

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. LXX September / October, 1987 No. 5

The Testimony of Jesus

"I John ... was in the isle that is called Patmos ... for the testimony of Jesus Christ." -- Revelation 1:9

The friends of Jesus have never had any difficulty accepting his testimony about himself. Although he bore record of himself, yet they know that his record is true (John 8:14). That is because those who follow Jesus have proven his claims. He is the light of the world (John 8:12) who illuminates his followers. This he does in proportion to our ability to receive his illumination; according to the depth of our love for and loyalty to him; according to our willingness to walk in the light instead of darkness.

He who was truth personified did not ask his hearers to accept an uncorroborated testimony. On the contrary, the faithful and true witness (Rev. 3:14) testifies on his own behalf (John 5:31) and appeals to other testimonies in order to establish a faith in himself (John 5:32-36). We note a few lines of testimony written by the Apostle John on Jesus' behalf.

Note that John defined his purpose in writing his Gospel: "... *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name*" (John 20:31). John writes, specifically, in order to inspire a true belief in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. Further, John notes that there were other signs performed, but that he would not mention them (John 20:30). He chose specific incidents which were so assembled as to provide us with conclusive proof that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, so that by our believing and exercising that belief we might receive life through his name.

That Ye Might Have Life

We will not discuss the subject of faith, but note, if you will, that belief rests upon evidence. This is what John presents: evidence to the effect that Jesus is the Messiah. A study of John's Gospel

should therefore proceed with this underlying purpose in mind. As we read the Gospel we ask ourselves three questions: Is he doing what he set out to do? Is he proving Jesus' messiahship? Is his proof convincing?

John did not write merely to inspire belief. His purpose went further: "...that believing ye might have life through his name." A historical enumeration of facts might result in a mental assent to the truth that Jesus is the Messiah, but more than assent is required in order to produce life through his name. John understood this mystery of godliness. As another has said, "Godliness is not an open philosophy, which all can judge for themselves, but a spiritual experience which can be learned only by being godly."

John's evidence contains two elements: evidence to bring about mental assent to the messiahship of Jesus; evidence to bring about a belief that life will result from our faith in the first item. As we look at this Gospel, then, we do not look merely for an accurate recalling of events. John's view of Jesus must show the effect which Jesus had upon the people with whom he came in contact: those who received him and those who rejected him. It is John's special vantage point that we recognize as unique to the nature of this Gospel. It appeals to both our head and our heart.

Waiting for the Consolation of Israel Jesus' contemporaries expected the coming of Messiah. We find this supported by the record of the Magi's visit to Herod. They asked, "...Where is he that is born King of the Jews..." (Matt. 2:2)? Herod had no answer to their question and took this matter to the priests. The priests were familiar with the scripture and told the king about the prophecy of Micah: "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda ... for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (Matt. 2:6; Micah 5:2).

We do not know exactly how much of the prophecies were understood in Jesus' day. Yet, because there was a general expectation of their Messiah (Luke 3:15), it appears that some had correctly interpreted the seventy week prophecy of Daniel (Dan. 9:24). Some thought that John the Baptist might, be Messiah. Not all of the people were devout. God did reveal Messiah's coming during the lifetime of one devout Jew, Simeon, a man who waited for the consolation of Israel (Luke 2:25,26). How it must have tested Simeon's faith when he saw, not a great prophet, nor a priest, nor even a king or a warrior, only a helpless babe. Consider what must have been his emotions when he "...took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said:"

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, According to thy word; For mine eyes have seen thy salvation Which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, A light for revelation to the Gentiles, And for glory to thy people Israel" (Luke 2:28-32, RV).

The Logos

As imperfectly as the office of Messiah was understood, his relationship to Jehovah was even less perfectly comprehended. Not until the writings of the Apostle John was it explained that the Messiah was none other than the Logos, the Word of God. John showed that the most sublime of all the works consigned to Messiah would be the revelation of the Father. This he tells us in the prologue to his Gospel where he summarizes three main propositions:

"In the beginning was the Logos; and the Logos was with God; and the Logos was a god."

Our attention is drawn to a god, a mighty spirit being whose relationship to Jehovah is as our words are to us. As our words reveal us, so he would reveal Jehovah.

"In a beginning was the Logos; and the Logos was with the God and a god was the Logos (John 1:1, literal trans., Diaglott).

"And the Logos became flesh, and dwelt among us, ...full of grace and truth..."

John's second proposition is that this mighty spirit being became a fleshly being in due time:

"...And the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us ... full of favor and truth"(John 1:14, literal trans., Diaglott).

"No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

The first two propositions unite in a third. The spirit being who became flesh is the Son of God, Jesus. John now introduces testimony to prove that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, the revealer of the Father.

"...No one has ever seen God. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father He has made him known" (John 1:18, Diaglott).

Testimony of the Baptist

John's first witness is John the Baptist. The question is raised, Why does the Apostle John give such prominence to John the Baptist? There has been considerable discussion as to who wrote that Gospel which we call "John's" Gospel. Let us suppose that some one who had not been well acquainted with the Baptist had written this Gospel. It is hardly likely that he would have given such prominence to the Baptist's testimony. The fact, therefore, that the Baptist is highlighted is important, suggesting that whoever wrote this Gospel was acquainted with (and probably had been a disciple of) the Baptist. Notice that the Baptist is mentioned nineteen times and not once is he called the Baptist, but is simply called John. In Matthew, he is called John the Baptist seven times; in Mark four times, and in Luke four times. In the Fourth Gospel the writer does not need to distinguish John the Baptist from himself, whose name is John, by calling him the Baptist. This is a second item of internal evidence to the genuineness of the Gospel. The Gospel was probably written by a disciple of the Baptist. We saw that the disciple's name was John. In other words, without leaving the Fourth Gospel we have reason to believe that the writer must have been John, a disciple of the Baptist, who, on the Baptist's advice and testimony, left him to follow Jesus, whom the Baptist declared was the Lamb of God (John 1:35-37).

The Baptist was in a position to know Jesus well. He was his cousin; he had known him from childhood. He was also in a position to know what was involved in being the Messiah. By the very circumstance that he himself had been mistaken for the Messiah, he was driven to define (in his own mind) the distinctive and characteristic marks of the Messiah. Ever more clearly, John must have seen that he was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light.

He was prepared to understand the sign which gave him more than his own personal surmises to go upon in declaring Jesus to the world as the Messiah. If there is any man's testimony we may accept about our Lord, it is that of the Baptist, who from his close contact with the most profligate

and with the most spiritual of the people saw what they needed and saw in Jesus the power to give it.

