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An Inheritance by Promise

" And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. "
- Galatians 3:29.

"HEIRS OF GOD, AND JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST" -- Can such an honor be ours? Surely, none of us are to be considered as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ! But, wonder of wonders, God, Himself, has not only promised it, but has also made it more sure to our otherwise unbelieving hearts by confirming it with an oath.

Let us follow the Apostle through the third chapter of Galatians, and find out just how it is possible that we "who were dead in trespasses and sins. " can be owned of God as His children and heirs.

In the Galatian Church there were Jewish disciples who were tending to lapse back again to the observance of some of the ordinances of the Mosaic Law, Particularly the rite of circumcision. (Gal. 5:1,2.) *"This only would I learn of you, " writes Paul, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?" The answer is so palpably plain that it needs no reply. No one received the Spirit under the law dispensation as a result of keeping the law. And these of the early Church were not so far removed from the phenomenon of Pentecost that they were not well aware of that outpouring. So the Apostle propounds another question: "He that ministers to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Again, the answer is evident: Most assuredly it was "by the hearing of faith." "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."*

CONSIDER ABRAHAM

The record is that Abraham was counted righteous without works. He, being old and without offspring, had inquired of God regarding his heir and seed. God had told Abraham to count the stars for multitude; "so shall thy seed be." (Gen 15:1-6.) Impossible as it seemed of fulfillment, Abraham:

"considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:19-22.)

"Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham."

THE QUESTION IS...

In what sense is Abraham the father of those who are of faith? Let us consider:

- God in creating the first parents, created them perfect, with all the faculties perfectly blended so as to enjoy a perfect existence.
- God was under obligation to this first pair, in that having thus created them He must place them in an environment perfectly adapted to their nature and constitutional make-up. God's sense of justice would demand this of Him. And it was so; for "all God's works are perfect." When man sinned and broke this covenant between himself and God, he came under the just penalty of "*dying thou shalt die.*"
- God is no longer obligated to Adam nor to any of his offspring, except to see to it that man shall pay the penalty for disobedience, and not live out his "day." True, God did give an indefinite prophecy that "*the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*" yet there was no definite promise in this - only a vague hope to sustain them in their misery.
- Two thousand years passed. Sin, and death by sin, or as a result of sin (Rom. 5:12; 6:23) reigns in the race. One great civilization has been judged and swept away by the Deluge. A new dispensation has come. Still sin and death are rampant, evidencing the unchangeableness of God's decree, "*dying thou shalt die.*" But now God is ready to take a definite step towards man's salvation, and He "*preached the good news to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*"
- God is not responsible for the sinful, dying condition of the race; and is under no just obligation to do anything for it. But the time has arrived in His plans and purposes when God is to obligate Himself. To the Human Race? No, never. To Abraham? Again, no. Then to what? To Abraham's faith in His (God's) own word.

WHAT IS FAITH?

It is the "*confidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" (Heb. 11:1.) God saw in Abraham a man who could act upon the confidence that God's Word would be fulfilled. So it was that "by faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." (Heb. 11:8.) He obeyed with increasingly growing confidence that what God had spoken would surely be fulfilled. "*Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude.*" (Heb. 11:12.) Abraham trusted in God's promise, and God must fulfill His own promise, for He cannot lie; He cannot deny Himself.

It was a great trial of faith to Abraham to leave his Father's house and kindred; but it was a greater test of faith for him to cast off Ishmael after having considered him as the heir for so many years.

God had confirmed Sarah's request, "Cast off the bondwoman and her son; this shall not be heir with the son of the free woman; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." (The Seed must be of promise.) Yet another test remains, and "God did tempt Abraham and said, Take thy son, thine only Son Isaac," (note that Ishmael is not reckoned in sonship), "whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

DID ABRAHAM HESITATE?

"He rose up early in the morning, saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him."

How Abraham's faith in God's promise shines out in his instructions to his attendants: *"Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you."* It was "by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten of whom it was said That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." - Heb. 11:17-19.

THE SECRET OF OBEDIENCE

Abram, whose name had been changed to Abraham, was not yet the father of many nations. If His seed was to be as "the stars of heaven and as the sand upon the seashore for multitude" and that seed was to be in Isaac, and if in him all nations were to be blessed, God must raise Isaac again from the dead after the sacrifice. Strong was Abraham's confidence in God's promises; and in this supreme confidence that what God had promised He would fulfill, even though events present seemed so contrary to it, "Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." What a Faith! "And the angel of the Lord called out of heaven a second time, ...By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou has done this thing, and has not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed ... and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice."

Here we have the secret. Because Abraham had believed God, had firm confidence in His word, he was enabled to proceed in implicit obedience to that word. And God, who had given the promise to Abraham, was now obligated to fulfill that word -- *"In Isaac shall thy seed be called"* - or else deny Himself, which is impossible.

Bearing in mind that God was under no just obligation to the human race, we see how God has placed Himself under obligation to Abraham's faith in that promise to bless all the families of the earth in his seed. And not only under obligations to Abraham's faith, but through that to all who are of faith. *"So then they which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."*

This blessing could not come by the law. The law demanded that all blessing must be merited; "for it is written, The man that doeth them shall live by them." Failure to keep the law brought a curse; for again "It is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all the things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The blessings of Abraham certainly could not come on any who were under this curse, so *"God set Christ forth to be a propitiatory through faith in His blood"* (Rom. 3:25.) -- made Christ a curse for us *"that the blessing of Abraham might come through Him; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."*

THE BINDING POWER OF GOD'S COVENANT

"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men, though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuleth, or addeth thereto." Even among men this principle is recognized, that where an agreement or contract is recognized, is entered into, and has been sworn to (or as we sometimes say, "signed and sealed") the contract is valid, and its conditions

cannot be modified, either to add to or disannul any of the specifications of the contract. And so it is with God: having made a promise to Abraham and to his seed, and having confirmed it with an oath, God cannot add to this agreement nor take from it. Should He do so, it would make the promise of none effect. This will never be, for God is not changeable. He cannot deny Himself. His promise and His oath both unsolicited, are verities.

"Wherefore then serves the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. "

TWOFOLD PURPOSE OF THE LAW

In Rom. 4:15 we read: "Where no law is, there is no transgression"; and in 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the Law." From the transgression in Eden until the giving of the law by Moses, "sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed [as a transgression] when there is no law." (Rom. 5:12-14.)

