

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. LXVI July / August, 1983 No. 4

Things Coming to Pass

"For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." "And none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." - Luke 21:35; Daniel 12:10; Luke 21:31.

FROM time to time, under this article heading, we have considered some aspect of current world events in its relation to that most important of all events, the establishment of God's Kingdom. The Biblical evidences for its proximity have been examined from many viewpoints, but there is still another "sign," and one often overlooked, which we now desire to consider, and that is the "sign" of *unawareness*. To emphasize this we have grouped the Scripture texts above, which, while removed from their context, are nevertheless in complete harmony in testifying to a paradox of paradoxes. For the world's ignorance of the "day of their visitation" is paradoxical, inasmuch as "these things are not being done in a corner." For how is it possible for men witnessing the significant events of history's greatest crisis to be so astonishingly unaware of their true implication - that the Kingdom of God is near, "even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33)? Have not millions of Bibles circulated the earth, each witnessing clearly and explicitly to the signs of the times? What is the cause of the mental blindness which has come upon the present generation -- a blindness unperceived in the face of intellectual attainments that are the marvel of our day?

"DARKNESS COVERS THE EARTH: GROSS DARKNESS THE PEOPLE"

It is becoming evident to thinking men that the roots of the present world distress have their beginnings in deeper soil than is generally recognized. We are witnessing the breakdown of a civilization based on a materialistic liberalism that had its inception in the dissolution of the medieval culture of the feudal civilization which ushered in two great movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation. Both these movements, allied in some respects, and diametrically opposed in others, contributed jointly to the freedom and individualism of modern civilization. Both represented great advances; the one in social, political, and economic reforms which culminated eventually in the industrial revolution of the past century, and the other in a freedom from the fetters of religious authority and the corruptions of religious superstition. Both begat

great hopes and promises. Both brought great confidence that the "emancipated" mind would disclose the secrets of nature; penetrate into all the ultimate mysteries of life; exploit the buried treasures of the natural world and make them available for man; explore the complexities of human society and eliminate the social maladjustments that ignorance had perpetuated, and finally free man himself of the sorrows and pains, the frustrations and lusts by which he made himself and his fellows miserable. And in a measure this has come to pass.

But unfortunately in the process of realizing these great dreams, political and economic action was thoroughly secularized and authentic Christian social ideals were neglected. Human dignity, human personality, and human solidarity were forgotten. With the vast material progress there have arisen new problems, and the fabulous productivity of the modern machine has created crises and unemployment rather than security and abundance. The dreams of economic harmony and of individual happiness have been cruelly disappointed. Far- from attaining that individual liberty, the "right" of democratic man, today in large sections of the world man has sunk to the position of a creature of the State, that new juggernaut. Great totalitarian systems have sprung up and humanity finds itself in the midst of an unparalleled worldwide conflict between the forces of freedom and slavery. The injustice, the unhappiness, the brutality so rife, oppress and darken men's minds and they see no way out. In Matthew Arnold's words:

"The world which seems
To lie before us, like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here, as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."

Poor groaning creation! How accurately did our Master predict the mental state of men of our day. "Upon the earth distress of nations in *perplexity* at the roar of the sea and rolling waves, men ready to die through fear and expectation of what is coming on the habitable earth" (Luke 21:26, *Darby*).

Just what has caused society to move toward catastrophe rather than triumph? Why have not the enormous achievements of man during the past century resulted in a stable and beneficent order for his welfare? Why the present disillusionment and shattering of hopes?

"Individual profit, which in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provided the motive force for the economic system, has failed us, and we have not yet discovered any moral substitute for it other than war. Nothing but war seems sufficiently worthwhile. The economic crisis is in essence a moral crisis. It cannot be explained - and much less solved - in constitutional or even in economic terms. The fundamental issue is moral."

Thus wrote pessimistic Professor Carr, in "Conditions of Peace:" And here we have a partial answer to our question. Who cannot recognize a great decadence in moral and ethical values throughout the earth? What has become of the absolute distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, of the sanctity of agreements, of the sacredness of one's word? What promise can be trusted, what firm agreement can ever be made again, in a world where millions have been educated to believe that if it seems in their interest to violate it, no pact or pledge, however solemnly drawn up, need be regarded by "realistic" minds, or "cold statesmanship," as more than a "scrap

of paper"? And what of the imperatives of conscience, that God within the breast? "Conscience," said Hitler, "is a Jewish invention."

**"CURSED BE THE MAN . . . WHOSE
HEART DEPARTETH FROM THE LORD."**

Alas, in his emphasis on material prosperity, man has gradually lost those fundamental values which make for morality and true freedom, and which constitute the individual superior to his own creations. This central value of Christianity, the value of the individual, has been corrupted in modern political thought to demand a subordination of the individual to the State (or indeed to any organization or society of which he is a member), the implications of which tragic fallacy are but now being realized by thinking men. Thoreau uttered a profound truth when he said: "There will never be a really free and enlightened State until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived."

This has well been called the lost key to the whole problem of modern government. We are all witnesses to the enslavement of hundreds of millions under the tyranny of totalitarian powers. Never in human history has the individual counted for *so* little, and never has human life been so cheap. The attempt to comprehend the sum total of human suffering leaves the mind numb with horror. Thank God for the assurance that under the beneficent rule of Christ's Kingdom man shall regain his original state, a creature in the likeness of his God. For God shall

"Give back the upward looking and the light,
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes."

Thus speaks the Lord:

"Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. *I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir*" (Isa. 13:13, 11, 12).

But what has happened to the world's spiritual guides? Are there not thousands of church edifices, with tens of thousands dedicated to preaching Him whom these buildings monumentalize? Are there not countless multitudes of church adherents and millions upon millions of Bibles? What is lacking?

Hear the words of Jawaharlal Nehru: "The old days were days of faith, blind unquestioning faith. The wonderful temples and mosques and cathedrals of past centuries could never have been built but for the overpowering faith of the architects and builders and people generally. The very stones that they reverently put one on top of the other, or carved into beautiful designs, tell us of this faith. The old temple spire, the mosque with its slender minarets, the Gothic cathedral -- all of them pointing upward with an amazing intensity of devotion, as if offering a prayer in stone or marble to the sky above -- thrill us even now, though we may be lacking in that faith of old of which they are the embodiments. But the days of that faith are gone, and gone with them is that magic touch in stone. Thousands of temples and mosques and cathedrals continue to be built, but they lack the spirit that made them live during the middle ages. There is little difference between them and the commercial offices which are so representative of our age. Our age is a different

one; it is an age of disillusion, of doubt and uncertainty and questioning. We can no longer accept many of the ancient beliefs and customs; we have no more faith in them, in Asia, or in Europe, or in America. So we search for new ways, new aspects of truth more in harmony with our environment. And we question each other and debate and quarrel and evolve any number of 'isms' and philosophies. As in the days of Socrates, we live in an age of questioning, but that questioning is not confined to a city like Athens; it is world-wide."