It was the Baptist's purpose to point him out and to discern certain information about him. The Baptist's demeanor caused many to suppose that he was the Messiah, but John quickly dissuaded such ideas. He could see, because of his own spirituality, that Messiah was far superior to himself. Seen from the low ground, the star may seem close to the top of the mountains; seen from the mountain top it is recognized as infinitely above it. John as on the mountain-top.

It is impossible that we can make nothing of such a testimony. Here was one who knew spotless holiness when he saw it if any man e er did; who knew what human strength and courage could accomplish and is man, standing thus on the highest level human nature can reach, looks up to Christ, and not only admits his superiority, but shrinks from all comparison with him.

What is the flaw in John the Baptist's testimony? Ah, there is no flaw, and we gladly accept his testimony, receiving Jesus as our light, the Lamb of God, the one who is able to take away our sins and to make us partakers with himself of his holy Spirit.

Signs and Works

Jesus says that a though John was a burning and shining light, he has a greater witness than that of John. This he says on the basis of the works which the father had sent him to earth to do (John 5:35,36).

Remembering the purpose of this Gospel, let us note the selection of miracles to which John points. There are forty nine miracles recorded by the combined testimony of the Four Gospels, with hints of more. John was familiar with all of these, but he records seven (the eighth mentioned in chapter twenty one is not included in the "these" of John 20:31). These, therefore, become all the more interesting as we look for some logic in his selection of these specific situations. The seven are as follows:

- 1.) Water turned into wine (John 2:1-11)
- 2.) Nobleman's son healed (John 4:43-54)
- 3.) Man with infirmity thirty-eight years healed (John 5:5-16)
- 4.) Feeding of five thousand (John 6:5-13)
- 5.) Walking on the water (John 6:16-21)
- 6.) Blind man given sight (John 9)
- 7.) Lazarus raised from the dead (John 11:1-46)

"Many others *signs* truly did Jesus in the presence of is disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written [these seven], that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ [the Messiah], the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31).

Notice the word "sign." It appears seventeen times in John's Gospel and is usually translated "miracle." Scholars point out a very interesting shade of meaning in the original Greek word. Suppose that Jesus had by the exercise of spiritual force picked up a couple of elephants and held them up over his head -- that would have been a miracle, an exhibition of power, without a doubt. But John would have used a different Greek word to describe that kind of miracle. Suppose that Jesus had jumped off the pinnacle of the temple and had landed without injury to himself. Such an incident would also have been miraculous, but the Greek word for that kind of miracle is also

very different from the word that John chose to use. Either of these miracles are pointless, they have no meaning of themselves. But the works which Jesus did -- especially the seven to which John refers -- are full of meaning.

Demonstrating Truth through Action

What would have been accomplished if Jesus had turned stones into bread for himself? It would have shown him to be a wonderworker. But it would not have shown him to be the Messiah. So, we find the seven "signs" of John's Gospel are not recorded to support Jesus' wonderworking ability. They demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah. We might ask, how is this done? A well-known commentator says of the miracles found in John's Gospel, "They were miracles not ending in themselves." And that is exactly the point. These miracles constituted object lessons. They were the embodiment in deeds of divine thoughts, of spiritual truths. Examining them we find that not only does each miracle bear its own lesson, but also, taken as a group, they unite in teaching that Jesus is the Messiah. Just as the heavens declare the glory of God, so the works of Jesus declare his glory.

When Jesus takes to himself his great power to reign, there will be no need to prove that he is the Messiah. All shall be fully informed in that day. And it will be futile for his enemies to oppose him. But in the days of his humiliation he performed miracles which disclosed to those who had (and have) ears to hear that he is the "Sent" one of God. They illustrate the activities of the Millennial Day of Messiah.

Coming Glory

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him..." (John 2:11). Yes, Jesus, Master, Lord, this sign alone convinces us -- this sign which causes some to hate thee, this sign which causes some to despise and reject thee, causes us, your disciples, to exclaim with true devotion and joy: My Lord! It satisfies our heads, and oh, how it rejoices our hearts, as we recognize it not only as a miracle but as one being worthy of our great Messiah, revealing to us ahead of time his glory.

In turning water into wine we see the first changes which come to the heart of the believer. He must first hear the story of the Savior's love. And with this hearing there comes to the believer a wonderful realization of what a "restoration of life" means and which are those rights which shall accompany such a restored human life. He is led to give his life to the Father's will and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. What a transformation takes place in the believer's life when the Father honors him with the spirit of sonship! What gladness such an experience will produce when the Marriage of the Lamb takes place and we, with our Lord, partake of that "new wine" which the literal wine in the parable represented. What a new life will be given to the world as it partakes of the "fruitage" brought forth by the Gospel Age Church.

The healing of the nobleman's son, the curing of the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda -- What were these mighty works but illustrations of the great work of restoration to which Messiah will put forth his arm! And was it only to appease the literal hunger of the five thousand that caused Jesus to bid them to be fed from live barley loaves and two small fishes? Ah, no! In this, as in them all, he displays his glory. He discloses his identity and he shows himself to be the living bread who came down from heaven. The word shall yet partake of such a meal when they learn to appreciate the right to hum life which Jesus graciously surrendered for their sake.

How sublime the evidence of his messiahship is seen in the Light of the world! How plainly we see this lesson in the blind man who received his sight -- a man born blind, not because of his own sin, nor the sin of his parents -- but so that the work of God might declare in him the work of Messiah (John 9). How plainly this points to the Millennial day in which Messiah will open the eyes, not of one blind man but of all. He will restore not only physical, but mental vision as well -- yes, and moral vision also. He will open the eyes of their understanding and enlighten their minds regarding God. He will be their light!

The Sign of Resurrection Hope

All of the circumstances of Jesus' life bear testimony to his messiahship. When a storm came up while the apostles struggled to cross the sea by boat, the Master came to them -- walking on the water.

"Ah," muses John as he selected the miracles which in his judgment best emphasized Jesus' authority, "I must not leave this one out." We are glad that he did not, for it so aptly illustrates the manner of his return to earth. The church has been tossed about during the Gospel Age just as the disciples were in that boat. The sea of humanity is raging, and the winds of society blow against us. Just as Jesus came to the disciples unexpectedly, walking on the water, so his return to his faithful is quiet and in a manner which they had not anticipated. Oh, the joy to remember that as the waves and wind subsided for the disciples and they were "immediately" at their safe haven, so the Master will subdue all things under him so that he and his bride may reign for a thousand years.