We see this paralleled in the forming of our own code of laws in the State. A man does some act which works ill to his neighbor, or that is injurious to the public, but there is found to be no law dealing with his particular case. A law is therefore framed forbidding such an act and carrying with it a penalty for violation.

So with the law given at Sinai; it was added to the Abrahamic promise to give to sin the nature of transgression. This served a two-fold purpose:

- 1.) It Pointed out that Israel was not the seed of promise -- indeed it placed them under a curse.
- 2.) It pointed out Christ as the Seed *"to whom the promise was made."*

The very law which concluded all others under sin, pointed out Christ as the sinless One. While it measured and condemned all others, it could only commend Him for continuing in all things which were written in the law to do them; - and this under the most trying adverse conditions. His deeds of the law indicated Him as One who had Life, the very thing which all the families of the earth lack; the blessing which all need.

The terms of the law covenant as it was suggested to Israel were these: "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine. And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." (Ex. 19:5,6.) Israel, not understanding, entered into a solemn covenant to merit being kings and priest unto God to bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

Note particularly the words of the Apostle: *"The law was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator. Now a mediator is not of one, but God is one. "* The law covenant was not made directly with Israel. God delegated angels to institute this covenant, indeed; but there was a mediating agency - Moses. When God made promise to Abraham, there was no mediating agency. This law covenant with Israel was much inferior to the covenant with Abraham in this respect.

We hear much in these days of bilateral and multi-lateral treaties between nations. The law covenant was bi-lateral: two parties obligated themselves -- God and Israel. But the Abrahamic covenant was unilateral; only one party is obligated -- God. And God not only gave His word, but His oath also. For whose sake? Abraham's? Abraham did not *need* the oath; he obeyed God,

exercised faith in God without the oath; the oath being given after He had to all intents and purposes offered up Isaac. Then why was the oath given? For the seed's sake; "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things [His word and His oath], in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." - Heb. 6:17,18.

"IS THE LAW AGAINST THE PROMISES OF GOD?"

The law served its purpose; it kept those under it strictly accountable to its demands, according to the agreement entered into at Sinai -- "all that the Lord our God hath said we will do," even as a child was strictly accountable to the pedagogue into whose charge he had been given. It must be remembered that although Christ being obedient to the law, inherited all the promises of the law, yet the law never gave Him righteousness, life. "In Him was life." (John 1:14.) He came by promise; "God sent His Son into the world." The law only singled Him out from among all others as the One who had life; the law was the measure of the Messiah, and Christ was the One found to measure up to its requirements, as it is written, "The man that doeth them shall live in them." In other words, the law was not against the promises of God. Rather, it served to point out the Promised of God, Christ. "Wherefore the law was our pedagogue to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

"But after faith is come, we are no longer under a pedagogue. For ye are all children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek [Gentile], there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

"The simplicity of the Gospel!" Abraham's receiving the fulfillment of the promises of God was contingent upon his faith in the reality of those promises; and as we have seen, his thus exercising such faith obligates God to fulfill those promises: "*In Isaac shall thy seed be called,* " and "*in thee and thy seed shall all nations be blessed.* " The promises are all to faith; and so it still is that the exercise of faith in God's word obligates God to fulfill that word to the seed.

"According to your faith be it unto you. " "So then they which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. "

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ... And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

- F.A. Essler

Watchman, What Hour of the Night?

From the editors:

Each watchman standing along an ancient city wall viewed the horizon from a unique perspective: some saw trees; others saw the spy behind the tree. Together, they protected the city.

Now, our subscribers circle the globe like those watchmen circled the ancient city. Our combined expertise, background and interests run the gamut of human experience. Some of "US" see prophetic trees; others of "US" see those prophetic spies behind the trees.

While this journal has frequently commented on subjects of current interest we have endeavored to in doing so to use a non-controversial spirit of Christian liberty. This we will continue to do, realizing that "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. " Yet we cannot deny that events around us cry out for Christian attention.

No one person, magazine, or organization can see the world's events from God's over-all perspective. But, together, we can see events from a wider perspective than it is individually possible to do. Mindful therefore of our purpose to encourage one another, we invite your current events observations.

Short, attributable, news clippings submitted by readers from around the globe would be appreciated.

Such, if submitted with a pertinent scripture citation and a brief comment on why you would consider such to be a sign of the proximity of our Master's Kingdom, would be considered as meat for a regular feature now being considered by the editors.

We hasten to stress that encouragement, NOT speculation, is our purpose. St. Paul warns: "that ye might learn ... not to think above that which is written." Such serious warnings notwithstanding, we are told that "when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Tell us what are the signs which have encouraged you as you stand guard along Zion's walls? . . .

Watchman, What Hour of the Night?

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

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

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

WHAT TIME IS IT?

- The Psalmist David asked: "O Jehovah, *how long* shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?" Again he inquires, saying: "Our own signs have we not see -- there is no longer a prophet -- neither is there one with us who knoweth *how long!* How long, O God, shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy revile thy name perpetually?"

- In the prophecy of Daniel the repeated inquiry is found concerning the symbolic time-measures given him: "*How long shall be the vision?*" "*What shall be the issue of these things?*"
- The disciples asked of the Lord: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign...?" And after the resurrection: "Dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?"
- Demons also, having a deep personal interest in the matter, demanded of Jesus: "Art thou come hither to torment [restrain] us before the time?" (Psa. 94:3; 74:9,10; Dan. 8:13;12:8; Matt. 24:3; Acts 1:6; Matt. 8:29.)

Interest today among the wakeful is no less intense. The "Worldly Wisemen" are anxiously seeking to penetrate the future; and many modern Bible students are searching the Scriptures, as did the holy men of old, to discover if it may be, "*What time or what manner of time*" the prophecies signify.

WHY WRITE THIS ARTICLE?

The *HERALD* receives from earnest and zealous brethren, manuscripts, charts, pamphlets, and books on various features of "the chronology." These usually "correct" one or two alleged mistakes of past writers and often contain helpful suggestions. But these correspondents are not in collaboration. Their conclusions are not in harmony. Not only so, but related Scriptures are often overlooked or ignored, which would modify or contradict their findings.

