

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. LXXI March / April, 1988 No. 2

## There is Nothing

*"A little cloud ... like a man's hand" - 1 Kings 18:44*

Elijah had been answered by the "God of fire;" had vindicated the name of the Lord; had converted a nation in one day. Now there awaited the fruit of that conversion -- the ending of the pitiless drought of three and one half years. He has ascended to the top of Carmel and casting himself down upon the earth with bowed head, prays. His young attendant reaches the highest point of the long ridge of the mountain and, instructed, looks out over the wide expanse of the Mediterranean Sea. The boy gazes in the hope that the Prophet's earnest prayer may bring down the long desired rain. The sun had sunk into the western sea. But after the sunset there followed the long white glow so common in the evenings of Eastern countries. Six times the youthful watcher went up and looked, and *six* times he reported: *"There is nothing."* The sky was still calm.

But at last on the far horizon there arose a little cloud, the first that for months had passed across the heavens. It was no larger than an outstretched hand; but it grew in the deepening shades of evening, and quickly the whole sky was overcast, and the forests of Carmel shook in the welcome sound of those mighty winds which in Eastern regions precede a coming tempest. The cry of the boy from his mountain watch had hardly been uttered when the storm broke upon the plain, the rain descended and the nation was delivered from its sufferings.

Here we have one of those natural parables which can be applied in many ways. It expresses the truth that out of seeming nothingness there may arise the very blessing most desired.

*"There is nothing."* So it would seem as we look at the meager materials which we have to carry on the conflict with the great powers of nature. *"There is nothing."* So we say to ourselves when in the blank desolations of sorrow we look on the work that lies before us, feeling alone in the world. *"There is nothing."* So we think as we look into the vast expanse and see no visible trace of its eternal Maker and Ruler. There is the infinite space, and nothing, as far as we can see,

beyond it. We say, "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down" (Isa. 64:1)! and no voice answers us. The silence of God oppresses our spirits.

But courage! Look up, despising not "...the *day of small things*" (Zech. 4:10), for though we may indeed have searched "six times" in vain, a "little cloud" even now appears in the heaven of human affairs. "The great events of history" says an acute French writer, "like the mysterious personages in old romances, come through a door in the wall which no one had noticed." And the greatest, unrecognized by mankind (Luke 21:35) is before us. The whole creation moves steadily onward to one divine event, though slowly and uncertainly it may seem. "*For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry*" (Heb. 10:37). "*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him...*" (Rev. 1:7). "*The kingdom of God is at the doors*" (Matt. 24:33; cf. Luke 21:31).

Not to the world only, but to each one of us, "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand*" (Rom. 13:12). Young and old, our time is passing away; we are every one of us drawing nearer to that day when we must face the Judge of all mankind. God knows that we all have need of mercy -- of his infinite mercy. Everyone who knows his own heart knows now welcome is any thought that softens the severity of that judgment. How gladly we trust that the love which was manifested in Christ Jesus is indeed boundless and overflows. "*God be merciful to me a sinner*" (Luke 18:13) must be the prayer even' of the best and purest of men.

We are all of us, young and old, beset more or less by the sophistries, the systems, the schools, the parties, which time and circumstances, which past ages or our own age, have cast around, beside, before and behind us. We are involved in their meshes, we walk in the grooves which they have made for us. We feel it a duty to go on as we have begun walking round and round our own small circles, seeing only ~a short way in advance, thinking much of what lies close before us, little of what lies beyond us. Yet none of these things of themselves constitute the whole or the essence of Christianity; Christ is still the pattern of his church, he is the "little cloud's on the horizon, the harbinger of unnumbered blessings soon to fall upon suffering humanity.

Brethren in Christ, the Truth -- take hope! A new day is dawning; a new order draws nigh! "*Gird I up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*" (1 Pet. 1:13). Put far from you childish things (1 Cor. 1:11), set your feet firmly in the way of God (Matt. 22:16), and take earnest heed to the words of the Apostle to his "son" Timothy: "*Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them*" (1 Tim. 4:15).

To feel that there is a work before us to be done -- to feel that God is with us, and that the world and the things of earth have no power to turn us from our purpose L- to have fears, and hopes, and pleasures, and pains, of which the worldly man knows nothing -- to feel that God in Christ has forgiven us all that is past, and henceforth bids us joyfully serve him in newness of life -- to have within our hearts that divine faculty of love which alone will outlast the great change of death -- to show forth in our characters some trace, however slight, of "*the mind which was also in Christ Jesus*" (Phil 2:5) -- this is to become a new, heavenly, unearthly creature which will survive when all else shall wax old and perish; which will have its abiding place in the "...*new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*" (2 Pet. 3:13).

- W. J. Siekman



## **The Broken Body and Shed Blood** **On The Memorial Supper**

*"For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." - John 6:55, ASV*

By God's instructions there were a great many memorials instituted by the Jewish people. For illustration we cite four examples. There was the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, along with the tables of the covenant (Heb. 9:4) which were kept in the Ark. Also, we remember the two stones upon the shoulderpieces of the ephod which were to be stones of memorial for the children of Israel (Exod. 28:12). There were the fringes on the garments of the children of Israel that they might remember all of the commandments of God and do them (Num. 15:38). Finally, we are reminded of the censers of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram which were made into beaten plates for a covering of the altar ... to be a memorial to the children of Israel, to the end that no stranger (ie., those not of the seed of Aaron) come near to burn incense before Jehovah (Num. 16:39). All of these are interesting because of their historical and spiritual lessons.