Dearly beloved, you who have stood in silence by the cold and silent form of one you have loved, as you have watched as the body was lowered beneath the sod, as you have turned from the graveside in tears, is there any significance to you that Jesus awakened Lazarus from the sleep of death? How eloquently this act speaks to us of the mightier work of raising all that have ever lived back to life. This miracle points unerringly to the time, now so close, when Messiah, the Living One, the One who for our sakes became dead and is now alive forevermore, shall speak with authority and all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth.

Oh, blessed Jesus, Oh Faithful and True Witness! You have the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God, and believing thus we have life through thy name.

- P.L. Read

Why There is Diversity Among God's People

"Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" - 1 Corinthians 4:7

While it is true that men are born with inalienable rights and privileges, yet no man is born without sin. The Scriptures declare that the race yet in Adam's loins was sold into sin six thousand years ago. In this sense, we were not born free but are slaves of sin. Neither are we born equal. No two persons are exactly alike in opportunity, talent, and ability. We differ from one another. God did not create some better and some worse -- some more richly endowed and some less richly endowed. We are to take the Bible statement of the origin of humanity and understand that God made Adam perfect. The human imperfections are the results of the dying process. Sin in man has altered our original image and likeness of God. Satan brought about this difference through Mother Eve.

In our text, however, the Apostle Paul has in mind a new creation in Jesus Christ -- a new order, amongst whose members there is a difference. Some in the church have many talents, others have few talents; some have special talents, others have ordinary talents. But Satan is not charged with having given the greater or lesser talents to these. The apostle says that it is God who has set the various members in the body as it has pleased him, and that both this setting of the different members of the body and the bringing forth of the different degrees of fruitage are manifestations of God's grace in our hearts. Thus we differ one from another.

Diverse Attainments

Growth in the holy Spirit is dependent upon one's zeal to know and to do the will of God. We are in the school of Christ in order to learn of him. Some learn rapidly, others less rapidly. In proportion as they learn, they are blessed. All receive a measure of the holy Spirit -- some spiritual blessing from the Lord. Those who are anxious to know the will of the Lord and to study it grow the more rapidly, and thus have more of the holy Spirit. These are zealous to do the Lord's will. Their progress is not attributable to themselves, but to the favor of God. The Apostle goes on to say, Ye are God's workmanship; "...it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13)

We could not do this work ourselves That which works in us is God's power. He is preparing a temple. He provides the cornerstone of this temple (Eph. 2:20) and decides who shall be members of the temple class. We could not choose a place for ourselves. But in God's providence we have responded to the call to be living stones. The stones were cut out of the dark quarry of humanity and are now being shaped and prepared for places in the glorious building.

Another Kind of Diversity

The great Master Workman is at work as us, chiseling and fashioning us. He is making us what we are. Consequently there is to be no boasting. We all have personality, however, and if ours be too resistant to shaping, like the grain in a stone, then we will be abandoned, just as would be an unworkable stone. As the Apostle Peter exhorts, we are to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt us in due time. He reminds us that we should look to God and give him praise for all that we have and are (1 Peter 5:6; 4:11). We are co-laborers with God.

We praise God that he has changed us from what we once were, that he continues to change us every day, and that he will continue this work as the time passes and as we seek his will. What have we of ourselves? Nothing! We were dead through Father Adam's disobedience; we were born so, having no right to everlasting life. But God has a plan which is worldwide. He has offered the blessings of the highest feature of this plan to man and has invited us to come to him now in advance of the world. This we receive through his grace.

- C.T. Russell

The Pathway of Life

"But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil..." - Deuteronomy 30:14,15

Only the revelation of God, his Word, supplies a satisfactory answer for every question. God foresaw the fall of man. He foresaw the consequences of death. He anticipated the longings which we would have for release from the hand of our enemy: Death. He knew the struggle which would be necessary in order to break the bands of death and to attain the heritage which he planned for man -- eternal life in the paradise he had created.

Things Yet To Come

At times God has forcibly reminded man of his ultimate intent to satisfy man's longings for life and for fellowship with him. He has used pictorial illustrations from the past to draw our attention to characters and experiences in their lives which illustrate what he will yet accomplish in subsequent times.

Knowing in advance how the nation of Israel would behave, God chose the Jewish people as a special people. These he separated to himself. The message of light which he committed unto them proved to be a way to death -- they were imperfect and unable to keep the Law Covenant. While they were still manifesting their imperfection under the Law, God was already speaking to them, by picture and prophecy, of a second segment of his plan: of another age, and of a new covenant. By these future arrangements all of his prior arrangements would be vindicated and all his past promises fulfilled.

Belief And Confession

Paul declares that there has been only one message (or gospel) to man from the time of Moses until Jesus. Those words of good news were simply stated: confess the Lord with the mouth, and have faith in him in the heart. Paul and Moses used the same formula, and we believe that they did not do so by accident.

An oral confession, words spoken by the mouth, is the first evidence of a faith which comes from the heart. Indeed, it seems part of God's plan that a confession of the truth is necessary to fully appreciate it. We cannot confess what we have not yet believed, and so the belief must precede the confession. But the confession is necessary in order to enlarge and complete the faith which begins in the heart (Luke 6:45). We deceive ourselves if we think that the faith which lies in our hearts can be maintained without publicly confessing it. *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation"* (Rom. 10:10). The righteousness which begins by faith cannot go on to completion unless it is accompanied by faith, the most prominent feature of which is oral confession.

Moses warned his brethren about leaving the Lord in order to serve other gods. His words also apply to those who walk after the spirit (Rom. 8:1,4). We have received the words of life and are enjoying the Canaan rest by faith in our Lord. But we are in danger of self-deception. We are in danger of making other gods (at the suggestion of our Adversary or the desires of our flesh) and of turning our hearts from the proper center of our affection. There are other gods: the god of wealth, the god of fame, the lesser gods of family, of home, and even the most ignoble of all, the

god of self. We must not be drawn aside by any of these. Nor may we give to them any service or worship. To do so would be to turn away from the hopes we have in Christ and to neglect the grace of the Lord. In this manner God has left s a choice. We have the blessings and the curses to choose from; the advantages and the disadvantages; life and death.