The Bible chronology, as it has been constructed by many generations of investigators throughout the Gospel Age, is not readily corrected in detail. If it is to be changed, it must be revised with full regard for interrelated prophetic time periods, and with familiarity with the vast and invaluable researches of previous chronologers. By restating of some underlying principles and requirements, and reviewing the conclusions and unanswered questions left to us by the ablest of investigators in this field, may we thus help those continuing in prophetic research to harmonize their findings.

It is evident that the question before us is essentially identical with the one that St. Peter declares was in the minds of the prophets -- yes, even in the minds of angels (1 Pet. 1:10-12; Dan. 8:13.) -- viz.:

What time-periods, or what manner (kind) of time-periods, does the spirit signify, in the prophecies of Scripture which obviously indicate a fixed and definite period of suffering for God's people, of both the Old and New Dispensations, to be followed by an equally definite period of exaltation and glory in the "*Age to come wherein dwelleth righteousness?*"

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

Those to whom the Apostle refers as "us" are the ones to whom he addressed his Epistle: "*...elect. .. according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*" (ver. 1-3).

We therefore ask: Have all these been fully aware of the time significance of the prophecies; of the dates of the beginnings and endings of the periods; of "*what time and what manner of time*" was meant?

The answer of course is: No! All have not been so aware. It would therefore appear that some other feature of the prophecies was intended for *all* the Church - the "us" class.

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

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

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

Numbers are exact; "seventy sevens" are 490, not 491 or 489; "seven times" (if we understand the numerical system correctly) are 2520 years, not 2520 plus 40, or some other figure. The time-periods of prophecy must have a definite ending, marked by some definite end, or their significance and authority are greatly weakened.

The fact that previous interpreters obviously have erred in their conclusions should not have a deterrent or discouraging effect, but rather a stimulating influence, on the "searchers" and "examiners" of the Scriptures. There is the gold of further truth yet to be discovered, if we are willing to "search for it as for hid treasure." Through the prophet Habakkuk the assurance is given: "*The vision is yet for the appointed time... though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not delay*" (beyond the "appointed time") (Prov. 2:1-5; Hab. 2:3).

Daniel, who asked for an understanding of the time-prophecies given him, was told: "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end ... none of the wicked shall understand, but they that are wise shall understand." This expression, "time of the end," clearly

indicates a *period* of time. The Prophet employs quite another word to indicate a *point* of time. The latter is found in Dan. 2:8,9,16 (see *A.R. V.* and *Rotherham*); Dan. 4:36; Dan. 7:22.

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

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

"The words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end.... None of the wicked shall understand" (Dan. 12:9,10). Whether this promise means that during the end-period the "wise" shall come to

a complete understanding of all of the time-prophecies, or to the particular one or ones given through Daniel; or merely that the "wise" shall know in a general way that it is the time of the end, and that the prophecies are being, or are about to be, fulfilled, is for each sincere and earnest examiner of the sacred records to conclude for himself. The writer holds the former view. He believes that it would be more to the glory of God and the vindication of his Word for some, at least, of his "little ones" to arrive at "an exact knowledge of the truth" in this respect as in others, during the due time -- the time period of the end. Such an understanding would demonstrate not only God's foreknowledge, but his ability to foretell events in such a way as that, hidden until the "time-lock" is released, even poor human intelligence, enlightened by the holy Spirit, may share the foreknowledge in all its exactness. "The path of the righteous is as the light of dawn, going on and brightening, unto meridian day" (Prov.4:1-28, *Rotherham*).

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

- H.E. Hollister

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

The True Unity of Christ's Church

" *And thou shalt take fine meal, and bake it in twelve cakes,...and thou shalt set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the pure table before Jehovah. " "And thou shalt place upon the table Presence bread before me continually. " - Lev. 24:5,6; Exod. 25:30.*

THE INJUNCTION WAS VERY PRECISE: "*Thou shalt set upon the table the Presence-bread before me alway. " In two passages it is described as the "continual bread" (Num. 4:7; 2 Chron. 2:4). When the trumpet gave the signal for the march, the loaves and vessels were left undisturbed in their accustomed places, and over them all three coverings were placed, of blue, of scarlet and of sealskin. There was therefore no interruption of the continued symbolism of the Unity of the Chosen People.*

This thought pervades the Scriptures. If we go back to the days of the Judges when the land was repeatedly swept by whirlwinds of judgment, when every man did as seemed right in his eyes, and there was no unity of government or authority, we find that the Presence bread was offered with undeviating regularity. This is established by the incident told of David, when he sought the hospitality of the High Priest at Nob, and did "*eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests" (Mark 2:25,26). Evidently, through those stormy centuries the twelve loaves stood before God, an emblem of the essential unity of Israel.*

When, afterwards, schism came, and the ten tribes, under the leadership of Jeroboam, broke away from the house of David, still upon the holy table, in Solomon's temple, the *twelve* loaves were presented, representing an unimpaired oneness.

So when Elijah repaired the altar of the Lord, that had been broken down by Jezebel's orders, he took *twelve* stones, " according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name." In the Prophet's thought, as in God's, the sorrowful strife and alienation between the northern and southern groups were as though they were not, in view of the Eternal Covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

A WITNESS TO THE UNITY OF THE PEOPLE

When the ten tribes were carried into captivity, and scattered far and wide through Babylonia, Persia, and Asia Minor, still each Sabbath the priests brought the twelve loaves, and placed them on the Table of Presence, as though God knew well where to find his scattered people, and in his judgment they continued one. Then followed the captivity of the seventy years, and afterward the return to the Temple of the priests, the people, and the holy bread.

In our Lord's time, though Israel was rent and scattered, and Simeon and Dan had long since disappeared, still the twelve loaves *were* presented. In a remarkable sentence, Paul, speaking before Agrippa of the promise made unto the fathers, expressed his belief in the unbroken number of the tribes, when he said:

"Unto which promise *our twelve tribes*, earnestly serving God, night and day, hope to attain."

In the opening of his epistle, James sends greetings to the twelve tribes of the dispersion. Our Lord assured his Apostles, that in the regeneration they should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. On the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem are written the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. Dan is indeed missed out of the enumeration of Revelation

7, but the sacred associations of the twelve are still maintained by the dual representation of Joseph. Remember also Ezekiel's unfulfilled prophecy (Eze. 37:15,17,21,22).