In this candid statement we have the full explanation for the present unawareness of the implication of world events. The world has lost its sense of spiritual values -- has lost its faith in revealed religion. A spirit of irreligiousness has spread abroad. Men have become lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. We live in a generation which can refer contemptuously to the Bible as a "collection of Hebrew myths," and stigmatize religion as an "opiate for the inferior-minded" - a time when a prominent man of letters can write a friend that "Rabelais was nearer God than Christ," and a famous writer can say that no man who regards Christ as an ideal is worth working with. This is the day of the cynic; of the pseudo-intellectual, of the spirit of shallow cynicism and of mockery which has destroyed in large measure the old simplicity and integrity based upon the great Christian principles of the Word of God. Yes, a generation which questions the existence of its God. One is reminded of Milton's lines so applicable to our day:

"Truth shall retire
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of Faith
Rarely be found. So shall the World go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign,
Under her own weight groaning, till the day
Appear of respiration to the just
And vengeance to the wicked."

Yes, the world has reached a condition of disbelief that augurs ill for the immediate future, and though we still hear of "Christian principles," it is too often in circumstances which, as ex-President Hoover has said, make the very phrase sound like a "Gargantuan joke."

**"A FAMINE IN THE LAND ...
NOT FOR BREAD,
BUT FOR THE WORD OF THE LORD."**

But what of the spiritual guides of "Christendom"? Have they no message from the Word for questioning humanity? Men seek a positive answer, a definite "thus saith the Lord." Alas, though thousands of sermons are preached weekly, seldom is the voice of assurance and enlightenment heard. Instead only echoes of doubt and perplexity, of struggles to find one's bearings, of pious moralism, of psychological therapeutics - truly "stones for bread"; man seeking strength from within himself.

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr has well written:

"Some of the most stubborn and sentimental illusions about the possibilities of a simple and easy peace between the competing elements in human society have been fostered by modern churches. In America they contributed more possibly than any other influence to political and moral illusions, for they aggravated false estimates of man and history by compounding them with classical and pious conceptions. The errors and illusions of our culture, which have made an estimate of the crisis of our civilization difficult if not impossible, are, almost without exception,

various versions of a single error. *They are all expressions of too great an optimism about the goodness of human nature;* they all therefore underestimate the difficulties of relating life to life, will to will, interest to interest, in a harmonious social life. They regard the achievement of justice and social peace in human society as a comparatively easy task. It is, as a matter of fact, a very difficult task, which can be accomplished with tolerable success only if its difficulties are fully recognized."

This fact concerning the weakness of human nature is a fundamental teaching of the Bible, and is the basis for the Divine Plan of regeneration through the Kingdom of Christ. Other salvation there is none. The hope for man resides in the promised Millennial reign upon earth, "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). This is the message of God to all men. Why is it not proclaimed from every pulpit?

The answer to this question goes back to two great scientific theories. The first was the theory of Copernicus which destroyed the old comfortable assumption that the earth was the center of things, and dwarfed man by the mere size of the material universe. The other was the Darwinian theory, which subjected his inner world to an even more disintegrating scrutiny, and filled mankind with doubts as to the values of human personality and the nature of its origin. The advancing flow of scientific thought, true or otherwise, plus the wave of Higher Criticism which originated in Germany and flowed out to all the ecclesiastical schools, resulted in the gradual breakdown of faith in the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God. The great foundation truths were slowly obscured, with the tragic result that people are now blind to the Bible's message revealing the stupendous significance of present momentous events. It is rare indeed today to find in some one a living faith in the Bible as God's revealed Word. True, there is still regard for the moral precepts of the Scriptures, but the vital substance has been lost. Men do not seek from the Bible the answers to their questions. Men do not bring God into their counsels. And so, as of old, to our day the Word of the Lord speaks:

"Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid" (Isa. 29:13, 14).

The Church Nominal gropes blindly on, all unwitting that the hopes of true Christians are soon to materialize. Though professing faith in the First Advent of Christ, the evidences for His Second Advent are disallowed, though there are ten times as many Scriptures for the latter as there were for the former. The glorious words of the 96th, 97th, 98th and 99th Psalms evoke no responsive chords. There stands One at the door and they know not. Christ's own judgment is recorded in Revelation 3:15, 16: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The Church Nominal now brings forth no message for the times from the Lord. The voice of the Bridegroom and Bride is heard no more in her. There remains but blindness and barrenness. "Her prophets also find no vision from the Lord." "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Lam. 2:9; Prov. 29:18).

Yes, "as a snare" are these things coming on all mankind. Only the wise of God understand and rejoice in the evidence of the proximity of God's Kingdom. The world continues on into ever-increasing darkness, unheeding the few who point to the sure Word of Prophecy, until that glad

day soon when upon the wreck of man's institutions, the human race, illuminated by the spirit of God, shall rebuild an earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"And while the earth with strife is riven,
And envious factions Truth do hide,
Lo! He, the Lord of earth and heaven,
Stands at the door and claims his Bride.

"He's come! Let all the earth adore him;
The path his human nature trod
Spreads to a royal realm before him,
The Life of Life, the Word of God!"

- *W. J. Siekman*

"Count It All Joy" - -How?

"The proving of your faith worketh steadfastness." - James 1:3 Am. R. V., Margin.

IN THIS meditation we propose to consider the first four verses of the Epistle of James. In our Authorized Version these verses read: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, Greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Let us next notice the word translated "greeting." "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, *Greeting.*"

The literal meaning of the Greek word is "Joy to you." When a Hebrew met another Hebrew, the one saluted the other with "*Peace* to you"; for they had learned that the real blessedness of life was to be at peace-at peace with God, at peace with their neighbors, at peace in their hearts. But when Greek met Greek, the one saluted the other with "*Joy* to you," the Greeks being lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of peace. Of course, when they used this salutation they did not always recognize its full meaning, any more than we, when we say, "Goodbye" always remember that the word means, that it is a contraction of, "God be with you." But St. James both compels his readers to think of its meaning, by continuing: "Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold trials," and at once proceeds to put a higher, a Christian, meaning into the heathen salutation. *His* joy the joy *he* wishes them, is not that pleasant exhilaration which results from gratified senses or tastes of which the Greeks were conscious when things went as they wished. It was rather the "peace" for which the Hebrew sighed; but that peace intensified into a divine gladness; elevated into a pure and sacred delight. It was the joy which springs from being restored to our true relations to God and to our fellowman, from having all the conflicting passions, powers and aims of the heart drawn into a happy accord. A peace penetrated through and through with the exhilarating sense of gladness-this was the "joy" which St. James wished for and invoked upon his readers.