Choosing the Best Portion

The choice of life, blessing, righteousness, and God is not a momentary joy. Trials and testings will prove whom we love and whom we serve. We will do well if we examine ourselves, noting what has occupied our time, on what we spent our money, and where our affections dwelt today. What satisfies our longings as nothing else can do? To the extent that we find the Lord to be the center of our hopes and our aims, in that same proportion we will find joy, peace, blessing, and continue, spiritual growth.

We speak vainly if we claim to love the Lord without seeking to do those things which please him. He is not seeking those who appear loyal, but those who love him and his righteous arrangements. God accepts our profession of faith and devotion under the robe of Christ's righteousness knowing that as long as we are still imperfect earthly children we could never love him perfectly. But he expects us to progress in the pathway to life, to grow in grace and in our personal knowledge of and acquaintance with him. Only thus will we remain in his love. Only by abiding in his life can we attain the glories which he has in reservation for those ho love him supremely.

T

The Second Psalm

"Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." - Psalm 72:11

The Bible may be compared to a mountain range of truth rising above the plane of human reasonings. Here and there along the range high peaks arise which especially evidence divine inspiration.

Let us consider in detail one such peak of divinely revealed truth, the majestic second Psalm which celebrates the dignity, power, and ultimate triumph of an Anointed One; the world dominion of a king who is a son of David and a Son of God. His is a universal kingdom; the whole earth is his inheritance; all nations are subject to him, and under his sway righteousness and peace everywhere prevail. It is a kingdom in permanent form and without end. Jehovah has found one who can be in the highest sense his king and his priest; and this one, by whom he acts in all his works, both of judgment and of blessing, is thus distinguished from and lifted up above all his predecessors.

The circumstances which determined the psalmist's mood and called these words forth are not known. He finds himself transported, however, into the midst of those commotions among the nations which result in their becoming "...the *kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ...*" (Rev. 11:15).

This psalm is in the nature of a prophecy which awaits its final accomplishment. It had a partial fulfillment, no doubt, in the banding together of Herod and Pontius Pilate against Christ, and was thus applied by some in the early church (Acts 4:25,27). But this was not the complete (final) fulfillment which is yet to take place.

The psalm naturally divides into four parts of three verses each.

Psalm 2:1-3 -- A description of the presumptuous rebellion of the princes of the earth.

Psalm 2:4-6 -- Jehovah expresses his contempt for the rebels and announces his purpose to overthrow them by the agency of his anointed One.

Psalm 2:7-9 -- The anointed One declares his office and his resolve to carry out Jehovah's will and execute vengeance.

Psalm 2:10-12 -- A practical and solemn warning is given to the princes and people of the earth.

In this order, and using Darby's translation, let us consider the prophecy in detail.

Maddened Nations

Why are the nations in tumultuous agitation, and why do the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the princes plot together, against Jehovah and against his Anointed: Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us (Psalm 2:1-3).

The psalm opens abruptly; these are words of amazement, breaking from the lips of one who looks out upon the nations and generations of men. He discerns in his widespread view a

rebellion against God, which in the vast ignorant masses of the world is half unconscious, but in their leaders finds description, shape, and formula. Jehovah himself is assailed in the person of the king whom he has set upon the throne. How can they who set themselves against the Lord and against his Christ succeed? Will men fight against God (Acts 5:39)? Such an enterprise cannot succeed. It is, in its very nature, a vain thing (Ps. 33:17).

It would be premature to suggest a positive interpretation of these strange words in our day. We await the future for a full understanding of such expressions as "*...these shall make war with the Lamb...*" (Rev. 17:14). But as we consider the state of world affairs we discern in the trend of human affairs a glimmer as to their ultimate direction, and consequently the significance of the prophecy.

The shaking of nations (cf. Ezek. 31:16) commences in 1914. This shaking has continued and will increase to that terrible climax when, but for the grace of God, no flesh would be saved (Matt. 24:22). By all scriptural indications we stand at the threshold of the kingdom of God. "*... it is near, even at the doors*" (Matt. 24:33). "*So likewise, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is at hand*" (Luke 21:31). Yes, the morning comes, but so does a *night* (Isa. 21:12). The morning has yet to be discerned by the nations, but there is a gradual fear of a steadily increasing *night* that is descending on all the earth.

Two prostrating global wars have upset the economic and social equilibrium of the nations. The resulting wave of discontent and disillusion sweeping away all before it has resulted in the rise of atheistic totalitarianism now dominating half the world and threatening to engulf it all. Peoples of all races and colors are in a state of terrible ferment in their search for political autonomy and economic freedom. Further, the decline of real faith in supernaturalistic religion and the corruption of man's spirit which has resulted from the crass materialism so rampant have gendered attitudes of mind in the human race causing grave concern to serious thinkers.

Men's hearts fail them for fear (Lu 21:26) in anticipation of the things coming upon them. From all sides the cry is heard that the present distress among nations (Luke 25) *must* be resolved by a new order, a worldwide collaboration in human affairs. Mankind recognizes that their safety and existence necessitate a unity which is independent of race, creed, color, or language. And one of the marked signs of these latter days is an active search for such a worldwide solution that will embrace all nations and assure the well-being of all.

Christian Sympathy

Every Christian must sympathize with this hope; not only for the creation but also for the creatures which we see suffering throughout the earth.

For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves... (Rom. 8:22-23).

We cannot ignore the inspired record which witnesses that all human efforts to establish a just and equitable arrangement of society are doomed to failure. The desire of all nations (Hag. 2:7) will not be brought about by human ability. Every such hope, as commendable as it may be, is a vain thing. There can be no peace apart from the Prince of Peace. There can be no world order apart from the World King. Man must learn the lessons of his own insufficiency and utter dependence upon his Creator. Such has been God's purpose in the permission of evil.

Legal Requirements

Our generation is reaping the consequences of six thousand years of sowing contrary to the law of God. This law requires (for human well being, happiness, and prosperity) first, supreme love for the Creator, and second, love for one's fellow men. Any violation of this law is sin, whether as an individual, nation, or world. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23) and "...God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). The time has approached for the establishment of Christ's kingdom upon earth. All things that can be shaken [that will not stand up under the present testing by "fire"] will be removed (cf. Heb. 12:26,27).

Be Still

He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. Then will he speak to them in his anger, and in his fierce displeasure will he terrify them: And I have anointed my King upon Zion, the hill of my holiness.

The scene abruptly changes. The first act of this drama was set upon earth. The second scene is laid in heaven. The transition is a sublime one, from the noise and agitation of earth to the safety and tranquility of heaven. As we pass onward we pass upward. Watching all the turmoil and rebellion below, calmly surveying the nations as they rage, there sits the One against whose rule this unwitting revolt is made. He reposes far above them and beyond their reach, in undisturbed majesty.