UNITY OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

This is one of those deep and subtle suggestions of the way in which the objective ideal of the Church, as an undivided and sacred unity, stands before God.... Amid all the storms that have swept the world since our Lord constituted his Church, through out those disastrous periods of division and distraction, there have still been, in the Divine estimation, *"one Body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."*

Always the twelve loaves, the wine of His blood, and the frankincense of His merit, for we are made "accepted in the Beloved."

NOT VISIBLE UNITY

It need hardly be remarked that this unity was never intended to be organic, because Jesus prayed that his own might be one as the Father and he were one. "Holy Father," he said *"keep them in thy Name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are."*

It is therefore certain that those who suppose that the unity of the Church must be patent to the senses have wholly misconceived the Divine ideal. The members of the Body of Christ were never intended to be gathered into one organization, to repeat one formulary, or march in military array. Uniformity is far removed from unity; and you may have perfect unity apart from uniformity. A tree is a unity, though there is a vast diversity between the gnarled branches and the cones which it tosses on the forest floor. A house is a unity, though there is no similarity between the gabled roof and the deep laid foundations. A body is a unity, but the eyelash differs widely from the bones.

Uniformity is impossible where there is life, as the most superficial consideration of the autumnal produce of orchard, field and garden proves. Wherever, therefore uniformity has been insisted on death has ensued. Just before the Reformation of the sixteenth century, it seemed as though the Inquisition had extinguished every trace of nonconformity with the tenets and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, she might have almost literally adopted the proud boast of Babylon: *"As one gathereth eggs that are forsaken, so have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped"* (Isa. 10:14, R.V.). But at this period it is incontestable that the religious life of Christendom was dead; except where the limited Piedmontese, in the high Alps, kept a spark burning amid the grey ashes.

UNIFORMITY UNATTAINABLE

The same mistake is perpetrated by those who demand uniformity of creed as by those who insist on uniformity of ritual. You cannot make all men climb alike, or express identical conceptions in identical words. A creed is, after all, an intellectual effort, whereas religion is not the creature of mind or reason, but of the heart and spirit. It is a life The inauguration of that eternal condition of existence which will be still young when all human formularies and conceptions have been put away, as a man puts away the things of childhood.

If your soul is united to the Head of the Church by a living faith, through which the life of Christ enters and pervades it, you must be reckoned a member of the Body, though you may have passed through none of those ecclesiastical systems which at the best are but broken lights, reflecting the sunlight at different angles.

VARIETY

In the Church there is room, therefore, for an infinite variety. Each brings his own contribution; and we must gather with all saints, if we would comprehend the length, and breadth, and depth and height of the love of Christ. You cannot see the whole sky, the whole mountain, the whole broad ocean, nor can I; but I will tell you what I have seen, tasted, and handled of the Word of Life, and you shall tell me what you have experienced. Thus our spirits shall have fellowship one with another. There will be a mutual exchange in commodities, as we report our discoveries of the unsearchable riches of Christ. For none has exactly the same viewpoint as another has; and none exactly the same definition or formula. Be yourself!

Make your own discoveries of the manifold grace of Christ. If you cannot bring grapes from Eschol, bring pomegranites or figs. Bartimaeus and the man born blind had different stories to tell of the way in which they were healed, but the both saw, and owed the sight which revealed the world to the same voice and touch. Whether you swam to shore or floated on a broken piece of ship furniture, or a spar, makes very little difference, so long as you have been saved from the storm, and stand there with the rest in the circle round the fire lighted because of the cold.

You are probably right in what you affirm, but wrong in what you deny. You are justified in holding firmly to your special fragment of Truth, but be willing to admit that you have not everything, and that others may be as conscientious, as to truth, and as eager for its maintenance and diffusion as yourself. Seek to gain from others whatever will perfect your religious life, rounding it to a more complete circle, and touching it to finer issues. *"I long to see you,"* said the Apostle, *"that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift. .. that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith"* (Rom.1:11,12, R.V.).

CHRIST: THE BOND OF UNITY

Christ is the bond of unity to his Church -- Christ in each individual, and each individual in Christ. Let us never forget that gracious reciprocity. The sponge must be in the ocean and the ocean in the sponge. Each believer is written in the Lamb's Book of Life by the same fingers. Each of us has been grafted into the true Vine, though in different places. Each of us has some function in the mystical Body. We were in Him when he died, and rose, and entered the Father's presence. In him we have access into this grace wherein we stand. We are in him, as those twelve loaves stood on that pure table.

The gift of Christ, on the other hand, has been made to each one of us, that he might realize himself through all the experiences of his members. As of old it required four Gospels to reveal to mankind what Jesus Christ was, so all believers are required to set forth and exemplify to the world all the excelling glories of our Emmanuel. It is for this reason that we are told that the Church is His Body, *"the fulness of him that filleth all in all."* (Eph. 1:23).

ONE IN HIM

Was it not of this that our Lord spoke, when he said: *"The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me"* (John 17:22,23)?

In such radiance the Church now stands before God. He sees her essential unity. Its denial does not disintegrate it. Its obscuration does not impair it. The very members of the Church that compose the Unity may be unaware of it, and may denounce each other; but even so, the twelve stones are in the same breastplate and the twelve loaves stand side by side on the same table. The members of a large family of boys and girls may be scattered far and wide over the world, but to the mother, in her daily and nightly prayer, there is but one family, and to her they seem sheltered still under the wings of her brooding love.

When Savonarola was about to be burned, the Papal Legate, dressed in his scarlet robes, stood beside his scaffold, and cried: "I cut thee off from the Church triumphant and the Church Militant." But the martyr replied truly: "You may cut me off from the Church militant, but over the church triumphant thou hast no power." Only two things can cut a man off from the Holy Catholic Church, (considered in the loftiest sense: pertaining to the whole Christian Body) and these are unforgetfulness to the brethren and departure from the living God.

As surely as the Lord accounts us members of the same mystical Body, he bids us give diligence to keep the unity of that Body in the bonds of peace. We are not required to create the unity, but to manifest it. We are to recognize as one with us, those who may differ ... in their ritual and creedal expression... Without the other neither can be made perfect. Let us, therefore, in this way hasten the time when our Lord shall present the Church to himself, a glorious Church, without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing.

- F.B. Meyer

The Divine Shelter

"See! A King shall rule justly, and princes do right, and a Man be a shelter from the wind, and a refuge from storm, like pools in a dry, like a shadowing rock in a wearisome land." - Isa. 32:1, Fenton's Translation.