But the memorial in which Christians find the greatest inspiration is that which our blessed Master himself instituted. Jesus identifies himself with the lamb of this celebration. The cup which the Jews called the "cup of blessing" he took as a symbol of his own shed blood and for that purpose the cup was blessed anew. He took, also, the unleavened bread as a symbol of his own body, broken and sacrificed in the doing of God's will.

We reflect, momentarily, upon the instituting of the Passover. God commanded the Israelites to sprinkle the doorposts and lintels of their homes with the blood of the slain Passover lamb: "...when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exod. 12:13, ASV) was the promise he had given them. The night for Israel's departure from Egypt arrived and God's judgment was to be executed upon the land. The destroying angel would soon begin his deadly pass through the land, slaying all of the firstborn (vs. 12) who abode in homes unprotected by the sprinkling of blood.

Provision had been made for God's chosen people; the blood was a "token" or indicator of where the children of Israel lived and the destroying angel would mark that token, saving the lives of the firstborn who were protected by their obedience to God's command. What assurance is found in these words! They were spoken to God's natural children, but to those who have received the spirit of adoption (Rom. 8:15) the words are just as strong, for they are still abiding in the land of the enemy (Ps. 106:10).

The Paschal lamb may be viewed from at least two aspects. The lamb is the ground (foundation) of peace. It is also the center of unity. The blood upon the lintels secured Israel's peace. Nothing else was required. There was no question of good works or of individual merit. The Israelite needed only to believe God's word (that when he saw the blood the destroyer would not enter their homes) and act upon that faith. It is the same with believers today. We find no peace with God because of works which we may have done. No! Faith in the power of Jesus's blood cleanses us of our sins even though they be as scarlet. It is only the power of his blood which can make us as white as snow (Isa. 1:18).

The second aspect of the Passover lamb (antitypically, Christ Jesus our Lord) was pictured in the assembly of the people for the purpose of eating that Passover meal. The lamb brought the Jews together just as Christ is the center and unifying influence among Christians. Being saved by the blood was one thing. Being gathered around the lamb was quite another. It was the blood of that slain animal which lay at the foundation of both their peace and unity.

It is the same in Christian experience.

Apart from the atonement found in Christ there can be no peace with God and no fellowship either with God or with his people. Believers in Christ are gathered by the power of the holy Spirit to a living head: to the living Christ in heaven.

He is our center. Having found peace through his blood, we own him as our grand gathering point. The holy Spirit is the only gatherer; Christ himself is the only object to which we are gathered. The holy Spirit can gather only to Christ. It cannot gather to a system, a name, a doctrine, or set of doctrines. It gathers to a person, and that person is a glorified Christ in heaven.

Jesus ate his last Passover during the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan. That is, he did this during the evening of the previous day. Following this ritual observance he instituted the "Lord's Supper," a memorial of his coming death, in which we have a partnership:

Does not the consecrated cup which we bless mean that in drinking it we share in the blood of Christ? Does not the bread which we break mean that in eating it we share in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, many as we are, are one body, for we all share in one loaf (1 Cor. 10:16-17, E.J. Goodspeed).

Eating the lamb gave the Jewish people literal strength. We too must be nourished by feeding upon our mystical lamb. We must accept the merit of his sacrifice and that acceptance must have an affect upon the way we live our lives -- just as food does to our fleshly body. This is how we are prepared for our deliverance in the morning of God's new dispensation. The Apostle Paul calls our bread the bread of "sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8). What does this expression mean? If we see a loaf of bread we may know that it is good to eat, tasty, that it will satisfy our hunger and that we will obtain strength to do a number of activities. But, if we EAT the bread all of these things actually HAPPEN. It is just so with Christ Jesus. We may know, intellectually, that there is salvation in Jesus' blood but as long as there *is* only knowledge there is no saving work that is taking place. We must eat! We must accept Jesus as a moral power in our lives. Our attendance to his words must be allowed to transform (-- yes, CHANGE) our lives. We must grow in a specific direction: toward him and into his likeness. That is the work of putting on Christ (Gal. 3:27) and growing up into him (Eph. 4:15). So it is that by eating the figurative flesh of Christ we agree to "suffer with him" (Rom. 8:17) and to conduct ourselves in a way that is fitting to those who are to become members of the "body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27).

Eating bitter herbs was commanded along with the eating of the lamb. Symbolically, these herbs depict our cheerfully enduring (Greek, "patiently") those experiences which we need in order to be tested by God. The "body of Christ" is to share abundant promises and glory with Jesus. It is fitting, therefore, that their faithfulness to God be tested -- *"in all points"* -- as was our Master (Heb. 4:15). Our course of action began with the repetition of words -- we accepted Jesus and the blood which he shed for us. It is fitting that God prove our words, accurately determining whether we are so set upon doing his will that we will do it to our best ability forever.

