as we recognize it, not only as a miracle, but as one worthy of our great Messiah, a sign revealing to us ahead of time, thy glory.

THE LIVING BREAD FROM HEAVEN

And so with the rest of these deeds having significance, these *signs* that were written that we may believe (John 20:30, 31). The healing of the nobleman's son, the cure of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, what were these mighty works but illustrations of the gracious work of restoration which Messiah will undertake in that glad Millennial day? Was it only to appease the hunger of the moment that he caused five thousand to sit down and be fed from five barley loaves and two small fishes? Ah! no, in this as in all of them he displays his glory, he discloses his identity, he shows himself to be the great Messiah, who is the Bread, the Living Bread come down from heaven, and mankind shall yet with joy appropriate the rights to human life which he so graciously surrendered, that they might live forever.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

How sublime the evidence he presents that he is the light of the world. How little need there is to argue *that* point in the presence of the blind man who received his sight. How plainly does this point to the glorious day fast approaching when Messiah will open the eyes not of one blind man but of all; when he will restore the sight of those who are blind not only physically but mentally, yes, and morally too; when he will open the eyes of their understanding, and enlighten their minds with respect to the Father; when he will be their guiding light indeed.

WALKING ON THE WATER

Again, the circumstances in connection with our Lord's walking on the water bear unmistakable testimony to his Messiahship. The disciples were in a boat on the sea. A storm came up, and on account of the strong wind the boat was being tossed about with the waves. Night came on and it grew very dark when in the fourth watch of the night, *just before the dawn*, Jesus came to them, walking on the water. "Ah!" muses John, as from more than forty miracles he selects those seven which, in his judgment, will best serve as signs of Jesus' Messiahship, "I must not leave that one out." And how glad we are that he did not, for is it not a very remarkable picture of the way in which our Lord was to return? Has not the Church been tossed about pretty much all down through the Gospel Age? Is not the darkness growing more intense? Is not the night fast closing in upon us, that dark night when no man can work? (John 9:4). Do not the sea and the waves roar and foam? Are not the restless, turbulent, masses of society dashing up against the firmly entrenched powers that be, and are not men's hearts failing them for fear? (Luke 21:25, 26). And just as to his disciples in the boat Jesus came in a manner quite unexpected, walking on the water, so he was to return and to make his presence known to the Watchers in the end of this Age (Luke 21:26, 27). And is it not a joyous thought to remember that just as the waves subsided and the wind, and they soon reached their haven, so he will subdue all things unto himself shortly, and we, if faithful, shall reign with him a thousand years.

RAISING OF LAZARUS

And, beloved reader, you who have stood in silence by the cold and silent form of one you have loved, and watched the body lowered beneath the sod-have come away with your heart all crushed and broken-is there any significance to you in that mighty work which Jesus wrought when he awakened Lazarus from the sleep of death?

Ah! how eloquently this sign speaks to us. It speaks of that still mightier work the Father wrought when he raised up Jesus from the dead. It points unerringly to the time now near, when Messiah, the Living One, the One who was dead, and who is now alive forevermore, shall speak with authority, and all that are in the graves shall come forth, and they that hear and obey his precepts shall live (John 5:28, 29).

Examination of these signs discloses the fact that while each had its own particular lesson to impart, they unite in teaching one special lesson, namely, that Jesus is the Messiah. Yet just as many today, even amongst believers, may read of them without seeing their Messianic significance, so when they were being performed many saw the mighty works but saw in them no sign of his Messiahship. Even the disciples had been slow to believe (Luke 24:25). *Would they experience difficulty in recognizing him at his second advent? Some such thoughts as these, it seems to us, must have been uppermost in their minds causing them to put the questions: "What will be the sign of thy presence?"* (Matt. 24:3).

(Continued in next issue)

- P. L. Read

The Word of God

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
True wisdom its pages unfold;
And though we may read them a thousand times o'er
They never, no never, grow old!
Each line hath a pleasure, each promise a pearl,
That all if they will may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away
God's Word shall forever endure.

Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
The lamp that our Father above
So kindly hath lighted to teach us the way
That leads to the arms of His love!
Its warnings, its counsels, are faithful and just;
Its judgments are perfect and pure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away,

God's Word shall forever endure.
Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord!
Our only salvation is there;
It carries conviction down deep in the heart,
And shows us ourselves as we are.
It tells of a Savior, and points to the cross,
Where pardon we now may secure;
And we know that when time and the world pass away
God's Word shall forever endure.

Notes on Chronology

IN the *Watch Tower* for October 1, 1907, under the caption *Knowledge and Faith Regarding Chronology*, Brother Russell wrote as follows:

A dear Brother inquires:

Can we feel absolutely sure that the Chronology set forth in the Dawn Studies is correct -- that the harvest began in A. D. 1874, and will end in A. D. 1914 in a world-wide trouble which will overthrow, all present institutions and be followed by the reign of righteousness of the King of Glory and his bride, the church?

We answer:

(as we have frequently done before in the *Dawns* and *Towers*, and orally and by letter) that we have never claimed our calculations to be infallibly correct; we have never claimed that they were *knowledge*, nor based upon indisputable evidence, facts, knowledge; our claim has always been that they are based on *faith*. We have set forth the evidences as plainly as possible and stated the conclusions of faith we draw from them, and have invited others to accept as much or as little of them as their hearts and heads could endorse. Many have examined these evidences and have accepted them; others equally bright do not endorse them.... We neither urge nor insist upon our views as infallible, nor do we smite or abuse those who disagree; but regard as "brethren" all sanctified believers in the precious blood.

* * * * *

If our chronology is not reliable we have no idea where we are nor when the morning will come.

* * * * *

But let us suppose a case far from our expectations: suppose that A.D. 1915 should pass with the world's affairs all serene and with evidence that the "very elect" had not all been "changed" and without the restoration of natural Israel to favor under the New Covenant (Rom. 11:12, 15). What then? Would that not prove our chronology wrong? Yes, surely! And would not that prove a keen disappointment? Indeed it would! It would work irreparable wreck to

1. the parallel dispensations,
2. and to Israel's double,
3. and to the Jubilee calculations,
4. and to the prophecy of the 2,300 days of Daniel,
5. and to the epoch called "Gentile Times,"
6. and to the 1,260, 1,290 and 1,335 days ...

None of these would be available longer. What a blow that would be! One of the strings of our, "harp" would be quite broken!

However, dear friends, our harp would still have all the other strings in tune and that is what no other aggregation of God's people on earth could boast. We could still worship a God so great and grand that none other could compare with him. We should still see the grandeur of his salvation in

Christ Jesus -- "a ransom for *all*." We should still see the wonders of "the hidden mystery," our fellowship with our Redeemer in "his death" and also "in his resurrection" to "glory, honor and immortality" -- "the divine nature." *Reprints R4067-R4068*

The next month Brother Russell wrote a letter to Brother John T. Read in reply to, a puzzling question Brother John had sent him. Brother Russell's letter was, dated November 30, 1907. After freely admitting his inability to solve the problem to his own satisfaction or to that of his inquirer, he went on to say: "There are indeed, as we have already stated, difficulties in connection with chronology. From whatever standpoint the subject is viewed we meet them. I believe, dear brother, that a thorough investigation of the subject of chronology will be profitable to all of the Lord's people. This I have urged from the first. "

More than seventy years have passed since our beloved brother penned these lines. Today, and for some years now, a number of brethren, both in this country and abroad, have been in correspondence with us, suggesting that questions relating to chronology might profitably be reviewed in these pages.

There is, of course, no good reason why such matters should not be considered in these columns, and since this seems to be desired, we propose, in subsequent issues of this journal, to examine one or another of these points of difficulty. In our discussions it will be assumed that every interested student has already become very familiar with the outline of Chronology presented in Chapter 2 of the second volume of *Scripture Studies*; and, of course, with the remarkable unfolding of the Plan and Purposes of God, as expounded in the first volume of those studies.

- P. L. Read

The Question Box

Revelation 18 - 22

Question:

What is the sequence of events to be expected in connection with the Second Advent of our Lord?

Answer:

When the series of articles captioned "Even at the Doors" is resumed, it is expected that this question will be considered in greater detail. Meantime, perhaps the following paragraphs may suffice.

As the events unfold I shall be able to speak with greater certainty than would become me today. However, I think I can find the answer in the last five chapters of the Book of Revelation.