WHAT A WEALTH OF MEANING those words contain for all who are weary of the dark night of sin and sorrow, and who cling with undiminished faith to the promise of a joyful morning without clouds, when sighing and crying shall flee away forever. We may well inquire:

- Of whom does the Prophet speak when he tells of one who shall be so complete a hiding place?
- If we are to understand him to refer to one among the sons of men, where can such a one be found?

For six thousand years mankind has sought in vain for such a deliverer, only to discover that no arm of flesh has been competent to ward off the succeeding waves of storm and tempest.

History records man's shattered hopes. Through the ages he has repeatedly chosen some trusted leader to guide him into a happier state, only to find that it is not in the power of any human agency to break the fetters under which the whole creation groans and travails. Surely the experience of threescore centuries has demonstrated the verity of the inspired declaration, *"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish"* (Psa. 146:3,4). Who then is the man foreseen by the Prophet Isaiah?

Even if it be admitted that in some manner such a prophecy might be a forecast of a man's future glory and service to his fellows, yet it seems that the only possible application which would give full weight to the prophecy of so great a wealth of blessing, would be that it refers to the "Man" whom God has appointed to abolish sin and death, and to fill the earth with perpetual rest and peace.

"The Man Christ Jesus" is the only one who can be the deliverer and the refuge from all adverse conditions of wind and storm, and bring forth streams in the desert, or be the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. In him alone may the Church now (and a sin-sick world by-and-by,) find the fruition of all true desires for emancipation and peace, for only in and through him is it possible to find a complete satisfaction of the unutterable longings of the heart for perfect harmony with infinite love.

WHENCE OUR GROANINGS?

Taken as a prophecy of earth's future glory under the reign of its rightful King in association with his Bride, the Church, our text leaves nothing more to be desired. Ever since man was driven from the happy home provided for him, "eastward in Eden," where he had enjoyed intimate communion with God, and then because of disobedience sent out into the earth, cursed for his sake, to dwell where "the wrath of god is revealed against all unrighteousness," and toil with sweat of brow against the thorns and thistles, the disappointments, suffering, and exposure to the unrelenting malice of a malignant Adversary, O how greatly he has needed a hiding place.

A THOUSAND YEARS EARTH'S COMING GLORY

Unnumbered souls have felt as Job must have done when he prayed in the midst of his affliction,

"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until they wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" (Job 14:13.)

Many indeed have similarly longed to escape the afflictions traceable to the entrance of sin into the world, and to go *"where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."* How blessed then to know that for a thousand wonderful years mankind will be in the hands of Christ and his Church and through the Kingdom protections and advantages be hidden from the demands of a perfect law, until qualified to fall into the hands of the living God without fear. In that glad day they shall find the promise fulfilled, far beyond all the dreams which have kept hope springing eternal in the human breast.

Truly, it is not in the power of human tongue or pen to portray the glorious perfection of the coming earthly paradise condition when mankind have found shelter in the Rock of Ages and complete deliverance from sin and death through Emmanuel's reign. It is beyond our powers of imagination to visualize the happiness of man's estate, when the great work of reconciliation between God and man is complete, and "the tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." (Rev. 21:3.)

But this we know: in that glad day every God-implanted longing of which a perfect heart is capable will find its full realization and expression. Man will be at rest in God, world without end.

TRUE BROTHERLY LOVE

Harmony with God will mean perfect harmony with each brother man in that eternal Kingdom of joy and peace; for then no more will "man's inhumanity to man make countless thousands mourn," but instead, earth's society will be fashioned after the order of that which fills the courts of heaven itself. O what a wealth of possibilities divine love has planted within the mind of man! Created in the image and likeness of God, there are springs of infinite and eternal possibilities hidden in that image and likeness far beyond our present ability to even catch a dim outline. Man, as God intends he shall yet be, is a noble, lovable, marvelous creation.

When we read *"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life,"* we must not confine the meaning of this love of God for man to the limits of a great sympathy for him in his fallen condition. The love of God for man is centered in his eternal purpose, when in the exercise of his creative love and power he added a perfect human being to *"the whole family of God."*

Is it not more heavenly love than human reaction, which is displayed when a new-born babe is added to the number of the family circle. The children who have preceded it are not loved less, but the new arrival becomes the center of every one's affection, and all combine to welcome the added treasure given them to love and cherish. So it must have been among the heavenly host when man appeared among the children of God. Are we not told that *"the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy"* over the works of creation? Who but the first-born of all creation is represented in these words,

"The Lord [Jehovah] possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men" (Job 38:7; Prov. 8:22,25,30,31).

Do these Scriptures not tell us something of the thrills of joy experienced by all former members of "the family of god" when man "crowned with glory and honor" came from the hand of him whose name means love?

It was this noble creature that *"God so loved."* It was this marvelous being that Jesus gave his life to reclaim. It is this conception of man as God beholds him by-and-by, that fills our own hearts with that unexplainable present love for mankind, even though for the moment he is so marred and defiled by sin. Underneath the marred and sadly disfigured image borne by man as *we see* him today, we realize there are latent qualities which six thousand years of the exceeding sinfulness of sin has not entirely eradicated.

And so, with *"the love of God shed abroad in our hearts,"* and faith in his power to reclaim and perfect even to the uttermost all who come unto him, do we not find a sheltering love creeping into our own souls and feel the surging floods of living water welling up in our hearts for every struggling human being, filling us with a longing to refresh them with its thirst quenching sweetness? Surely, to have had contact with the "Man," that "shadowing Rock in a wearisome land," has filled our lives with love for the world, for whom he gave his life to reclaim from sin, that he might again crown them with the glory and honor of perfect manhood.

Our Reactions

If these be the reactions we experience today as we come under the benevolent influences of the redemptive love of God, shall it not be so with the world of mankind when Jesus reigns from the *"river unto the ends of the earth"*? In that day shall not,

"every man love his fellow, justice give to each and all,
dwell in love, and dwell in Jesus, who redeemed them from the fall. "

Living, as each one will be, under the sheltering wings of Christ's Kingdom reign, and receiving through its beneficent provisions all needed sympathy and encouragement, "the brotherhood of man" will then become a beautiful reality. Living in constant contact with Christ and his Bride will bring them into an understanding touch with everything in human life. They shall learn to look for the man God intends, and forget the warped and twisted characters undergoing the regenerative operations of that glorious restitution day.