JOY IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS

To any one other than the brethren in Christ Jesus (to Jews who were not Christians, for example) St. James, in wishing them joy, might seem to be mocking them; for their outward lot was quite miserable. It was full of pain, adversity- and shame. The Christian faith was not yet formally persecuted by the Roman government; indeed, it had not been long enough in the Roman Empire to attract the attention of the authorities, nor had it as yet touched the general population. But, as we all know, private hostility precedes public persecution, and is often harder - to bear. And there was that in the position of foreign Jews who had accepted Jesus as the Christ which would inevitably involve them in manifold trials and temptations. Their Jewish neighbors had listened to the same teaching with themselves, examined the same credentials, and they had deliberately rejected the Man of Nazareth. They would, therefore, regard their brethren who accepted Jesus as base and impious apostates. Not content with casting them out of the synagogue with stripes, they would refuse all private intercourse with them. They would prejudice the minds of the Gentiles against them; and the Gentiles would be only too apt to conceive a prejudice against men whose pure lives were a standing rebuke to their vices and pleasures. The Jews themselves were eyed with suspicion and were the first to suffer when the mob of a Roman city took the law into its own hands. But *these* Jews, whom the Jews themselves loathed and denounced, would be held as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things.

We may be sure, then, that the life of the Christian Jews was made hard and bitter to them by the enmity of their fellow-countrymen, and by the growing suspicion and animosity of the foreign races among whom they sojourned. "Joy" would seem to have forsaken them. To meet them with a "joy to you" greeting, would sound like a joke or an insult, as, indeed it would have been, had this joy been simply the result of happy, outward conditions. But their joy did not flow from the mere surface of life. It bubbled up from the deep, underlying strata and still ran on whatever changes vexed the surface. It was the joy of happy, *spiritual* conditions, the joy which springs from a knowledge of sins forgiven, of a full consecration to God, and the assurance that all things are overruled by Him, and overruled for good.

TEMPTATIONS-TRIALS-TESTS

Our temptations may not be the same as those experienced by the brethren to whom St. James wrote, but whatever form they may take, the Apostle's exhortation applies equally to us: "Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold temptations."

In the margin of the Revised Version an alternative rendering of the word "temptations" is "trials," the thought of the Greek being that of testing. But whether the word means temptation in the ordinary sense of inducement to evil, or means a test in the sense of being made subject to an examination to demonstrate the strength or weakness of one's character, in either case the question may well be asked: "How is it possible to rejoice therein?" To this question we would reply: It is not possible. We can rejoice in neither temptations nor tests, but there is something else associated with them, something which results from them, which enables the Christian to rejoice because of them. The Hellenistic Jewish Christians could not rejoice in their temptations or trials, but there was joy for them in connection therewith, if they could but learn the secret of extracting that joy, from their experiences.

Before we note the secret for ourselves, let us first examine both words, temptations and tests, and realize thoroughly that there is no joy to be had in either, if we were to experience temptations or tests, or even if we were to experience temptations and tests, only.

First, then, let us consider the word "temptations." If we were to experience temptations only, opportunities and inducements to sin, we might meet them, indeed, with firmness and courage, as being among the inevitable evils incident to the moral disorder of the world and our own imperfection, but to find any joy in them would be impossible. To an upright and truthful man the bare suggestion, however, it may come to him, that he should act dishonestly, or tell a lie, is an insult and an injury. A kindly, generous, man is conscious of a sharp pain if the mere thought of committing an act of cruelty enters his mind and finds a momentary lodgment there. To a pure man a temptation to sensual sin taints the air; it inspires loathing and disgust; when it has passed away, it leaves something like a stain upon his memory, although he made no movement in response to it, but repelled it, and recoiled from it as soon as it approached. Mere temptations can never be a reason for joy, even if we invariably overcome them, any more than an epidemic of smallpox or typhoid though we escape infection.

Nor can tests, if they are tests and nothing more, give us any great reason for thanksgiving and delight. It is a satisfaction, perhaps, to learn that we are strong, but the strain upon our strength is not at all pleasant; not only so, but too often the tests discover weakness in us instead of strength, and certainly there is no joy in that discovery. But while there would be no joy in temptations even if we overcame them all, instead of being frequently overcome by them; and while there would be no joy if they were not temptations but merely trials or tests, even if each test proved us

strong, instead of, as often happens, discovering an unsuspected weakness, the Apostle's exhortation stands nevertheless: "Count it all joy when ye fall into manifold temptations or tests." If this is possible, then there must be something associated with the temptations or tests which we have thus far failed to notice, for there can be no joy in the temptation or trial itself.

There is something. What is that something? It is this: The tests which come to a Christian not only take his measure, not only indicate his strength or weakness, but, and, here is why he can rejoice in them, they accomplish, if rightly received, his strengthening. An iron railway bridge is no stronger after its strength has been measured by running a dozen heavy trains over it than it was before. An airplane is no better after a "Test-pilot" has pronounced it satisfactory than before he tested it. Not so with the tests applied to Christians. According to St. James the trials which test our faith strengthen it; the temptations which assault our integrity confirm it. If we master the temptation, we do not merely escape the sin to which we were tempted; we obtain a positive increase of righteousness. As we used to sing in childhood days:

"Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you, some other to win."

If we bear the strain which the trial brings upon our strength, we are the stronger for it. "Knowing this," says the Apostle, "that the trying, or proving, of your faith worketh patience, or endurance," the proof of our faith results in a firm and steadfast constancy. It is because of this that we can rejoice when we are tempted or tried.

PERFECT AND ENTIRE, LACKING IN NOTHING

But not only is the proving of our faith to result in steadfast constancy; we are to allow this patience to "have its perfect work that we may be perfect and entire lacking nothing," or "lacking in nothing." (James 1:4.) -- The word here rendered perfect is elsewhere taken to denote manliness or maturity. - For example, in 1 Cor. 14:20, where the Apostle writes: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; -howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men," the word translated "men" is the same word as is translated "perfect" in the verse from St. James. And again, in Heb. 5:14, where the Apostle writes that "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age," the word translated "'full age" is the same word here translated "perfect." The meaning of St. James is, therefore, clear. If we endure the full trial with a patient fidelity, we become mature men in Christ Jesus, we become complete men, lacking nothing that a Christ-man should have and enjoy in his character.