Beginning with Rev. 18, and continuing to the end of the Book I find a series of 12 distinct visions *narrated in orderly sequence*. If I mistake not, they commence with the times in which we now live, and cover the entire period up to the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, at the close of the Millennial Age. The events thus symbolized are"

1. The fall of Babylon. - Rev. 18.

This, in my judgment, has been in process for years, but is not yet complete.

2. The first resurrection, that is to say, the resurrection of the Church, symbolized as the Marriage of the Lamb. - Rev. 19:6-9.

This too, I think, has been in process for years; my belief being based on the text: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord *from henceforth*." (Rev. 14:13.) It is my conviction that this text began to be fulfilled some years ago. First the dead in Christ were raised, as predicted in 1 Thess. 4:16; then, ever since, the remaining members of the Church, one by one, as they complete their course in death, are blessed by an instantaneous change to perfection as spirit beings. As soon as the Church is complete on the other side the veil, the Marriage will occur.

3. The glorious epiphany of Christ *with* his Church. - Rev. 19:11.

Note: The Church, in my understanding, is to share in her Lord's epiphany. (Col. 3:4.) This, in my judgment, has not yet taken place, nor, indeed, can it, until the last member of the Church has gone beyond the veil and the Marriage has occurred. (That some of the last members of the Church are still in the flesh I firmly believe, with all due respect to those who think otherwise.)

4. The *final* Armageddon conflict and victory. - Rev. 19:17, 21.

Note: -- While there have been some notable conflicts the *final* one, *and the ensuing victory*, is, in my judgment, still future.

Moreover, if I understand the matter correctly, it is in connection with *this* event, that Israel's experience, spoken of by the Prophet as "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), is to occur. Those who are looking for the time of Jacob's trouble to occur before the Church is gone, are looking for the right thing at the wrong time. What is taking place in the Middle East is merely

preparatory; not only will the Church be glorified, but even the Great Company will have completed its earthly experiences, and, while not part of the Bride, will have shared the blessedness of the Marriage Supper (Rev. 19:9), before the time of Jacob's trouble occurs.

Jacob will be saved out of his trouble, by Christ and his Church, operating from the other side the veil, directing the victorious Armageddon conflict.

5. The binding of Satan. - Rev. 20:1-3.

In my view this has not yet occurred. World conditions fully confirm this. One has only to read the headlines, to leaf through a few popular magazines, to listen to the radio, to glance at television, to review the newspaper advertisements of theatres and motion picture houses, to realize this. Evident it is that, far from being bound, Satan is still going about like a roaring lion; still operating as an angel of light. Evident it is that far from hearing the calm, strong voice of Jesus speaking, in tones of *kingly authority*: "Peace, be still," we hear only the expression of men's hearts failing them for fear, looking after those things that are coming on the earth. Moreover, when we turn from the advertisements of theatres and motion picture houses to the advertisements of the "Church" page, or leaf through religious magazines, it becomes increasingly apparent that the powers of the (ecclesiastical) heavens are being shaken. - Luke, 21:26.

6. The Millennial reign of Christ and his Church. - Rev. 20:4-6.

7. The loosing of Satan for a little season, at the end of the Millennium. - Rev. 20:7, 8.

8. The Post-millennial apostasy, and the judgment on it. - Rev. 20:9.

9. The destruction of Satan. - Rev. 20:10.

10. The judgment of the dead, small and great. - Rev. 20:12, 13.

11. The destruction of the last enemy, death, with all that the word destruction implies. - Rev. 20:14.

12. The eternal Kingdom of God. - Rev. 21; Rev. 22:5.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be. " - 2 Peter 3:11.

- P. L. Read

Sorrow

Count each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's Messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive Him; rise and bow;
And, ere His shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first His heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before Him all thou hast; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow
Or mar thy hospitality, no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
Thy soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate,
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

Entered Into Rest

Florentine A. Bloss, Jefferson City, Mo.
Sis. D. Heap, England
Lucyna Kobiela, Chicago, Ill.
Dora M. Marquand, Wales
Chrissie Petrie, Scotland
Charles F. Schwede, Wausau, Wis.
Stanley Stanek, South Haven, Mich.
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Francis Wysocki, Springfield, Mass.