So it is that we go forth from the point of our initial decision with staff in hand, just as did those pilgrims and strangers who left Egypt in search of the promised land. Like they, we carry our bread with us and our journeys are long and tiring before we enter into our promised rest. Typically, to the Israelites who murmured at the provisions of God, the wilderness became their burial place. Only two of the males who ate that first Passover lamb in Egypt entered into the land of promise. That stark reminder gives us reason to question whether we too are being unworthy (1 Cor. 11:27,29) in the way we "eat" of the true Lamb of God.

The children of Israel did not fail to enter the land because of their lack of knowledge. No, it was an *"evil heart of unbelief"* (Heb. 3:12) that caused them to fall in the wilderness.

"Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God. But exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called today; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin: for we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:12-14, NAS).

We learn from the fourth chapter of Hebrews that Israel failed because they had no faith in what they heard (Heb. 4:2). Pictorially, they were looking at the divinely provided bread without eating it. The lesson they learned is apt for us today. They provided us with both a memorial and a lesson. The One who will save "*all Israel*" (Rom. 11:26) out of their ruin has yet to erect his eternal memorial to the God of justice, wisdom, love and power.

There will be one hundred forty-four thousand who will die along with Jesus the sacrificial lamb. These individuals will have a faith like that of Joshua and Caleb. They saw their enemies properly, "*...we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight*" (Num. 13:33, NAS). Like those two men of days gone by the faithful followers of Jesus must have an active faith in the One who promised them the fruitage of the land.

Among the provisions by God for the sustaining of modern day "wilderness pilgrims" is the Memorial Supper which our Lord himself instituted on the night prior to his crucifixion. "*Do this*" he said, "*in remembrance of me*" (Luke 22:19, NAS). "*Take, eat; This is my body*" (Man. 25:26, NAS). That loaf did appropriately represent him because it was unleavened. "*For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world*" (John 6:33, NAS). He could say!

"I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh" (John 6:51).

The Revelator describes a group who did not have this satisfaction but promises them a future in which they shall *no longer* hunger or thirst -- Rev. 7:16). When we partake in the Memorial Supper we profess our own faith by which we are appropriating the perfect life which Jesus laid down; accepting the restitution rights and privileges which his death secured for Adam and all his race.

### **Dead With Him**

The Apostle Paul includes the believer in the symbols of the Memorial Supper. In our participation we not only commemorate the death of the Savior of the world, we also accept our privilege of being "dead with him" (cf. Col. 2:20; 2 Tim. 2:11).

I speak to you as men of sense. Form your own judgment on what I say. When we bless 'the cup of blessing,' is it not a means of sharing in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, is it not a means of sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, many *as* we are, are one body; for it is one loaf of which we all partake (1 Cor. 10:15-17, NEB).

Matthew Henry comments on this passage:

By partaking of one broken loaf, the emblem of our Savior's broken body ... we coalesce into one body, become members of him' and one another. Those who partake by faith have this communion with Christ and with one another. Those who eat the emblems make a profession of communion: they claim to belong to God and the blessed fraternity of his people and worshipers, thus accepting *all* whom the Lord hath set in the body according to his pleasure (1 Cor. 12:18).

In order to see the connection of thought here it helps to remember that the words translated "communion" in this verse (1 Cor. 10:16), "partakers" (1 Cor. 10:18), and "fellowship" (1 Cor. 10:20), are all forms of the same Greek word. This word means "communion," "association," "fellowship." The genitive ending after the word may denote either the persons or things with which one is associated, or that in which they are associated and have part together.

If we examine the argument, we find that it is the fellowship or association with the blood and body of Christ that is meant. In the second analogy used, the Israelites, by eating the sacrifices, are represented as partaking with the altar -- that is, as consuming one part, while the altar consumes the other part of the sacrifices. And in the conclusion, those who eat the idol-sacrifices are represented in the same way, as in fellowship with demons.

Here in the other analogy of the Lord's Supper, it must be fellowship with some thing or person that will keep up the correspondence between all the cases, that forms the basis of the argument. Some suppose that the fellowship is with believers in the body and in the body of Christ. But this supposes that the point of the argument (that with which we are associated in the Supper) is left out by Paul. Moreover, in the parallel cases, it is not the association with the worshipers, but the object of worship, that is pointed out.

"The consistency of the several parts of the argument requires that we understand here fellowship with the blood of Christ to be meant. But in what sense? It is evident from the passages (Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:23; John 6:51), which give the history and explanation of the Lord's Supper, that these symbols represent the sacrificial death of Christ and that, therefore, fellowship with the body and blood of Christ is fellowship with the Lord in his death. The partaking of these emblems brings us into this fellowship. Just as the emblems are symbols, not the real body and blood of the Lord, so our eating and drinking are symbolic acts, representing the faith by which this fellowship is really accomplished" (cf. John 6:35, 40, 47, 51, 53, 54, 56-58) - *American Commentary*

We find these words corroborated by another writer:

"There is a difference, we believe, maintained in the Scriptures between the bread, which symbolized the Lord's flesh, and the wine, which symbolizes his blood. The church, in order to be accepted as members of his glorified body, must share in both of these by participation. The loaf, as the Apostle explains, not only represents our Lord, as the Bread of Life necessary for us, it also represents us as his members to be broken as our Lord was broken; and the wine represents not only our Lord's blood, but also the blood of the church -- that we are sharers with him in his sacrificial sufferings" (1 Cor. 10:16, 17).