The love of Christ will constrain them to practice a sympathy with "all sorts and conditions of men" in all sorts of deformity, and thus together they shall attain the goal of perfect Godlikeness - perfect life, perfect love, perfect rest, completeness. Verily the prophetic picture given in our text is no overdrawn forecast of earth's coming glory, or of the completeness of the deliverance man shall enjoy from wind and storm, arid conditions, or from the inhumanity of man to man.

COMPASSION FOR THE CREATION

Such a picture of God's present sympathy for mankind in his fallen condition, and of His ultimate purpose in his full recovery, cannot but fill our hearts with comfort and joy. No one who has himself really experienced the love of God in pardoning grace can be a stranger to the impulses that love creates. True, there will be those who, like the man in our Lord's pointed illustration, though forgiven an enormous debt themselves, will nevertheless, keep a stranglehold on a debtor owing but a few pennies. Such, however, have not really experienced the thrill of conscious forgiveness, for none are forgiven beyond their own willingness and delight in forgiving.

But we are thinking now of those who really know by experience that mysterious inflow of sympathetic love which must have filled the heart of Stephan, when with the glory-lightened countenance he entreated that his murderers be not charged with their crime. The answer to that prayer is a matter over which we need not dispute. Who knows but that it was that forgiving love radiating from his angel-like face that burned so deeply into the innermost soul of Saul, and prepared his troubled heart for the voice of Jesus on the Damascus road. Sweeter to the heart of the noble Stephen than vindictive retribution could ever be, would be the adding of a character like Paul to the number of the *elect* of God. And what would it have meant to us if his murderers had been served with the punishment their crime deserved? Would we have ever known Saul as anything but a heartless Zealot, blind to every human claim of love and pity? Surely we would never have felt the power that every true Christian has realized as flowing through this "*Chosen vessel*," had God not certainly answered Stephen's prayer.

But let it be remembered that Stephen could not have foreseen the immediate results of his forgiving spirit. He did not pray thus because he knew that ere long Paul would shake the Jewish world with his championship of the cause of Christ. No, he prayed thus solely because he had caught the spirit of his Master, who came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. And in all this we may find a lesson never more needed than at the present time.

BEARING INJUSTICE

Many of today's saints are placed in circumstances where there is plenty of opportunity to allow bitterness against others to gain no little possession of the mind. The world is full of injustice. In many ways every man's hand seems set against his neighbor, and the survival of the individual seems more and more to depend on a willingness to use any method to attain a reasonable share of life's necessities. In the midst of such conditions it is easy to develop a vindictive attitude, to be unmindful of the example of Jesus, who opened not his mouth in complaint against his murderers, and to forget the spectacle of angelic rapture never to be forgotten by Saul of Tarsus.

When it comes to the matter of our daily life with its round of "*all things working together for good*," how little we can really know of the meaning of a thousand and one things that come and go from day to day. Could we always realize the possibilities hidden in our contacts with all sorts and conditions of men, is it not safe to say that many times our reactions toward their selfish ways and their unjust methods would be different from what it often is? May there not be times when, if we have developed the spirit of Stephen, and are ready to really believe that "*they know not what they do*," we will find it so much easier to curb any bitterness that might be creeping in. Surely, if keeping company with the Son of Man cannot make one strong to bear injustice, and fortify one against the toil and pain that daily love sees best for us, then how can Jesus say to us, "*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matt. 11:28)?

OUGHT NOT CHRIST TO SUFFER?

It was after he had suffered all the terrible agonies of Gethsemane that he said to his disciples,

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:25,26.)

The whole tenor of Scripture shows that the Christ must be first a suffering Christ before the right to reign can be enjoyed. How we need to constantly remind ourselves of our need of sharing the experiences of our Lord and Head if we would be qualified to reign with him by-and-by. Did he not learn obedience by the things which he suffered, and at the same time was he not being made a merciful High Priest through being touched with a feeling of our infirmities? He gained thereby a greater sympathy with tried and sin wounded men, and became thus a saviour more perfectly equipped for his saving work.

Thus chastening becomes a vital part of the peculiar heritage of the sons and daughters of God. The great husbandman does not prune wild brambles growing outside of his garden, but every branch within the wall that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more and more fruit. Then better far to be his wounded tree, bleeding from prunings perhaps, but from which richer fruit will yet appear.

OUR VISION: GOD'S VISION

Let us keep God's vision of perfect man consistently before our mind, not the warped and deformed creature who now afflicts us because sin has made him so. Visualize the everlasting benefits yet to come to men through the permission of evil. Train your vision on that ever brightening horizon where the prophetic beams of light are already promising the speedy coming of *"the times of restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of God's holy prophets since the world began."* Thus, even now, we shall find ourselves enjoying more and more of the spirit of Stephan, and thereby become sympathetic intercessors for those who, because blinded by the god of this world, cause us suffering and disappointment.

Taking this view of present experiences, and learning to interpret our trials in the light of preparatory lessons in patience and love, qualifying us for our future work in the Kingdom, shall we not even now, because of our abiding faith in God, by our manifest peace and joy though troubled on every side, and by our freedom from any taint of vindictiveness, be to weary, chafing hearts all about us, a guide to *"a shadowing Rock in a wearisome land."* How better can we honor our God and reveal the quietness of spirit a knowledge of the truth can bring, than by our daily testimony witnessing to the fact that we have found the Man Christ Jesus a blessed shelter from the biting winds and stormy blast, a sheltering Rock under whose shadow there is peace, perfect peace. O what if we do sow in tears for a little while? What if we do find the struggle at times seemingly more than we can bear? The promise is sure, "We shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing our sheaves with us." When at last the long-hoped-for Kingdom reign does come, and the work of lifting mankind out of sin and death is our age-long blessed occupation, shall we not then rejoice that we have had so much opportunity in the school of Christ to learn how to exercise the love of Christ for sinful man?

THEN COMETH THE END

And what an End! As the result of the work of Christ and his Church, the earth will be filled with a happy human family all in perfect harmony with their Creator. There will be no more one absent "prodigal son" among the children of God, but the "whole family of God in heaven and earth" one in eternal unity, eternal peace, and in a never ending enjoyment together of the ceaseless unfoldings of the love and power and goodness of our gracious God. Surely God's *"elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."* Then, dear tried and warfare encompassed saints, *"let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing,"* for so great an undertaking as shall be given to us, when in a little while it shall be our privilege to lead the race back over the long way, until it rests again in the Paradise of God.