The psalmist sees the utter futility of revolt against God. He discerns the strength of the Almighty; the pillars of the eternal throne are before his soul; he can find no other words to express the vanity of man's revolt than to say that the Lord shall "laugh." There is something awful in this representation of God. First, as if in calm contempt, he laughs. Then, there is a bitter derision which in its effects bring their counsels to nothing and baffles their purposes. He mocks them. Lastly, with the thunder of his word, he casts them into confusion. "Who thought," said Luther "when Christ suffered and the Jews triumphed, that God was laughing all the time?" Beneath this bold expression is hidden a profound truth, namely, that to all superior beings, and above all to God himself, there is something in sin that is not only odious, but absurd; something which cannot possibly escape the contempt of higher, much less of the highest, intelligence.

Human World Government

Why should the attempt of struggling men to establish a world government be so displeasing to the Almighty? Is not such an arrangement desirable? Would it not justify man's greatest efforts? Should not the benevolent God have blessed such an ambitious undertaking?

Our first thought might agree with these questions. But as we look deeper into the provisions of the Lord for the ultimate and eternal welfare of all people, we find that this human arrangement would be a direct expression of resistance to God's will. A beneficent world government is the logical solution to the problems of men. But no human strength or wisdom can possibly effect such a solution. Rather, the inherited burden of individual sin, plus the hatreds and prejudices engendered by the conflicts of nations, have raised insurmountable obstacles to such a utopian scheme, and this truth is recognized by practical men. But whether man realizes this truth or not (as regards his helplessness), God does. God has wisely provided his own arrangement for the welfare of mankind. Consequently, he who rules in the kingdom of men (Dan. 4:32) and guides the course of human history, as once to the literal sea, so now to the raging sea of humanity, says

"...Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further..." (Job 38:11; cf. vss. 8-11; Luke 21:25; Ps. 104:5-9; Jer. 5:22). Any attempts to break the bonds and cast away the cords of restriction which were set by divine omniscience will be in vain. To permit man to go further in his social experiments would be to endanger his very existence (cf. Matt. 24:22).

In verse six (Psa. 2:6) we have God's answer to those that oppose him,

"I [the pronoun is emphatic in the Hebrew text], the king of heaven and earth, have set my own king, my Son and my vicegerent, on the throne. The world's dominion shall be his, and his alone. He who dares to attempt accomplishing this rough human ability is setting himself against me and my unalterable purpose. I have constituted my king upon Zion, my holy hill. He, and none other, shall work my sovereign will, for he alone is worthy."

The above expression can be linked with the judgments of the sixteenth chapter of Revelation, which terminate at Armageddon. What a host of other relevant scriptures come to mind:

"Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of all countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us. For the LORD spake thus to me with a strong hand and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid (Isa. 8:9-12).

The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed (1 Sam. 2:10).

"The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect" (Ps. 33:10).

"The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted" (Ps. 46:6).

"... the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come..." (Rev. 11:18).

"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I raise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent" (Zeph. 3:8,9).

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low ... And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2:11,12,19).

Receive Thy King

"I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; I this day have begotten thee [brought thee forth -- *Young*]. Ask of me, and I will give thee nations for an inheritance, and for thy possession the ends of the earth: Thou shalt break [shepherd -- *Rotherham*] them with a scepter of iron, as a potter's vessel thou shalt dash them to pieces (Psa. 2:7-9).

Now, with inimitable beauty, the Messiah himself appears and speaks, witnessing to his sonship and kingship, and to the constitution -- the grand charter of rights -- under which this fallen world is given to him as his empire.

No transition or introduction marks this passage from the words of Jehovah to those of his Christ. Just as Jehovah, in opposition to the rebels, acknowledges the king upon Zion, so in opposition to the same rebels the king upon Zion appeals to God. He pronounces the Father's counsel concerning himself, a royal decree which like that of the Medes and Persians is irrevocable. He reigns not by the will of man but by the grace of God; not by right only as the Son of Jehovah but by covenant and promise likewise (cf. Heb. 5:5).

The plain thought of the decree is this: "This day, by anointing thee as king on my hill of Zion, I have recognized thee as my son. This enthroning is my public and solemn recognition of this relationship" -- a relationship never disclosed to created minds till this momentous inauguration as king. So Paul understood this verse, for he finds it fulfilled in Christ's resurrection and subsequent ascension and enthronement in heaven (cf. Acts 13:33; 17:3 1; Rom. 1:4).

Jesus is the Son of God. The son is dear to the Father, beloved, well pleasing, and the Father has given all things into his hands (John 3:35; 5:20). Being a son, he is heir of all the Father's things. And since God has said to him "*Thou art my Son...*," it becomes each individual to say to him "...Thou art my Lord, my sovereign."

Since the nations are given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, there awaits a great unveiling of the glory of earth's rightful King -- the proclamation on earth of the decree of heaven. We believe This will be accomplished at the time of the deliverance of natural Israel from Jacob's Trouble (Jer. 30:7), in a miraculous demonstration of divine power. This will be the first visible evidence to a astounded world of the new heavenly arrangement for earth. Then every knee shall bow to him (Phil. 2:9-11), and every voice acknowledge his right to lordship. "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power...*" (Ps. 110:3). The wonderful provision by God for the eternal welfare of the suffering creation shall be revealed. They shall see his answer to their prayers and groanings -- and this when faith in a divine helper will, evidently, be at its lowest ebb. When man most realizes his necessity in the consciousness of his weakness will be the most overwhelming. When he cries out in the despair of his soul; when God shall answer man by revealing his chosen king. Along with his associated saints, God's king shall commence the reign of righteousness which will more than satisfy the needs of mankind. But before all of this, there must first come the divine judgment upon the institutions of man, through this righteous king. "...he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15).

Hear the Beloved Son

"And now, O kings, be ye wise, be admonished, ye judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, though his anger be kindled but a little. Blessed be all who have their trust in him" (Psa. 22:10-12).

Finally, the Psalmist seeks, by wise counsel, to dissuade the rebels from their mad enterprise. He had heard the words of Jehovah and those of Jehovah's Anointed.

The last three verses of the psalm correspond to the first three. The revolt against the Lord and his Anointed finds its parallel in the injunction to serve the Lord and to kiss the Son. There can be no resisting the Son's authority. Of him Moses truly prophesied,

"For Moses truly said unto the Fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22,23).