The privilege of sharing our Lord's cup is not for the world. They will not share in the sufferings of Christ, because all opportunity to share in his sufferings and glory will have ended when the church is glorified. The Lord said, drink all of it. There will be none for the world to drink. And we who are of the Church class "...fill up that which is [left] behind of the afflictions of Christ" (Col. 1:24) Reprints, pg. R5342.

Shortly before instituting the Memorial Supper the Master offered his intercessory prayer for all who should be of his body.

"...I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20,21, NAS).

This can only refer to the oneness of spirit that Paul begs us to be eager to maintain -- the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:2). Thus doing we may lead a life worthy of our calling. By

"worthy" he includes our developing humility, meekness, patience, and the forbearing of one another in love (Eph. 4:1-3). If a person who participates in the Memorial Supper lacks the desire for unity, they must not have noticed the way in which the Apostle associates the two thoughts:

Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment unto himself, if he does not judge the body rightly (1 Cor. 11:27-29, NAS).

### **Who Partakes?**

No one should partake unworthily. In Paul's stance on this matter he was not forgetting our universal imperfection (Rom. 3:10). Rather, he is remembering that we are acceptable "in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6) -- and that only by faith. Through him we can offer our lives as living sacrifices which are acceptable to God in holiness (Rom. 12:1). *"Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you -- unless indeed you fail the test?"* (2 Cor. 13:5, NAS).

If we say that we have fellowship with him and yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 6,7, NAS).

Immediately after the institution of the Memorial Supper Jesus warned Peter: *"Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat"* (Luke 22:31 NAS). The Master added, *"But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers"* (vs. 32). These were the words to the weak, impetuous Peter who thought that he was able to follow the Lord into any experience. Instead, Jesus told him of his future threefold betrayal and the crowing of the cock (John 13:38). Was it perhaps for our instruction that Peter was permitted so drastic a demonstration of his weakness? And are not the Master's following words perhaps just as apt for us to be comforted with when he said, *"Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me"* (14:1). *"Hence, also, he [Jesus] is able to save forever those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them"* (Heb. 7:25).

In closing we are reminded of the words of another:

Beloved brethren, let us *"meditate on these things"* (Phil. 4:8). We have tasted, through grace, the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Jesus. As such it is our privilege to feed upon his unsearchable riches (Eph. 3:8); to have fellowship in his sufferings and be made conformable to his death (Phil. 3:10). Oh! Let us, therefore, be seen with the unleavened bread and bitter herbs, the girded loins, the shoes and staff. In a word, let us be marked as a holy people (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9), a crucified people, a watchful and diligent people -- a people manifestly on our way to God -- on our way to glory -- bound for the kingdom. May God grant us to enter into the depth and power of all these things; so that they may not be mere theories in our intellects -- mere principles of scriptural knowledge and interpretation; but (living, divine realities, known *by* experience, and exhibited in the life, to the glory of God (C.T. Russell).

- PE. Thomson



## The Serpent of Genesis Three

In the third chapter of Genesis we have neither allegory, myth, legend, nor fable, but literal historical facts set forth, and emphasized by the use of certain figures of speech.

All the confusion of thought and conflicting exegesis have arisen from taking literally what is expressed by figures, or from taking figuratively what is literal. A figure of speech is never used except for the purpose of calling attention to, emphasizing, and intensifying *the reality of the literal sense* and the truth of the historical facts; so that while the words employed may not be so strictly true to the letter, they are all the more *true to the truth conveyed by them*, and to the historical events connected with them.

But for the figurative language of verses fourteen and fifteen no one would have thought of referring the third chapter of Genesis to a snake: no more than one does when reading the third chapter from the end of Revelation (Rev. 20:2). Indeed, the explanation added there, that the "*old serpent*" is the devil and Satan, would immediately lead one to connect the word "old" with the *earlier* and former mention of the serpent in the third chapter of Genesis: and the fact that it was Satan himself who tempted "the second man," "the last Adam," would force the conclusion that no other than the personal Satan could have been the tempter of "the first man, Adam."

The Hebrew for "serpent" (Gen. 3:1) is *nachash* from *nachash*, to hiss, mutter, whisper, as do enchanters. Secondary senses are to divine, enchant, whence the frequent use of the noun as "serpent." The allied Chaldean word means *brass, copper*, from "an assumed root" meaning *to be bright*. Various passages tell us that Satan possesses a glorious appearance, and the Hebrew term probably includes the sense of *fascinate, enchant* (see Deut. 18:10 *et. al.*). This element of *fascination* connects with the latter use of *nachash* as "serpent."

The term *saraph* (Pl. *seraphim*) is derived from *saraph*, a homonym meaning (1) *to burn*, (2) *to be elevated*. In Numbers (Num. 21:8) [it is translated] "a fiery serpent"=*saraph*; in the following verse "a serpent" - *nachash*; while in verse six both words are given for "fiery serpents." The same word *saraph* (*seraphim*) is used of the heavenly ones of Isaiah (Isa. 6:2,6).

Thus *saraph* is used of a fiery serpent and of an exalted celestial being; *nachash* being similarly used to designate a serpent and a glorious spirit being.