- The HERALD

An Institute Lending Library

The INSTITUTE has recently been blessed by a donation of numerous volumes, of wide ranging interest, for the purpose of organizing a lending library. This is a unique service. We anticipate it to be a blessing for a certain segment of our Brethren.

Much work lies ahead. So much so, that nearly a year will be required to organize the volumes before the service can begin. Cataloging has already taught us that it is not too early to encourage other individuals who might be disposed to add to the collection to contact our office. We would welcome volumes on a wide range of subjects which might interest such as read the HERALD.

Details about the Library's operations will be announced following the Institute's 1986 Annual Meeting.

True Worshippers

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." - John 4:23.

Paul prayed for the Philippians that their love might "abound yet more and more in knowledge and all judgment; that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and void of offence ... being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory of God" (Phil. 1:9-11).

In religion the natural tendency of man is to go beyond the bounds of moderation and right judgment in what is written, and to fall into extravagances, unbalanced views and wrong conceptions in all directions. Hence the religion of some is nothing but exterior performances, rites, ceremonies, churchgoing, reading prayers, or other mere routine formalities. With others it is a mere intellectual affair, a cold mental knowing, learning and understanding without regard to anything further. To be able to talk theology, and to be ready with arguments to defend their faith against skepticism or criticism or heresy, is their ideal of a Christian. With some it is a simple morality which makes nothing of creeds or churches, too weak to hold convictions in any definite shape. People of inquisitive or speculative turn of mind are in great danger of taking theology for faith and of substituting doctrines, inferences, theoretical subtleties, Pharisaic niceties for Christian purity. Others of dominating inclination transform the Christian life into pretentious activities, arrogant ascertains, malignant faultfinding, heresy-hunting. All these are systems of acknowledging truths and opinions that play about the head but impart no warmth to the region of the heart.

When we consider that an important part of our character centers in our affections and how powerful they are in determining our course of life, it is absurd to suppose that God has given us a faith capable of saving us and making us his true children, in which the affections are not at least as much concerned as the intellect.

There is no right or saving Christianity into which the warm and living affections do not enter. If God is to be loved, he must be loved ardently, supremely. If Jesus is the friend which the Scriptures represent him to be, there is due him an attachment stronger than death. If life is worth anything, it is above all valuation, and no earnestness for its security and salvation can be too great. If the interests of man stretch beyond the present life and through an eternity of existence, it is impossible to be too much moved, anxious and alive in all the springs and impulses in looking after and taking care of those interests.

If you have no heart, no relish, no pleasure, no satisfaction in devotion, prayer and worship of God, then question your piety and consider your faith a failure. If you have never felt the luxury of doing good, of being loving, kind, and true, and if your soul never warms to the Saviour who died for you, and your nature never kindles and thrills, and your heart never glows with joyous, living gratitude, admiration and love towards him who so loved us, then conclude that you know nothing yet aright of the "glorious Gospel."

Men have warmth, zeal, hope, intense desire for everything else. How can it be possible to be genuine Christians without these for the Lord Jesus Christ and for his service, for truth and good, for perishing lives, for fellow believers, for the favour of God, and for the blessed things of an eternal heaven?

Only when these, through earnest, persistent supplication and by the mighty power of God, the holy Spirit, are burned into our deepest being as part and parcel of ourselves, can we attain to that which the Scriptures so much desire us to attain, "to abound in," to be "rooted and grounded" in Christ.

- J.Seiss

The General Baptism of the Spirit

"Afterward I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." - Joel 2:28.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TO be the channel of reconciliation between the Almighty and the race of sinners redeemed with the precious life of Christ. As the object of the sacrifice of Christ was to open up the way by which God could be just, and yet be the justifier of all who believe in him, and who *seek* to come unto the Father by him, so his work, as the glorified Mediator, is to bring back unto full fellowship with God so many of the redeemed race as are willing to return when granted full knowledge and opportunity. This work of bringing back the members of the fallen race into harmony with God is divided into two parts:

- 1.) the Church of this Gospel age
- 2.) and so many as will, of the remainder of mankind, during the coming Millennial age.

The basis of harmony is not that God condones sin, and excuses it, and permits us to return to his favor as sinners, but that the sinners are to put away their sins, accept heartily the divine standard of righteousness, and to come back into full harmony with God; so that they will seek and attain, through appointed channels, and under the supervision of Christ, the heavenly Father's holy Spirit, mind, will, disposition - receiving it as their own mind, will, or disposition, and thus be transformed by the renewing of their minds. God's program for the Church, is also declared to be God's program, through Christ, for the reconciliation of the world unto himself during the next age. Not one iota of the divine law will be modified; sin and imperfection will not be excused and counted as perfection and righteousness.

The world of mankind will be in the hands of the Christ for reformation and restoration to the image of God, lost through father Adam through transgression. As a part of the means for bringing the world back into harmony with God, the influence of Satan, which now is upon the world, binding and blinding mankind, will be removed (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:2). Thereafter, instead of the world being under the influence or spirit of deception and error and ignorance and superstition, it shall be under the influence or spirit of truth and righteousness and love. Instead of outside influences being a pressure upon the hearts of men, to fill them with anger and malice, hatred, strife and selfishness, this influence of spirit will be restrained and ultimately destroyed, and the contrary influence or Spirit of righteousness, goodness, mercy, sympathy, love, will be developed. Thus, through Christ, the holy Spirit of God will be poured out upon the world of mankind:

- 1.) Giving them enlightenment
- 2.) Giving them help, assistance, strength, to overcome their own inherited tendencies
- 3.) Instructing and leading them back to the image and likeness of God, lost through father Adam's disobedience.