And what higher reward could possibly be set before a reasonable and religious being? What we want, what we know that we want, most of all, is to have our character fully and happily developed; its various and often hostile affections and aims absorbed and harmonized by having them all brought under law to Christ. To become such men as He was, and to walk also -- even as He walked, -- is not *this* the chief end of all who call and profess themselves Christians? Is not this our chief good, our highest blessedness?

But in order for us to develop this well-rounded, complete, Christian character; we must not only experience temptations or *trials-they must be manifold*. The more varied are the moral difficulties of life, the more complete is the discipline. The strain must come upon one muscle after another if there is to be a perfect, a mature, development of moral vigor-if, as St. James puts it, we are to be lacking in nothing. The courage which is unmoved by one form of danger may be daunted by another. The patience which submits without murmur to familiar suffering, may be changed by a new sorrow into angry resentment. The Christian love which has kept its sweetness through many

cruel experiences may, at last, become suddenly embittered by some fresh outrage. If it is to reach the maturity which beareth all things, and endureth - all things, it must show to those - who are guilty of the last offense the same gentleness and forbearance that it had shown to all who had wronged it before.

And how shall we be made complete except by manifold- trials borne with good fidelity? How are boys changed into men mature' enough to face and use *this* world? By being kept at home, guarded from all strain, all temptation, all hardness-no wind suffered to visit their cheek too roughly? Or by being sent out to face all-weathers, even the worst; to mix with men of all kinds, even the worst; to withstand all temptations, even the worst? As boys are made men, so are the sons of God made complete men-in Christ. The Church has milksops enough and to spare! It would have nothing else were' it not for the fact that God, knowing the value that manifold trials will have for us, graciously permits them to reach us, in order that, by faithfully and patiently meeting them, we may be trained in the image and for the service of that Son of Man who Himself, was made perfect, as a High Priest, by the things He suffered. Let us then, ask for the wisdom and grace to "count it all joy" when we are compassed about with manifold trials, knowing that the proving of our faith worketh patience, and that if we let patience have her perfect work in us, not hurrying to escape from the trials by which our fidelity is tested and trained, we ourselves shall grow into mature and entire men in Christ Jesus, lacking in nothing. Praise God for this glorious high calling held out to us now, -- in this life, as well as for the glorious hope of ultimate perfection on that glad day, when, if faithful here, we shall awake in His likeness.

- P. L. Read.

That I May Win Christ

"Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ." - Philippians 3:8.

WE NOTE that this is a letter written by Paul long years after he had found Christ as a Savior. He had *found* Christ, but he had not yet *won* him. In this letter he is revealing the great objective underlying all of his reactions in the service and fellowship of Jesus. To many, Christ is made a means to an end, but to Paul, Christ was the end to be gained, and all phases of the Christian life were looked upon as means to that end. Overtake Paul where we will in all the long years of his after life, and we will always find him reaching forward to this attainment. Let us observe that he is not revealing that his thought is focused primarily on gaining a place in the Kingdom, attaining a crown, etc., but that "I may win Christ."

In all undertakings, even in temporal things, so much depends on a proper beginning. Any one starting out in a business life without some definite plan of action will be almost certain to make a failure of the attempt. Our Lord teaches that this is sure to be true of any one attempting to live the Christian life. The cost is to be carefully considered, and the goal clearly understood.

It is worth while noting the two questions asked by Saul when he met Jesus:

Question No. 1: "Who art thou, Lord?" This question was never fully answered to Paul. Throughout his whole life he was asking that same question. Oh, "That I might know him and the power of his resurrection." Like the Psalmist, who was so eager to know God that he too could say, "As the hart panteth for the water brook, so panteth my soul for thee, O God." What a blessed thirst after a knowledge of God. Jesus' definition of eternal life was "Knowing God."

Question No. 2: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the answer to that question was not forthcoming in a day, nor in a year. Paul discovered a further and greater answer to that question the longer he lived. His longing to know God, and his fervent desire to learn more and more of what the Lord would have him do, made Paul the outstanding example to us that he is. Progress in the Christian life is an utter impossibility to us, too, unless we are constantly asking these same questions.

The difficulty with most of us is that we "came into the truth" all too suddenly. We go back to some date in the past when we first caught sight of some of the outlines of truth, and there "we came into the truth." Ask Paul after his years in Arabia, perhaps fourteen, "Paul, when did you come into the truth?" Ask him the same question ten years later, twenty or thirty years later, and fancy him smiling at us and saying, "When did I come into the truth? Why, my dear brother, I am only *just coming into the truth* as yet." True, he came very quickly to a knowledge of the fundamentals of the truth, the doctrines constituting the faith once delivered; but this was not the end of progress. It was merely the beginning. To obtain a full knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord, was to Paul, too great a matter to be fully grasped at once. He liked to write about "unsearchable riches" and of "love surpassing all understanding," and to urge all to seek "all the fulness of God."

Very early in the new life he grasped the fact that sin was the one great problem -- the effective barrier to fellowship with the Lord -- and that as a foundation of all progress, knowledge, and

fellowship, the question of sin must be given the needed attention. Paul did not offer many excuses for sin, but he constantly emphasized its sinfulness, and he insisted on holiness as the standard of the Christian. In his ministry to the Church he preached the facts of a full deliverance from sin through faith in Christ. To the ungodly his ministry was by no means calculated to "strengthen the hands of the wicked by promising him life." Felix trembled, when Paul reasoned "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment." He was able to say after years of preaching, "I am free from the blood of all men"; "I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God."

Very early in the new life he grasped the fact that sin was the one great problem -the effective barrier to fellowship with the Lord -- and that as a foundation of all progress, knowledge, and fellowship, the question of sin must be given the needed attention. Paul did not offer man excuses for sin, but he constant emphasized its sinfulness, ant he insisted on holiness as the standard of the Christian. In his ministry to the Church he preached the facts of a full deliverance from sin through faith in Christ. To the ungodly his ministry was by no means calculated to "strengthen the hands of the wicked by promising him life." Felix trembled, when Paul reasoned "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment." He was able to say after years of preaching, "I am free from the blood of all men"; "I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.'