Indeed, a reference to the structure of the third chapter of Genesis will show that the *Cherubim* (which are similarly celestial or spirit beings) of the last verse (Gen. 3:24) require a similar spirit being to correspond with them in the first verse (for the structure of the whole chapter is a great introversion). *The nachash*, or serpent, who beguiled Eve (2 Cor. 11:3) is spoken of as "an angel of light" in verse fourteen. Have we not in this a clear intimation that it was not a snake, but a being of glorious aspect, apparently an angel, to whom Eve paid such great deference, acknowledging him as one who seemed to possess superior knowledge, and who was evidently a being of a superior (not of an inferior) order? Moreover, in the description of Satan as "*the king of Tyre*" [Ezek. 28:11-19, who, is quite a different being from the "prince of Tyre," in verses 1-10, who is purely, human] it is distinctly implied that the latter being was of a supernatural order when he is called a "*cherub*" (Ezekiel 28:14,16, 11-19) His presence "*in Eden, the garden of Elohim*" (Eze. 28:13), is also clearly stated, as well as his being "*perfect in beauty*" (Eze. 28:12), his being "*perfect in his ways from the day he was created till iniquity was found in him*" (Eze. 28:15), and as being "*lifted up because of his beauty*" (Eze 28:17). These all compel the belief that Satan was *the "old serpent" (Nachash)* in Genesis the third chapter, and especially because

the following words could be addressed to him: *"Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before Dings, that they may behold thee"* (Eze. 28:17).

Even supposing that these things were spoken to, and of, an exalted human being in later days (cf Ezek. 28), still *"the king of Tyre"* is not compared to a being who was nonexistent; and facts and circumstances which never happened are not introduced into the comparison.

There is more about *"the king of Tyre"* in Ezekiel (Eze. 28:11-19) than was literally true of *"the prince of Tyre"* (Eze. 28:1-10). The words can be understood only of the mightiest and most exalted supernatural being that God ever created; and this for the purpose of showing how great would be his fall. The *history* must be true to make the *prophecy* of any weight.

Again, the word rendered "subtle" (Genesis 3:1) means *wise*, in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. In Ezekiel (Eze. 28:12) we have the good sense, *"Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom;"* and the bad sense, *"thou hast corrupted thy wisdom"* (Eze. 28:17, referring to his fall). So the word rendered "subtle" is rendered "prudent" [in a good sense] in Proverbs 1:4; Prov. 8:12; Prov. 12:23; Prov. 14:8; and in a bad sense in Job 15:5, 1 Samuel 23:22, Ps. 83:3.

The word "beast" also (Gen. 3:1) *chay*, denotes *a living being*, and it is as wrong to translate *zoa* "beasts" in the fourth chapter of Revelation as it is to translate *chay* "beast" in Genesis three. Both mean *living creature*. Satan is thus spoken of as being *"more wise than any other living creature which Jehovah Elohim had made."* Even if the word "beast" be retained, it does not say that either a serpent or Satan *was* a "beast," but only that he was "more wise" than any other living being.

We cannot conceive Eve as holding [a conversation] with a snake, but we can understand her being fascinated by one apparently *"an angel of light"* (*i.e.* a glorious angel), possessing superior and supernatural knowledge.

[It is remarkable that the verb *nachash* is generally translated to enchant, fascinate bewitch; or of one having and using occult knowledge (cf. Gen. 30:27; Gen. 44:5,15; Lev. 19:26; Deut 18:10; 1 Kings 20:33; 2 Kings 17:17; 21:6; 2 Chron. 33:6). So also the noun used in Num. 23:23; Num. 24:1.]

When Satan is spoken of as a "serpent," it is the figure of speech *Hypocatastasis or Implication*; it no more means a snake than it does when Dan is so called in Genesis forty-nine and verse seventeen; *or* an animal when Nero is called a "lion" (2 Tim. 4:17), or when Herod is called a "fox" (Luke 13:32); or when Judah is called "a lion's whelp." It is the same figure when "doctrine" is called "leaven" (Matt. 16:6). It shows that something much more real and truer to truth is intended. If a figure of speech is thus employed, it is for the purpose of expressing the truth more impressively and is intended to be a figure of something *more real* than the letter of the word.

Other figures of speech are used in verses fourteen and fifteen, but only for the same purpose of emphasizing the truth and the reality of what is said.

When it is said in verse fifteen, *"thou shalt bruise his heel,"* it cannot mean his literal heel of flesh and blood, but suffering, more temporary in character. When it is said (Gen 3:15), *"He shall crush thy head,"* it means something more than a skull of bone, and brain, and hair. It means that all of Satan's plans and plots, policies and purposes, will one day be finally crushed and ended, never more to mar or to hinder the purposes of God. This will be effected when Satan shall be

bruised under our feet (Rom. 16:20). This, again, will not be our literal feet, but something much more real.

The bruising of Christ's heel is the most eloquent and impressive way of foretelling the most solemn events and to point out that the effort made by Satan to evade his doom, then threatened, would become the very means of insuring its accomplishment. It was through the death of Christ that he who had the power of death should be destroyed and all of Satan's power and policy brought to an end, and all his works destroyed (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8; Rev. 20:1-3,10). What literal words could portray these literal facts so wonderfully as these expressive figures of speech?