Therefore, kiss the Son, do homage to the King, O mighty ones of earth lest he become angry and ye perish in the way. Be quick to obey, for his anger may easily be kindled.

In his kingdom nothing shall be permitted to hurt or destroy, and the slightest opposition to his authority shall be summarily dealt with. But trust him, obey him, confide in him, and he shall bless you with a feast of fat things (Isa. 25:6) because he, and those with him, are appointed to bless all the families of the earth (cf. Gen. 12:3; 28:14).

"He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also 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. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised. There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grace of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed" (Ps. 72:6-17).

What a glorious message the second Psalm holds forth! Oh that men could see within its beautiful and impressive words the lesson of submission to the divinely decreed arrangement! What a thrill of hope and joy would surge through the trouble wracked earth! Praise God that men will yet see, and this we believe, in the not far distant future.

- W. J. Siekman

The Anthem of the Flowers

Almighty Jehovah, we adore thee! Thou who studded the earth with our beautiful faces. Decked in all the colors of thy glorious rainbow, we glow with tender radiance in the soft moonlight or unfold in a thousand brilliant hues 'neath the sun. We carpet the hillsides. We riot in the meadow. We fill with fragrance and beauty the dim aisles of the forest. The waters lovingly reflect our sweet faces, and the snow proudly wears us as gems on her bosom. With rapture little children hold us to their hearts and in their own language prattle sweet love words. We bring to the bedside of the weary and sick the breath of the forest, the glory of the meadows and the wealth of the roadside and garden. We rejoice in our loveliness. We rejoice in our mission to delight the eyes of men and to lift up their hearts to thee in worship and adoration.

Oh! Jehovah our Creator! If all the glory and beauty of our tiny faces is but an infinitesimal reflection of thee, what must thou be in all the glory and beauty of thy being! What must be the rapture, not only of those who behold thee, but those also who shall yet have the glorious privilege, not only to look upon thee, but to be made like thee. As they fall before thee in praise and worship, we too, lift our thousand faces up to thee in silent adoration.

Jehovah, we adore Thee!

- RE Doney

Maturity

MATURITY is the ability to control anger and settle differences without violence or destruction.

MATURITY is patience, the willingness to pass up immediate pleasure in favor of the long term gain.

MATURITY is perseverance, the ability to sweat out a project or a situation in spite of opposition and discouraging setbacks.

MATURITY is unselfishness -- responding to the needs of others, often at the expense of one's own desires or wishes.

MATURITY is capacity to face unpleasantness and frustration, discomfort and defeat without complaining or collapse.

MATURITY is humility. It is being big enough to say "I was wrong." And when right, the mature person need not say: "I told you so."

MATURITY is the ability to make a decision and stand by it. The immature spend their lives exploring endless possibilities, then do nothing.

MATURITY means dependability, keeping one's word, coming through in a crisis. The immature are masters of the alibi -- confused and disorganized. Their lives are a maze of broken promises, former friends, unfinished business and good intentions which never materialize.

MATURITY is the art of living in peace with that which we cannot change.

- Bible Study Monthly

Irretraceable Footsteps

"There is a way which seems certain to a man, but death lies at the end thereof" - Proverbs 16:25, Crabb's New Translation of the Proverbs

In the twelfth century, an Arab doctor by the name of Thabit found himself in charge of the medical care of a small group of European migrants to the East. One day a knight with a severe abscess on his thigh was brought before Thabit, but refused to let the good doctor touch him, preferring instead to be treated by a European physician. A message was sent to Thabit's European contemporary, but by the time he arrived the condition of the soldier had worsened so much that he eventually agreed to let Thabit treat him temporarily.

Thabit cleaned the wound carefully and applied a poultice. By the following day the abscess was beginning to heal and the soldier was a little stronger. But then the European doctor arrived. The man had no time for Arabs and said, "You idiot; you don't know how to cure the sick! Get out!" Thabit protested that his treatment was working, but the European doctor refused to listen. He woke the soldier and said, "Would you rather live with one leg, or die with two?" Naturally, the soldier suggested the former. His leg was amputated by an axeman who was ordered to "cut cleanly with a strong blow." The patient died instantly through blood loss and shock.

Twelfth century European medicine was crude and based upon the principle that the simple answer was best. Never mind bothering with "high-faluting" poultices; just amputate the limb and be done with it. Several lessons can be drawn from this tale, one of which is the foolhardy way in which the European physician insisted on following his own treatment program despite the warnings of Thabit that amputation was both dangerous and unnecessary. Who would not be reminded of the Scripture which says, *"There is a way which seems certain to a man, but death lies at the end thereof"* (Prov. 16:25).

The swirling caldron of humanity contains many people like that European doctor; people who, despite repeated warnings, insist on walking along deceptively smooth pathways only to find that an impassable chasm lies at the other end. Invariably, such persons will, on realizing their foolishness, attempt to retrace their steps, only to find that they cannot. Imagine the agony of one whose way forward is blocked by a chasm dug with his own vain choices, and whose retreat is prevented by a mountain of circumstances fashioned with his own hands! Both the European physician and the patient made bad choices. One ruined his career, the other lost his life. Truly, when we willfully proceed in a certain direction and ignore the pleas of those who know better, death lies at the end thereof. *"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* (Prov. 10:23).

Personal Responsibility

Another truth is contained in our theme text. We bear a large part of the responsibility for our own circumstances. True, we are all, without choice, born onto the broad road which leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13), but as with most broad roads, our road contains many different lanes. Just which lane we travel along is largely our own choice. Those who are currently being called from death to life (John 5:24) need not walk along that road at all. Nevertheless, the final choice will always be our own.

The choices we make in life's garden are, in a sense, irrefutable footprints. They are like seeds planted in the Spring, which if nurtured until Summer become deeply rooted plants which cannot, for good or for bad, be uprooted without considerable effort.

Foolish Euripides, the Greek philosopher, once said "He who submits to fate without complaint is wise." Such a pessimistic maxim only encourages the spiritually lazy and the spiritually impetuous to walk along pathways which do not lead to happiness but rather to spiritual anguish. More sensible was the Indian poet Sivananda Saravati who noted that "The positive always defeats the negative: courage always overcomes fear, patience overcomes anger and irritability, love overcomes hatred." What we initiate today will always bear fruit tomorrow if we put our hand to the plow.