The point is just this: We must have proper views of sin and God's attitude toward it, and understand his remedy for it, if we are to enjoy a real, intimate fellowship with, and *win* Christ. Paul made a sharp distinction between being in contact with Christ and being "in Christ."

Many of us have fallen into the habit of using some important texts in a rather superficial way. For example: "For me to live is Christ." The meaning, some would say is "to live for Christ"; "that I might win Christ" -- "win a place in the Body of Christ." This was not the meaning Paul placed on these statements. He meant exactly what he said. The thought of many is really limited to "contact" with Christ. Paul's objective was nothing short of "union" with Christ, and not merely contact with him.

The difference between contact and union may be illustrated thus:

Place an indissoluble substance in a glass of water, and you can have all the contact possible, but no union. Place in that same water some dissoluble substance, and at once you will have perfect union. That is what Paul meant in the above and other similar texts. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This thought should be clear enough to us. We have little difficulty with the words of Jesus when he teaches the same union with the Father. He declared that none of his words and works were his own, but those of the Father, who dwelt in him. As Jesus could say, "The Father liveth in me," so Paul desired so to be in Christ and Christ in him that he could say, "Not I, but Christ." And what will all this lead to in Christian experience? It will lead to the sweetest and most intimate fellowship with Christ.

Let us look on another picture provided in the Word of Inspiration for us: The Book of Canticles depicts two lovers vying with each other in expressions of adoration and love. Love, consuming love, has a language all its own, a language of the heart. Our Lord is here brought before us as a Lover. "He is seen as manifesting his love to those who appreciate it and to whom it is more precious than all else." By the use of this love story we want to raise our voice once more in a plea for greater emphasis on the devotional life of the Christian.

The Song of Songs, as another has said, is a book for the heart. . . . The inspired title of the book, *The Song of Songs*, indicates its surpassing excellence.... No subject could be greater or sweeter than the love of Christ, and those responsive movements which it awakens in the hearts of those

who know it. To have the personal enjoyment of the love of Christ transcends all other joys This song delineates in a figurative way the affections that are in the heart of Christ towards his own, and the affections which have place in their hearts towards him."

We fear there is more emphasis put upon the head knowledge and far too little upon the heart devotion to the person of Christ.

THE SECRET OF THE STAIRS

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs." (Song of Solomon 2:14.) It is the espoused bride that speaks. We have learned many important secrets, the mystery hid from ages, etc. Have we learned the secret of the stairs? Stairs represent a means of rising from lower to higher levels. If we went into the Empire building or any skyscraper structure and desired to go to the top, we could ascend by the stairs. We would not find one continuous flight of stairs leading to the top. Perhaps ten or twelve steps, then a landing, and so on to the top. Those landings would represent the different attainments of professing Christians. Many have climbed only a few flights and have reached their heaven. They have contact. Others may climb a little higher and learn a little more "about Christ." Others who entered the high-calling lost sight of everything but Christ himself. Not until they have reached the top by the last flight of stairs revealed to their devoted eyes will they rest content.

And is there really any secret about these stairs? There must be, for we observe that when one talks about some of the higher possibilities of the Christian life, many are disposed to consider he is merely indulging in some flights of fancy. There is more than one saint who has been "caught away" into blessed visions of Christ, and in that heaven has heard things that cannot be uttered. There are some very vital features of Christian experience which must remain matters of personal experience. They cannot be written in a book for others to read, nor spoken audibly for others to hear. These thrills are to be found in the secret of the stairs.

This, beloved friends, is the life that is lost *in Christ*. He is "the chiefest among ten thousand." "Yea, he is altogether lovely."

- J. J. Blackburn.

This Generation Shall Not Pass

"This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." - Matt. 24:34.

MANY attacks have been made by Atheists, Freethinkers, and Higher Critics upon the bona-fides of our Lord as a teacher sent from God on account of his words in verse 34. Looking at the long category of events foretold in this Olivet conversation, and not noting with sufficient carefulness what proportion of these forecasts were included in the scope of "all these things" they have claimed that Jesus' words were falsified by events. This is a serious charge to lay against One who said *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."*

They have included all the signs and portents connected with his Second Advent in the scope of "these things". Manifestly that is a wrong thing to do. The "All these things" of Matt. 24:34, must be governed and defined by the meaning of the same words, from the same lips, as recorded in Matt. 23:36. "All these things" refer only to the crimes perpetrated upon the Prophets by the fathers, and to the "filling up of the Cup" by that generation as it slew the Stephens, and the James and Peters and Pauls, who came in Jesus' Name; and the retribution that came from *"All these things"* could fall only on that people, and only while they were unrepentant concerning their crimes. Jesus spoke of many things associated with his return which lay outside the scope of "all these things". It will not be forgotten that Jesus was answering three questions, not one. It would therefore be most improper to place all his words in reply to the one question "When shall these things be?" Even the sign of the budding fig-tree -- the return of Jewish favour -- should not be included; for that indicates punishment ending and restoration begun.

Again, signs applying to peoples other than the Jew should not be included, for they were not the children of those ancient fathers who had slain God's prophets. Further, the particular signs applicable to the Christian Church, in Matt. 24:42-51, must obviously be omitted from "all these things".

However, when we have cleared the ground of our enquiry from all these mistakes and misunderstandings, there yet remains one other point to be cleared up, and set in order. That point has to do with the word "fulfilled" in Matt. 24:34. It is generally understood that this word should have the same meaning as the words "accomplished" or "completed". But the word used by our Lord does not mean "come to pass" in the sense of being ended; but "come to pass" in the sense of beginning to happen, or beginning to take place.

One Greek scholar and writer says on this word: "The Lord concludes this special prophecy of the tribulation adding, *"Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things begin to take place'."* He then explains that the Greek word *Genetai* used by our Lord here is a derivative of the Greek *Ginomai*, which has a wide variety of meanings, few of which are so definite as the thought in our word "fulfilled". He further says "The word *genetai* from *ginomai* means 'to begin to be'; 'to come to be'; and is quite different from *pleroo* which does mean 'to fulfil'." In Luke 21:32 which is the parallel passage, we have the former word "begin to be", while in verse 24, we have the latter word "fulfilled" [referring to the Times of the Gentiles]. Professors Young and Strong, in their concordances verify this suggestion regarding *ginomai*. Young shows it to be translated "be" -- (the verb "to be") 249 times; "come to pass" 82 times, and many other forms which show a present and not a past fulfillment. Strong says *ginomai* (to cause to be; "to become") -- is used with great latitude. He then gives a list of words which include "arise" "be assembled"; "be" "be brought to pass", "continue" and many more indicative of a present happening. As an instance we may note a form of *genetai* in John 13:2, which in our Authorized

Version is translated "and supper being ended". It is quite clear from Matthew 24:26-28, that supper was not ended but was only just beginning. The Revised Version renders it "and during supper"; the Diaglott translates it "as supper was preparing".