It is the same with the other figures used in verse fourteen, "*On thy belly shalt thou go.*" This figure means infinitely more than the literal belly of flesh and blood; just as the words "heel" and "head" do in verse fifteen. It paints for the eyes of our mind the picture of Satan's ultimate *humiliation*; for prostration was ever the most eloquent sign of subjection. When it is said "*our belly cleaveth unto the ground*" (Ps. 44:25), it denotes such a prolonged prostration and such a depth of submission as could never be conveyed or expressed in literal words.

So with the other prophecy, "*Dust shalt thou eat.*" This is not true to the letter, or to fact, but it is all the more *true to truth*. It tells of constant, continuous disappointment, failure, and mortification as when deceitful ways are spoken of as feeding on deceitful food, which is "*sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel*" (Prov. 20:17). This does not mean literal gravel, but something far more disagreeable. It means *disappointment* so great that it would gladly be exchanged for the literal "gravel." So when Christians are rebuked for "*biting and devouring one another*" (Gal. 5:14,15), something more heartbreaking is meant than the literal words used in the figure.

When "*His enemies shall lick the dust*" (Ps. 72:9) they will not do it on their knees with their literal tongues; but they will be so prostrated and so utterly defeated that no words could literally depict their overthrow and subjugation. If a serpent was afterward called a *nachash*, it was because it exercised fascination over other creatures, and if it became known as "wise," it was not because of its own innate positive knowledge, but of its wisdom in hiding away from all observations; and because of its associations with one of the names of Satan (that old serpent) who "*beguiled Eve*" (2 Cor. 11:3,14).

It is wonderful how a snake could ever be supposed to speak without the organs of speech, or that Satan should be supposed able to accomplish so great a miracle [greater than that wrought by God himself, who opened the mouth of Balaam's ass.].

It only shows the power of tradition, which has, from the infancy of each one of us, put before our eyes and written on our minds the picture of a "snake" and an "apple:" the former based on a wrong interpretation, and the latter being a pure invention, about which there is not one word said in Holy Scripture.

Never was Satan's wisdom so craftily used as when he secured universal acceptance of this traditional belief for it has succeeded in fixing the attention of mankind on the *letter* and the *means*, and thus blinding the eyes to the solemn fact that the Fall of man had to do solely with the Word of God and is centered in the sin of believing Satan's lie instead of Jehovah's truth.

The temptation of "*the first man Adam*" began with the question "*Hath God said?*" The temptation of "*the second man, the Lord from heaven*" began with the similar question "*If Thou*

*be the Son of God,"* when the voice of the Father had scarcely died away, which said *"This IS my Beloved Son."*

All turned on the truth of what Jehovah had said.

The Word of God being questioned, led Eve in her reply (1) to *omit* the word "freely" (Gen. 3:2; Gen. 2:16); then (2) to *add* the words "neither shalt thou touch it" (Gen. 3:3; Gen. 2:17); and finally (3) to *alter* a certainty into a contingency by changing *"thou shalt surely die"* (Gen. 2:17) into *"Lest ye die"* (Gen. 3:3).

It is not without significance that the first ministerial words of *"the second Man"* were *"It is written,"* three times repeated and that his last ministerial words contained a similar threefold reference to the written word of God

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received me, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me ... I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world ... Sanctify them through the truth: thy word is truth (John 17:8,14,17).

The former temptation succeeded because the Word of God was three times misrepresented; the latter temptation was successfully defeated because the same Word was faithfully repeated.

The history of the third chapter of Genesis is intended to teach us the fact that Satan's sphere of activities is in the *religious* sphere, and not the sphere of crime or immorality; that his battlefield is not the sins arising from human depravity, but the *unbelief* of the human heart. We are not to look for Satan's activities today in the newspaper, or the police courts but in the pulpit, and in professor's chairs. Wherever the Word of God is called in question, there we see the trail of *"that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan."* This is why anything against the true interests of the Word of God (as being such) finds a ready admission into the media of the world, and is treated as "general literature." This is why anything in favor of its inspiration and Divine origin and its spiritual truth is rigidly excluded as being "controversial."

This is why Satan is quite content that the *letter* of Scripture should be accepted in the third chapter of Genesis, as he himself accepted the letter of Psalm ninety-one (vs. 11). He himself could say *"It is written"* (Matt. 4:6) so long as the *letter* of what is "written" could be put instead of the *truth* that is conveyed by it and so long as!, it is misquoted or misapplied.

This is the object in perpetuating the traditions of the "snare" and the "apple," because it ministers to the acceptance of his lie, the hiding of God's truth, the support of tradition, the jeers of the infidel, the opposition of the critics, and the stumbling of the weak in faith.

*Taken from the Companion Bible by E.W. Bullinger. Copyright ©1964, 1970, 1974 by Marshall Morgan and Scott, England. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.*

## Thorough In the Things of God

*"Ephraim is a cake not turned."* - Hosea 7:8

A cake not turned is *uncooked on one side*; and Ephraim was in many respects untouched by divine grace. There was some partial obedience, but there was much rebellion left. Ask yourself, I charge you, whether this is your case?