One of today's human weaknesses is to deny the cause if there is no immediately discernible effect. (As Churchill had it, "we live in the age of skepticism.") In short, it is popular to believe something when we can see it, or at least the effects of its presence. Peter predicted that in the latter days some would deny the *parousia* (presence) of Christ because no significant change could be measured in the state of human affairs. They would reason, "*Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*" (2 Pet. 3:3-4, ASV).

In a different way, this attitude may also be used as a tool of the Adversary to tire and wear down the saints still housed in their earthly tabernacles. During their lives, the Little Flock (Luke 12:32) strive to sow seeds of goodness wherever they find good ground. "Do good unto all men"(Gal. 6:10) is their maxim. And yet, despite this sowing of good seed, the world of mankind hurtles ever onward toward its seemingly inevitable marriage with oblivion. Few thinkers would deny that, from a human standpoint, the time may come when humanity will remove itself from the tapestry of creation by means of a nuclear holocaust. Of course, we know that this will not happen, but we may still anguish at the fact that the seeds we now sow will have no immediate effect upon man's plummet down to spiritual and physical degradation. We may ask, in paraphrase of Peter's words, "why are all things continuing on just as they were at the beginning of creation" (cf. 2 Peter 3:4)? The answer to this perplexing question lies in the dispensational features of God's plan of salvation.

The church in the flesh is, figuratively speaking, in the springtime of her spiritual labor. Seeds -- the fruits of the Christian character that blossom in glorious fullness at the translation of each new member to his or her reward in the heavenlies -- are being planted with great effort. It may seem that, as mankind races to seemingly inevitable destruction, no goodness is sprouting from the labors of the church in the flesh. This is not because the seed is infertile but rather because *now is not the time for fruit*. It is not during the springtime that the church can expect to see the fruit of her labors but in the *basileia* or Kingdom age. This will be the summertime, when the work of the church will bear fruit. *And Summer is near*.

This present evil world is like a school in which each member of the Little Flock is being trained -- as though in a proving ground -- for the twin offices of king and priest, which they are to exercise during the Kingdom age. Then, when the earthly kingdoms will relinquish what remains of their sovereignty, the fruits of the Spirit which are now being worked into the characters of the church in the flesh will be fully matured; and the completed Bride, beyond the veil, will use each and every fruit or talent to the benefit of a confused and feckless humanity who will then be ushered to a newness of life.

Mankind now, in its foolishness, makes seemingly irretraceable footsteps along the pathway of death, while the church, quietly and unobserved, makes irretraceable footsteps towards the inheritance of glory. Mankind labors, sometimes for decades, to achieve things that seem to be of inestimable value -- nuclear fission is a typical example -- only to find that the inventions turn on them with rapacious teeth. The pursuit of liberation leads to man being chained to the fruits of his own inadequacy. Meanwhile, the church labors to perfect itself for its future work .

But mankind's recklessness will end during the *basileia*. Then it will be possible for men to retrace their footsteps and find "life" (and an abundance of it) and not death at the end of their path. The church beyond the veil will play a vital part in this, and on this basis she may take heart and now that the good seed she now sows will not remain dormant forever. The poet spoke truly, when he said:

What we have done
Will not be lost to all eternity.
Everything ripens at its time
And becomes fruit at his hour.

- Michael Hallowell -- England

Near Unto God Am I

Near unto God am I,
Nearer I cannot be;
For in the person of his son
I am as near as he.

Dear unto God am I,
Dearer I cannot be;
For in the person of his Son
I am as dear as he.

Cleansed before God am I,
Purer I cannot be;
For now the loveliness of Christ
Completely covers me!

Not merely pardon for my sins,
But victory over sin,
The very source where sin begins
Renewed and cleansed within;

Not weary struggling to repress,
But all my mind renewed,
Refined by inwrought holiness,
Possessed, infilled, endued.

Heartiness

We need not be afraid of heartiness in our songs of praise. There is a dignity about the truth but it is not the dignity of a cold, lifeless statue. It is the dignity of a warm, vibrant, living thing, animating all with which it comes in contact and ennobling all that it touches. So when the situation calls for praise to be loud, then let the praise be loud.

- Selected

The Holy Tryst

"Martha was cumbered" with anxious care,
For the Master had come to dine that day,
And she did so long for the things most fair
To serve to her guest in a royal way.
The silver to polish! The platters to fill!
Yet Mary sat listening, devout and still.

"O Master, my sister hath left me alone;
And carest thou not? Now bid her, I pray,
That she come and lift the cakes from the stone
Before they are sodden. It is now mid-day,
And I, too, have longed to sit at thy feet --
To hear thy words that are holy and meet."

And the Master saw in Martha's deep eyes
A hungering soul; and the sisters bore
Each to the other, his divine surprise.
Had they never *known* each other before?
But the Master knew that the veil between
Hid only an unspoken love, unseen,

And tenderly lifted and drew it aside
While the table stood waiting, all silver white,
For the viands prepared in love and pride;
But pride gave way before love's clearer light
As the Master spoke peace to Martha's vain heart,
And she too, made the choice of "that good part."

"But one thing is needful, Martha, to bring --
A few ripe figs with a morsel of bread;
A cup of water from the hillside spring
This is the banquet I wish you to spread.
For I am the Water of Life this day,
And I am the Life-giving Bread alway."

And the three sat down to the simple fare --
To eat of the manna of life and drink
The wine of the kingdom to come; and there
The Master communed, for he came to think
Of the heavenly things held in memory,
And a holy tryst kept in Bethany.

- N. F. Jolly

The Inner Holiness

Goodness ("innocence," "purity," "freedom from sin") is not holiness ... even fallen nature was not holy. Goodness is an attribute of nature, as God created it: holiness is something infinitely higher. Holiness is a moral attribute; it is what a free will chooses and determines for itself. The human nature which God created and gave is only naturally good, but what man wills to have of God and of his will, and really appreciates, that has moral worth and leads to holiness.

We speak of the holiness of God as his infinite moral perfection; man's moral perfection can only come in the use of his will, consenting fully and abiding in the will of God. Only thus can he become holy. To be holy is to be Godlike: to have a disposition, a will, a character, like God. Holiness is not something we do or achieve; it is the communication of the Divine life. Where God is, there is holiness. It is the presence of God which makes us holy.