What the Lord really said was "This generation shall not pass till 'all these things' *'begin to happen'*." And they did begin to happen to that very generation! As if to show that this is the correct thought the Lord throws in a very illuminating phrase when He said "THE END is not yet" -- "these are the BEGINNING of sorrows".

This throws a new light on this baffling passage. The cup of Divine retribution was placed to the lips of that generation, and they drank deeply of its bitter draught, but that generation did not empty the cup. The great tribulation only BEGAN in their days. The overthrow of their city and nation was only the beginning of those special curses incorporated in the terms of their national 'Covenant. Warning the fathers of the penalties which the forsaking of their Covenant would entail (Deut. 28:15-68) he told them God would pluck them out of their land and curse them in field and home, and cast them into the wide places of the earth. Nowhere, not even in the Papal catalogue of cursings, are such terrible words to be found; and in their infliction there is nothing so terrible to be found in the records of history. That it had a portion of its fulfillment in the siege of Jerusalem is certain when we read Deut. 28:49-57; and that the nation from far is the Roman nation seems to admit of no doubt whatever. Then Deut. 28:64 says "*The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth to the other*". Jesus said, "*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations*" (Luke 21:24).

Evidently then, while the sack of Jerusalem saw the beginning of their "great tribulation", yet, terrible as it was, it was only the beginning of sorrows and not the end. It was to continue till they should repent and be prepared to say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord". Our Lord calls it "the tribulation of those days". "Those days" span an Age-the period that lies between Jerusalem's destruction, and that happier day when God pours upon them the spirit of supplication, when every family shall weep apart. (Zech. 10:12).

When therefore the Lord said "*this generation shall not pass till all these things begin to come to pass*", his words were not intended to cover all the signs and portents associated with his *Parousia*, but had reference only to the retributive measures due to be inflicted upon that rebellious nation, and to have their beginning with that then present generation.

- *Bible Study Monthly*, Eng.

Keep Thy Heart With All Diligence

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." - Mark 12:30.

THE secret of the Christian's strength consists in his having given up his own will -- the will of his own flesh -- and having taken instead of it the will of Christ. His danger consists of the endeavor of his flesh to override the decision of his new will. The flesh covertly insists that this and that and the other things are not wrong, because they are natural. It insists that its rights should be conserved; it even sometimes insists that the new creature would commit a crime in mortifying the flesh, with its affections and desires. - Col. 3:5; Gal. 5:24.

As the Christian advances in spiritual development, in control of the flesh, in the appreciation of the mind of Christ, he certainly does, in one sense of the word, become "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might" -- the power of the Holy Spirit. He becomes more gentle, more meek, more patient, more brotherly-kind, more loving. He is thus developing the fruits and growing in the graces of the Holy Spirit and in character likeness to the Master and Pattern. But his dangers are not over; for he finds the Adversary and the flesh ready to attack him along new lines-totally different from those of the attacks when he first gave his heart to the Lord.

These later attacks are along the lines of love -- the very climax of spiritual attainment. As a new creature, he desires that his love shall be pure, holy, spiritual. He desires that his love for the brethren shall be along the same lines as is his love for the Father and for the Son and for the holy angels. But as he attempts to adjust this love to present conditions, his holy and pure intentions and ambitions and desires are assailed by the flesh.

The admission into our lives of a close, absorbing fellowship in the flesh, however pure the intention, would be a disadvantage to the new creature in another way. Not only would it imply his failure to rightly appreciate the Lord and fellowship with him, but it would imply a failure to rightly appreciate the fellowship of the entire body of Christ, which is the church.

The spirit of Christ is too broad to permit the centering of our sympathy and interest upon one individual, except that individual be the Lord himself. As for others -- the body of Christ, the church -- our interest should be in all of them, not merely in the rich, but in the poor; not merely in the wise and noble, but in the less wise and ignoble; not merely in the educated, but also in the ignorant and stupid. Our interest must not be in the flesh, but in them as new creatures in Christ. And those who have the greatest handicap as respects earthly teaching and weaknesses of the flesh are the ones deserving of our earthly sympathies and affections, as they strive to fight the good fight and overcome their blemishes.

We exhort, therefore, that we as the Lord's people set our affections more and more upon the things above, and not on the things of the earth, that we may be transformed, that we may thus prove what is the good and acceptable will of God -- that his will may be done in us perfectly. His will is not unreasonable. He remembers our frame -- that it is but dust. He desires our will to be that our consecration shall be to him, that it shall not be along lines of the flesh, but of the Spirit, and not merely toward one individual, or little clique of the church, but toward all who have named the name of Christ and who have set their faces heavenward as soldiers of the cross marching toward the antitypical Mount Zion and the general assembly of the church of the firstborn. - Psalm 103:14; Romans 8:4; Hebrews 12:23.

- C. T. Russell

The Shiloh Prophecy

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." - Gen. 49:10.

Our readers are all well aware that the promise of the Seed to "bless all the families of the earth" is the great promise of Scripture; and that the germ seed of all promises is in the statement of God to the serpent in Eden, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Losing sight of the fact that this promise of the Seed runs through all prophetic utterances, either directly or indirectly, and that all God's plans for the children of Adam are based upon that promise of the Seed, we are apt to have the wrong thing in view in interpreting this passage of Genesis 49:8-11. But having this original promise in mind, and also following its development down to the time of Jacob's blessing of his sons, this blessing is then seen to have a relationship to that promise and is a step in its development.

Let us see. Originally the hope set forth was vague and indefinite. Who and what was the seed? When would the seed appear? It was applicable to no one in particular, and might be applicable to many. But as the centuries rolled on, the promise was continually narrowed down as to whom it might apply. After the flood, Noah voiced these words: "Blessed be Jehovah, God of Shem," thus indicating that Jehovah, the covenanting God, was henceforth to be in a special sense the God of Shem. Years later, the choice was further narrowed to Abraham and his seed; then Ishmael is excluded and Isaac designated; Esau set aside, and Jacob chosen. And then, when Jacob was ripe in years and his days were numbered, he "called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days."

We do not know, of course, as to just how much trust these twelve individuals had in the promises of God; yet the subsequent history shows that the promises were greatly respected by some of them, for these promises continued a vital force in their later national existence, a determining factor in many decisions.