Are you thorough in the things of God? Has grace gone through the very center of your being so as to be felt in all your powers, your actions, your words, and your thoughts? To be sanctified ... should be your aim and prayer. And although your sanctification may not be complete in you anywhere, yet it must be universal in its action. There must not be the appearance of holiness in one place and sin reigning in another, or else, you too, will be a cake unturned.

A cake not turned is *soon burnt on the side nearest the fire*, and although no man can have too much religion, there are some who,, seem burnt black with bigoted zeal for that part of the truth which they have received, or are charred to a cinder with a vain pharisaic showiness of those religious performances which suit their views. The assumed appearances of superior sanctity frequently accompany a total absence of all true godliness. The saint in public becomes the devil in! private. He deals in flour by day and in soot by night. The cake which is burned on one side is dough on the other.

*If it be so with me, O Lord, turn me!* Turn the unsanctified nature toward the fire of God's love and let it feel the sacred glow, and let the burnt side cool a little while learning your own weakness and your need of heat when you are removed from the heavenly flame. Do not let yourself be found to be a double minded person, but one entirely under the powerful influence of reigning grace."

- C.H. Spurgeon

## Another Earthly Pilgrimage Ended

Brother William J. Siekman finished his earthly course on January 20, 1988, at the age of 85, following a series of heart incidents. He had been an ardent and devoted follower of our Savior for more than sixty years. Few men have known a better example of devotion to the Lord and of a Christlike spirit in action than was visible to all who met our dear "Br. Will." Friends of the Institute have recognized his contributions to our ministry since he first served as an Editor in 1940. He was a Director of the Institute from 1943 until his retirement in 1985. Many of us will best remember him for the tireless and inspirational twenty-five years of service that he spent in the Institute offices, always with the goal of bringing others more closely into the Presence of the Father and of our blessed Lord.

A private funeral was held. A memorial service will be held April 10, at the Berean Bible Church. See details under convention.

### A Song of Thanksgiving In Memory of A Dear Co-Laborer

*"Tell ... how great things the Lord hath done for thee." - Mark 5:9*

It is chiefly through the Psalms that the saint of God finds utterance for the praise and thanksgiving of a gratitude filled heart. Thus the Lord has wisely provided means of expression for the pent-up emotions within.

From among the beautiful expressions of praise and thanksgiving we have chosen for consideration the thirtieth Psalm which was (perhaps) composed after the psalmist's recovery from a near fatal sickness. The circumstances which called it forth are no longer clear. But who can consider these words of warm gratitude without his heart burning within at the thought of his own many benefits (Ps 116:12) received from the *"Giver of every good and perfect gift"* (James 1:17)?

I will extol Thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up,  
And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.  
O Lord my God,  
I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.  
O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave:  
Thou has kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. (Psa. 30:1-3).

Is this not descriptive of our own experience? Do we not remember the *"hole of the pit from whence we were digged"* (Isa 51:1). We were ...dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in times past [we] walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Eph. 2:1-3).

*"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another"* (Tit. 3:3). And what of our many foes who so frequently triumphed over us; those works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19), the enemies within the fortress so graphically presented (Psa. 30:19-21)? *"What fruit had ye then in those*

*things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death" (Rom. 6:21). Yea, our feet were almost gone; our steps had well nigh slipped. We looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but none were found (Psa. 73:2; Psa. 69:20).*

Then *"this poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps. 34:6). For he "looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death" (Psa. 102:19,20).*

But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7).

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by the instinctive outburst of adoring worship that arises from a pure spirit at the knowledge and vision of an Infinite, Self-existent, All-creative, and sovereignly ruling God, a God of holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. It occupies a higher realm than thanksgiving since it represents homage and appreciative adoration for God in himself, as he is in his eternal, glorious, perfect, and blessed Being, utterly without thought of the good he bestows upon the worshiping, recipient creature.

The offering of praise, therefore, is the one spontaneous act of the true saint, unaffected by promise of good and uninfluenced by expectation of return for service. As thus unmixed with any thought of self, praise is the highest expression of honor to God and it brings the purest and loftiest element into the Christian's communion with God. In both Testaments it is characterized as an "offering" or "sacrifice" by which God is glorified (cf. Psa. 50:14, 23; Psa. 107:22; Heb. 13:15). Joined with the tenderer and sweeter note of thanksgiving for ineffable and unlimited "goodness and mercy" praise is the one revealed activity of the sinless and redeemed hosts in the heavenly Presence (Rev. 5:7-14). *"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion" (Psa. 65:1).*

The *"remembrance of his holiness"* means literally "his holy memorial" ("celebrate his holy memorial" -- Darby) and probably refers to the passage, *"...and this is my memorial unto all generations"* (Exod. 3:15). God's name is his revelation of himself, in all his various attributes of love, wisdom, power, holiness, truth, righteousness. God's memorial is that great history of redemption, which was, so to speak, the setting up of a monument to his glory, on which all these attributes were inscribed. The Revised Version brings out the precise thought in translating: *"Give thanks to his holy memorial name."*

The details of this psalm are of continual interest. They belong to no one time or experience. Some of its details are suitable to family, home, and individuals through all the years of their history. Eminently so is the fifth verse, which tells us of the bitter and the sweet, the dark and the light which runs in various distribution along human lives. The underlying doctrine is the great fact that *"God is love"* (I John 4:8), that love runs through all, rules over all, explains all.