These prospective privileges and blessings for the world are glorious, and rejoice our hearts far beyond anything that the Lord's people have seen in times past. They nevertheless offer no comfort to enemies of the Lord, or to those who, when they have the opportunity, refuse to receive of his holy Spirit, and to be filled by it. It will be poured out for all flesh, but it will be necessary for those who would enjoy it and be profited thereby to avail themselves of its privileges: just as it is necessary for believers of this Gospel age, who would come under and be

blessed by the holy Spirit, to make use of the means; - to consecrate themselves and to "eat" the truth, that they may have *"the Spirit of the truth."*

When the great Prophet and Life-giver, the great Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Christ, head and body, complete), stands forward to bless the world, it will mean a blessing for all who will receive the words of that prophet and obey them, and obtain the blessing of eternal life, by obedience; and it will mean the destruction by the Second Death for all those who refuse to hear him, as it is written: "Every soul which will not hear [obey] that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." - Acts 3:23.

TO THE SERVANTS AND HANDMAIDS NOW...

Joel's prophecy, it will be noticed, is stated in the reverse order to that of its fulfillment; the blessing of all flesh is stated first, and the blessing upon the Church last.

No doubt this order of statement was of the Lord's design, so as to cover or hide some of the glorious features of this great promise, until the due time for it to be understood. (Dan. 12:9,10.) Although it has been read over for centuries, it could not open up and disclose all of its wonderful treasure until God's "due time" had come. During this Gospel age the Lord has poured out his Spirit upon his servants and handmaidens only; and blessed has been the experience of all those who received it, -- all who were immersed into the body of Christ, and made partakers of his anointing as sons. It was to this that the Apostle Peter referred in his discourse at Pentecost.

Peter quoted both parts of this prophecy. Under the guidance of the holy Spirit, he did not illuminate the first part. The time for it to be understood had not yet come. Hence, instead of explaining the difference between the Holy Spirit upon the servants and the handmaidens during this Gospel age ("in those days"), and the holy Spirit upon all flesh "afterward", in the next age, he merely says, referring to the holy Spirit upon himself and the other believers, "This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel" -- a part of that, the beginning of that which was spoken. The prophecy will not be complete until the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh, which has not yet occurred.

Peter refers to the darkening of the sun and the moon, and the coming of the great and notable day of the Lord; events which are now nigh at hand, the great day of wrath, which intervenes and separates between the outpouring of the holy Spirit upon the Church, *"the servants and handmaidens,"* in these days, and *"all flesh,"* afterward.

IT IS THE SAME SPIRIT

There will be no difference between the Spirit of God, as it will come upon the world in the next age, and the Spirit of God as it comes upon the Church in this age, because it is the same Spirit of truth, Spirit of righteousness, Spirit of holiness, Spirit of sanctification, Spirit of harmony with God, -- the Spirit or influence which God will exert in favor of righteousness and goodness and truth.

Nevertheless, the Spirit will not mean the same thing in every particular then that it means now. To receive the Holy Spirit of God now, and to live in harmony therewith, means necessarily a conflict with the spirit of the world, Which abounds on every hand. For this reason it is that those who receive the holy Spirit now, and who walk in harmony with it, are instructed to expect persecution and opposition from all who do not have the Spirit, -- the vast majority.

... TO ALL FLESH THEN

To receive the holy Spirit in the future will not mean persecution. The order, arrangement, and government of the next age will be very different from the present. Whereas the prince of this world is Satan, the prince of the world or age to come will be Christ. Whereas the majority of mankind are now under the influence of Satan, willingly, or unwillingly, in the next age the whole world will be under the influence of Christ and his righteous government. The Truth will then be made free and common to all, from the least unto the greatest. The law of the next age will be righteousness, truth, and goodness. It will rule in the Kingdom of God. Those who come into harmony with that government and its law, and who have the Spirit of Truth, will not suffer persecution as a result thereof. On the contrary, they will experience favor and blessings and make progress in proportion as they receive that Spirit of holiness.

The possession of the holy Spirit, during the Millennial age, will not as during this age signify a begetting of the Spirit to a joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom. That promise belongs only to this Gospel age, to the servant and handmaiden class, who receive the holy Spirit and are actuated by it during this age, when in consequence of the present prevalence of evil, they are obliged to suffer for righteousness' sake; and upon whom, therefore, *"the Spirit of glory and of God resteth."* - 1 Pet. 4:14.

The possession of the holy Spirit during the Millennial age will signify that the recipient has come into harmony with Christ, the Mediator, and is to that extent in harmony with God and in line with the blessings which God has provided for mankind in general. Those blessings are not a change of nature, to the divine, but a restitution to all that was lost through the failure of the first Adam. (Acts 3:19-21.) The possession of the holy Spirit by such will be an evidence that the work of regeneration by the second Adam to perfection of human nature "bought" for them by the great sin offering has commenced in them; and that if continued it will ultimately bring perfection of restitution to the human likeness of the divine Father.

The blessings which Christ will give to the world during the Millennial Age, as the regenerator of the world, are the blessings which he bought for them by the sacrifice of himself. As he gave himself, as "the man Christ Jesus," a corresponding price for the man Adam, upon whom the condemnation came, so it was the manhood, rights, privileges, and life and kingdom of Adam that *were* purchased by the great sacrifice for sins; and these purchased things are the things which are to be restored to the regenerated world, through their regenerator or father, Christ Jesus our Lord, the second Adam. - Eph. 1:14; Acts 3:19-23.

The fact that our Lord Jesus was not the second Adam while in the flesh, but is the second Adam as a spirit being (since his resurrection), would not imply that he, as the second father of the race, would give to mankind spirit life or spirit being in their regeneration. On the contrary, we are to remember that the thought conveyed by the word "father" is merely "life-giver," without respect to the nature. Thus in father Adam's creation he is called a son of God, because created in the moral likeness and image of God, and not as implying that he was created in the divine nature; for we know that he was of the earth, earthy, while God is a spirit.

God's purpose in connection with:

- 1.) the creation of the world,
- 2.) man as its inhabitants and lord, and
- 3.) the lower animals as his subjects,

has not been changed by reason of the permitted disobedience and fall: the original plan remains. After the evil attempted by the Adversary shall be ultimately expunged, the divine plan, as originally designed, will be fully accomplished through Christ.

The Church of this Gospel Age, which shall be highly exalted and glorified as the Bride and joint-heir of Christ, is an exception to the restitution of mankind. It is called out, selected for a special purpose, and is particularly tried and tested, fitted and prepared for high exaltation, joint-heirship with Christ, -- a change from the human nature to a nature above the angelic nature, -- *'far above angels, principalities and powers.* "partakers of the divine nature.

- C.T. Russell

Entered into Rest

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