Into Jacob's presence came first, Reuben, the eldest of the brothers. Will the promise continue through him? Harken! "Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Thus is Reuben counted out of the chief blessing.

Next, of Simeon and Levi it was said: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united. . . I *will* divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." They, too, are set aside.

Now comes Judah. Will he also be passed by? Not so; for distinctly is Judah pointed out as the tribe that is to furnish the Messiah: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be: Binding His foal unto the vine, and His ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and His teeth white with milk."

If we apply here the principle that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10), we are confronted with such testimony; for the several promises of the 8th verse of Genesis 49, are much more applicable to Jesus Christ than to the literal Judah -- either man or tribe: "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee." This reminds us of the language of Psalm 72. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and His enemies shall lick the dust. . . Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him."

Yet primarily in this is set forth the coming royalty and conquering power of the tribe of Judah. Not yet was Judah so, for "Judah is [now but] a lion's whelp." But in the days of Joshua and during the period of the judges, it was the tribe of Judah which continued to grow, until, at the death of Saul, the prophecy came to a head in Judah being made the royal tribe, and David, king.

What we are particularly interested in, at this time, *is* the 10th verse: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come."

Examining this word "sceptre," we find that it is a translation of the Hebrew word "shebet"; and it is the regular word for "tribe," and is so rendered in the 28th verse of this same chapter: "These are the twelve tribes ["shebet" - Hebrew] of Israel." This being so, and using the English word "tribe" to translate the Hebrew "shebet" of Genesis 49:10, we then read, "The *tribe* shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Obviously, this was intended to be a prophecy and promise of Judah's continuity as a separate and distinct tribe until the advent of Messiah, the Seed. All tribes were to share in the blessings of Abraham, but only Judah's tribal history was promised to continue unbroken until Shiloh should appear. And this was true only of Judah. All other tribes were broken up and removed, or assimilated into Judah; so that, at the time of the First Advent, all Israelites, of what tribe so ever, were commonly designated "Jews." The Apostle Paul, in his writings, on several occasions used this common designation. This prophecy was designed to be an encouragement, and a rallying point, in times when the visible sceptre did pass away. To us, who live 1900 years beyond the coining of Messiah, Christ, this is a fact of history. But remember, as these sons of Jacob gathered *around* their father to be blessed, the Seed that was to bruise the Serpent's head was a very vague personage, who existed only in promise. This prophecy, in the blessing of Judah, was an assurance to all Israel of God's unchanging purpose regarding the sending of the Messiah, and of the fulfilling of the promises to Abraham.

We find much that is of interest and instruction in the comment of the sacred historian as found in 1 Chronicles 5:1, 2, "Now the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel, (for he was the first-born; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's)." According to the custom of the times, which also was later incorporated into the law of Moses, a double portion of the Father's possessions fell to the first-born (see Deut. 21:17); but, Reuben, by his actions toward his father's concubine, forfeited this; and this particular blessing was transferred to Joseph, of whose *two* sons, adopted by Israel (Gen. 48:16, 22), Jacob said, "Let my name be named on them." "Moreover I have given to thee [Joseph] one portion above thy brethren," each son receiving an allotted portion, forming two distinct tribes in Israel. Also the right of dominion fell to the firstborn. This also, of course, was lost to Reuben by his foul deed; and Jacob acknowledged that, when he said of Reuben, "Thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power." All this

Reuben should have been, but, "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Joseph, although receiving the birth right, or double portion, did not receive the superior honor of dominion, as this was conferred upon Judah -- not the man, but the tribe, as we note, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp," etc.

In 1 Chronicles 5:2 -- "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler," the Hebrew word "nagid," translated "chief ruler," refers back to the Shiloh of Genesis 49:10, and might have been translated "prince," and so is marginally. Leeser gives it as "prince." In Daniel 9:25 we read, "Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince," etc. The word translated "prince" is the same word "nagid" rendered "chief ruler" in 1 Chronicles 5:2. Thus we have these names, "Shiloh," "chief ruler," "Messiah," "Prince, all referring to the same individual. Daniel 9:25 is definitely a time prophecy pointing to the first advent of Christ -- to the anointing of Jesus with the Holy Spirit at Jordan, when He became "Messiah the Prince,"

This phrase, "until Shiloh come," has been variously translated. We do not have a Septuagint translation, but one commentator states that the Septuagint renders it, "until He come to whom the rule belongs." If so, this compares favorably with the statement recorded in Ezekiel 21:27, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is." But most translators render Shiloh "peace," "rest"; thus one who brings peace, rest. This quality of peace and rest is in many places ascribed to Christ. In fact, it is one of the outstanding characteristics set forth of the Messiah, as we read in Isaiah 9:6, 7, "And His name shall be called the Prince of Peace." And in this connection we are reminded of the invitation and promise of Jesus as He spoke to those who followed Him, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." - Matt. 11:28, 29.

And that this Shiloh prophecy was pointing forward to the First Advent is *conclusively shown* in the 5th chapter of Revelation. John had wept much because there was no one found worthy, in heaven or in earth, to open and read the scroll which he was seeing held forth in the vision. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not, behold: the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." And John turned, and instead of seeing a Lion he saw "a Lamb as it had been slain." And then a new song was sung; "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." Of no one else is this true but of Jesus, the Christ, Messiah, the Prince -- the Shiloh of Genesis 49:10.

In closing we briefly consider the 11th and 12th verses of Genesis 49, "Binding His foal unto the vine, and His ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and His teeth white with milk" -- a picture of peace and plenty, after the gathering of the people (nations) to Shiloh. "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Yes, in His Kingdom, Christ shall set forth the truth in rich abundance, cleared of all dregs and sediments -- "purified seven times"; for "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." - Isa. 25:6-8.

- F. A. Essler.

Annual Report of Directors

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." - Psalm 107:29.

THE wondrous truth of this text is salient to the Board of Directors in this sixty-fifth annual report of the Institute's ministry. The present tumult of nations, likened to raging seas and boisterous waves, continues its implacable erosion of society's foundations. This frightening aspect would dismay even our hearts (we, perhaps the last generation in the Gospel Age covenant relationship the Lord), except as our faith recognizes the Divine presence with mighty power to speak peace to the distressed world. For, "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with swelling thereof;" yet, "the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." In His due time He shall speak "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." - Psalm 46.