The nearer man approaches the divine presence, the greater the degree of holiness. Because God dwelt among Israel, the camp was holy; all uncleanness was to be removed from it. But the holiness of the Court of the Tabernacle was greater: those forms of uncleanness which did not exclude one from the camp could not be tolerated there. The Holy Place was still holier, because still nearer to God. The inner Sanctuary where the Presence dwelt on the Mercy Seat, was the holiest of all, was most holy. The principle still holds good: holiness is measured by nearness to God.

There are Christians who dwell in the camp but know little of drawing nigh to the Holy One. Then you have outer court Christians: they long for pardon and peace, and they come repeatedly to the altar of atonement, but they know little of true nearness to holiness, of their privilege as priests to enter into the Holy Place. There are others who have learned that this is their calling, and long to enter in, and yet they hardly understand the boldness with which they are able to enter into the holiest of all and to dwell there. Blessed are those to whom this secret of the Lord has been revealed. They know what the torn veil means and the access into God's immediate presence. The veil has been taken away from their heart and they have found the secret of true holiness in the indwelling of the Holy One, the God who is holy and makes holy.

Separation is not holiness but is the way to it. Though there can be no holiness without separation, there can be separation that does not lead to holiness. The Hebrew word for holiness possibly comes from a root that means "to separate." But where in our common translation we have the words "separate" or "sever" or "set apart," they derive from Hebrew words which are quite different. The Hebrew word for "holy" is used exclusively to express that special idea.

Separation is setting apart and taking possession of a vessel to be cleansed and used; it is the filling of it with something precious that gives it its real value. Holiness is Divine filling, without which separation leaves us empty. Separation is not holiness. The Nazarite was a type of separation. His separation consisted in three things: temperance (abstinence from the fruit of the vine); humiliation (not cutting or shaving the hair -- it is a shame for a man if he have long hair [cf., 1 Cor. 11:14]); self-sacrifice (not defiling himself -- even for father or mother in the case of their death). What we must note is that separation was not from unlawful things, but from lawful ones. It is in giving up, not what can be proved to be sin, but all that may hinder the intensity of our surrender into God's hands to make us holy, that the spirit of separation is manifested. Our holiness will not consist in human separation (in which we attempt to imitate God's) -- but in entering into his separateness; belonging entirely to him -- set apart by him and for himself.

We must know the *need* for separation. It is no arbitrary demand of God but has its ground in the nature of things. To separate a thing is to set it free for one special use or purpose, that it may fulfill the will of him that chose it and so realize its full potential. Separation is the principle that lies at the root of all division of labor; complete separation to one branch of study or effort is the way to success and perfection. God wants us all to himself that he may give all of himself to us. God separates us from all that does not lead us into his holiness and fellowship.

The separating power of the presence of God, this is what we need to know. *"For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?"* said Moses, *"is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth"* (Exod. 33:16). It is the consciousness of God's presence, making and keeping us his very own, that works true separateness from the world and its spirit, from ourselves and our own will. As this separation is accepted and prized and we persevered, the holiness of God I will enter in and take possession. He separates us for himself and sanctifies us to be his dwelling. He comes to take personal possession by the indwelling of Christ in the heart. Holiness is not what I do, or do, or give, but what God is, and does, and does to me.

Holiness is not something we bring to God or do for him. Holiness is what there is of God in us; our power to become holy is found in the call of God; the Holy One calls us to himself that he may make us holy in possessing himself. *"I am Jehovah who makes holy"* (Exod. 31:13, Living Bible).

If we gather up the lessons we have found in the Word from the Garden of Eden downward, we see that the elements of holiness in us correspond to some special aspect of God's holiness, namely, deep restfulness, humble reverence, entire surrender, joyful adoration, simple obedience. They prepare us for the Divine indwelling, and this we have through the abiding of Jesus with the crown of holiness upon his head. In the holiness of Jesus we see what ours might be: righteousness that hates sin and gives everything to have it destroyed; love that seeks the sinner and gives everything to have him saved. *"...whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother"* (1 John 3:10).

It is a sobering thought that we may be studying to know what holiness is and yet have little of it because we have little of Jesus. A man may be directly occupied with only infrequent thoughts of holiness, and yet have much of it because he is full of Jesus. There is first what we might call "word truth" in which a man may have the correct form of words while he does not apprehend the truth they contain. Then there is "thought truth," that is, a clear intellectual apprehension of a truth without the experience of its power. The Bible speaks of truth as a living reality -- this is "life truth" in which the spirit of the truth we profess has entered and possessed our lives.

God's chief sanctifying tool is his Word, but it is not the Word that sanctifies; it is God alone who can sanctify. Nor is it simply through the Word that God does it, but through the truth that is in the Word. As a tool the Word is of no value if God does not use it. Let us strive to connect God's holy Word with the Holy God himself. God sanctifies in the truth through his Word.

Many Christians have no conception of the danger or the deceitfulness of a "thought" religion, one with its sweet and precious thoughts coming to us in books and preaching and with little power. The teaching of the holy Spirit is in the heart first; man's teaching is in the mind. Let our thinking lead us to cease from thought and to open the heart and will to the Spirit.

We are called in order to be prepared for a heavenly life. If we are to live throughout eternity with him who is holy, we too must be holy, for without being holy we cannot share his life of holiness. We are on our way to see God. We have been invited to meet the Holy One face to face, and all our schooling here in the life of holiness is simply the preparation for that meeting and that vision.

"...He *hath chosen us in him ... that we should be holy...*" (Eph. 1:4). This is a calling before and above everything, to Holiness. "...be ye *holy, for I am holy*" (cf. Lev. 20:7; Lev. 11:44). It is as if God said, holiness is my blessedness and my glory: without this you cannot see me or enjoy me. I invite you to share it with me. Does it not move and draw you mightily, the hope of being with me, partakers of my holiness? I have nothing better to offer -- I offer you myself: be ye holy, for I am holy. "Mine" is a separating word in language, it is the great word love uses. God knows no mightier argument, he can put forth no more powerful attraction than this, "that ye should be mine."

That holiness is more than "cleansing," and that it must be preceded by cleansing, is taught in more than one New Testament passage. "...*Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word*" (Eph. 5:25, 26). The cleansing is a negative side -- the being separate and not touching the unclean thing; the sanctifying is the positive union and fellowship with God.

As soon as the people had been redeemed from Egypt, Sod's first word to them was "*Sanctify [make holy] unto me all the firstborn...*" (Exod. 13:2). The word reveals how proprietorship is a central thought both in redemption and in sanctification, the link that binds them together.

- *Andrew Murray*

Entered into Rest

Martin Dado, MN
L. Hallberg, MN
Rhoda Miller, PA