This stupendous prospect, an impending Divine intervention in world affairs, is the obvious essential for mankind's survival. It is imperative and inevitable, for no lesser power can avail. Hear the paean of the Psalmist (Psa. 65:5-8): "O God of our salvation, who *by thy* strength hast established the mountains, being girded with might; who dost still the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples; so that those who dwell at earth's farthest bounds are afraid at thy signs; thou makest the outgoings of the morning and the evening to shout for joy."

We, "who are alive and remain", in an "antechamber" to eternal glory awaiting daily our "departure", can find in our Master's amazing miracles, spiritual lessons for especial personal sustaining comfort in our difficult day.

In one account (Matt. 8:25-27), we find the Master is in a ship, in sound sleep. But not so His disciples for a violent storm has arisen. Hardened seafarers though they were, they realize catastrophe threatens, for "the ship was covered with the waves." Their frantic efforts to survive are unavailing, and in extreme fear they cry out to Him who appears so oblivious to their and His own peril: "Lord, save us: we perish!" What a graphic scene of utter human helplessness! But the Master's astonishing rebuke to the raging elements results in an amazing calm! How wonderful!

"No waters can swallow the ship where lies
The Master of ocean, and earth, and skies:
They all shall sweetly obey His will
"Peace, be still! Peace, be still!"

Then the gentle, always loving, reproof: "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?" Admittedly the disciples terror was justified, but not their incomprehension that His presence with them assured their absolute safety.

Dear Brethren! Are we able to discern His presence in our ship of faith? Do we recall His ability to walk calmly upon the surface of the turbulent sea and draw near with solicitude for His own? What blessed assurance is in His word: "Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Jesus, Savior, pilot Me
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Boist'rous waves obey Thy will
When Thou say' st to them "be still!"
Wondrous Sov'reign of the sea;
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.

When at last I near the shore,
And the fearful breakers roar,
'Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on Thy breast,
May I hear Thee say to me;
'Fear not, I will pilot thee."

Even when we enter deep waters. Alleluia!

INSTITUTE STATISTICS

The details of our past year's activity are necessarily brief. We continue to emphasize the liberty, fellowship, and unity of all consecrated believers in Christ, united in the Christian bond for mutual comfort and assistance, with joy for every privilege of service, be it large or small.

Our *Herald* continues its message of devotional, practical and spiritual articles based only on "wholesome words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness."

The Pilgrim ministry is largely restricted to local and convention services, as well as for funerals. In these capacities all the members of the Director and Editor boards serve as Institute representatives. Visits to shut-ins have become a special privilege. Our serving brethren welcome any of these ministries, as the Lord permits.

We strongly urge the usage of our free booklets for judicious distribution to interested individuals, in person or by mail. "A word in season, how good it is." Let us not underrate this personal privilege of witness.

We receive much correspondence which is treasured for the fellowship thus possible. The gracious words received do diffuse the fragrance of the Lord in our midst. For these we are most grateful. Would that we might find it possible to reply to each letter, and in fuller detail.

The Lord's blessing upon the past year's ministry is prayerfully anticipated for the Institutes future. The Directors trust Him for guidance in the resources, personal and financial, He will make available for ministries according to His will. We ask your prayers added to ours to that end.

Your brethren in the Master's service,
Board of Directors,
J. B. Webster, Chairman

The Annual Meeting

The sixty-third Annual Meeting of the members of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc., was held on Saturday, June 4, at 11:00 a.m. at 145 N. Grand St., West Suffield, Conn.

After the customary devotions, Brother A. Gonczewski was elected chairman of the meeting, and Brother W. J. Siekman, secretary.

Next followed the reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, held June 5, 1982, in West Suffield, Conn.

The annual report of the Directors, for the fiscal year ended April 30, 1983, was then presented. This, including the Treasurer's Financial Statements, is published on pages 62 and 63.

The names of recently deceased members were read next-also names of those brethren who had become members of the Institute during the previous year; after which the meeting proceeded with the election of a new Board. Sister and Brother L. Hindle were appointed to act as tellers. While they were counting the votes, the rest of the friends enjoyed a season of fellowship in praise and testimony. At the conclusion of the count, the names of the following brethren were announced as elected: J. L. Buss, A. Gonczewski, H. C. Hogrebe, L. Petran, W. J. Siekman, E. R. Villman, and J. B. Webster.

A devotional service concluded the meeting.

Following the Annual Meeting, the new Board met. Among other actions taken, they elected officers as follows: J. B. Webster, Chairman; A. Gonczewski, Vice-Chairman; W. J. Siekman, Secretary; H. C. Hogrebe, Treasurer; L. L. Kynion, C. B. Odell, P. J. Pazucha, W. J. Siekman, T. M. Thomassen, Editorial Committee.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1983

(1) Balance Sheet as of April 30, 1983

Assets

Cash on hand		\$22,418.85
U. S. Treasury Bills		58,839.10
Accounts Receivable		106.00
Interest Receivable		394.72
Prepaid Expense		500.00
Inventory of Books, etc.:		
Pocket Edition-Divine Plan	(640)	\$640.00
Miscellaneous Items		<u>98.08</u>
Total Inventory		<u>738.08</u>
Total Assets		\$82,996.75
Liabilities		<u>15.00</u>
Net Worth (as per analysis below)		\$82,981.75

(2) Statement of Income and Expense and Analysis of Net Worth
Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1983

Income

Contributions		\$12,197.27
Herald Subscriptions		3,542.00
Legacies		9,902.10
Interest Earned		<u>6,183.07</u>
Total Income		\$31,824.44

Operating Expense

Pilgrim Expense	\$ 5,598.01	
Herald Expense Including Printing, Mailing and Clerical	16,652.38	
Free literature	455.26	
Administrative and Office Expense	<u>1,317.03</u>	
Total Operating Expense		<u>24,022.68</u>
Net Expense for Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 1983		\$ 7,801.76
Net Worth, May 1, 1982		<u>75,179.99</u>
Net Worth, April 30, 1983 (as per Balance Sheet above)		\$ 82,981.75

Entered Into Rest

Vie Beavan, England
Ruby L. Bjorn, Oven, Wis.
Myrtle Chezum, Bishop, Cal.
Mary Greiner, Port Ewen, N.Y.
Eva Hilderbrandt, Ont., Can.
Jessie L. Jones, Ashland, Va.
Anna Kunz, Summerfield, Ill.
Frank Niemczak, Detroit, Mich.
Mary A. Owens, Chatfield, Minn.
Harley Pelo, Hanoverton, Ohio
Sallie E. Whitaker, Sunset, Tex.
C. Williams, Australia