Here is a reason why God is to be praised -- because he manifests himself in love, not in wrath; or if in wrath, but for a moment. Love directs all. Rotherham renders this verse,

*"For there is a Moment in his anger, a Lifetime in his good pleasure (or favor); in the evening cometh Weeping to lodge, but by the morning 'tis a shout of Triumph (or joy)."*

The parallelism is carefully preserved in each member -- "anger" ... "favor"; "a moment" ... "a lifetime"; "evening" ... "morning"; "weeping" ... "joy." Weeping is described under the image of a wayfarer who comes in at evening to lodge for the night. The suddenness and surprise of gladness, on the other hand, in the morning, are beautifully represented by the simple "at dawn, a shout of joy," without a verb. Just as the sun in Eastern lands, without any long prelude of twilight to announce his coming, leaps, as it were, in a moment above the horizon, so does the light of God's love dispel in a moment the long night and darkness of sorrow.

We quote a beautiful parallel passage from Isaiah:

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer" (Isa. 54:7-8).

And in the greater picture of the restitution day which the psalmist's words bring to mind, with what thrilled hearts do we in foretaste picture the glorious revealing, through his Christ, of the great God of the universe, whose righteous and holy character will then be made manifest to all humanity. In that new heaven and earth God's blessings abundantly poured forth upon astonished mankind will result in the wiping away of all tears from their eyes and will more than offset their experience under the terrible night of weeping (cf. Isa. 65:17; Rev. 21:4; Isa. 35:10; Isa. 25:6-9).

And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.  
LORD, by thy favor thou hast made my mountain to stand strong:  
Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.  
I cried unto thee, O LORD; and unto the LORD I made supplication.  
What profit is there in my blood,  
When I go down to the pit?  
Shall the dust praise thee? Shall it declare thy truth?  
Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper (Psa. 30:6-10).

In their times of trial God's people in all ages have been brought to feel their entire dependence on him. In days of flowing prosperity we have little sense of that dependence. As the Psalmist expresses it here: "*in m~ prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.*" We are very apt to dream, when things are well with us, that they will always be so, and never otherwise. Tomorrow shall be as this day. Yet prosperity is more pleasant than profitable to us; though in show it looks like a fair summer, it is indeed a wasting winter, and spendeth all the fruit we have reaped in the harvest of sanctified affliction.

We are never in greater danger than in the sunshine of prosperity. It is rare to receive much of this world, and not as the prodigal to go afar off; 'tis hard to keep close to God in prosperity, when we have much of this world to live upon and content ourselves with; to live upon God and make him our content and stay, as if we had no other life nor livelihood but in him. We are very apt in such a case to let go our hold of God, discustom ourselves to the exercise of faith, abate and estrange our affections from God.

It is more common to pray for strength to endure through times of adversity and suffering than for strength to endure through times of prosperity and gladness. Yet it is these latter times of buoyant self reliance that are most full of peril. It is not in those perilous ways when every step gives fresh evidence that without our Leader we are lost, I that we are most likely to turn away from him. That supreme peril comes rather when we walk in the open plain and have forgotten the serpents



that lurk among the flowers. For every soul that is harmed by adversity, ten are harmed by prosperity. Yet you will find a hundred persons who pray against that adversity which so often brings men closer to God, where you will find one who prays against that pleasant prosperity which too often lures men away from God and from their own best future.

And how deceiving is that prosperity! When the days run smoothly, "involving happy months, and these as happy years," all seems certain to continue. But a change comes over our life. Ill health fastens on us; death invades our circle; relatives bring us into deep waters; our means of living fail; we are plunged into a very wilderness of woe. How falsely we judged when we thought that it was by its own inherent stability our mountain stood strong! No; it was solely the result of God's favor, for all our springs are in him; the moment he hides his face we are most grievously troubled. Sad but salutary experience!

*"Thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled."* What soul can be deserted and not be afflicted? All the world does no good without the favor of God. As all the stars, though they shine together, do not dispel the darkness of night; so no creatures can comfort us sufficiently when God hides his face. His absence cannot but be lamented with greatest grief, whose presence the soul prizeth above all earthly joy.

O! may no earthborn cloud arise  
To hide the from thy servant's eyes.

How moving we find the psalmist's plea to his God in verses eight and nine. And yet his prayer for prolonged life was not offered with the view of any earthly possession or enjoyment, but only with a view to the honor of God. He dreaded death as an end of praise to God. His plea is, What would my life blood avail if thou shouldst send me to the grave? If I may live I shall praise God and witness to his truth before the living, and this will avail to the glory and honor of God. But, cut down in death, my lips are dumb thenceforth as to any testimony for God in the land of the living. Essentially the same reasonings appear in other places (cf. Ps. 6:5; 88:10-12; Isa. 38:18,19).

Every better spirit, just in proportion to its thoughtfulness and nobility, is saddened as it compares performance with aspiration and work with aim. There are times when the words of God's most believing children about this fleeting life, and the shortness of our time for doing God's appointed work, run in the mould of the Psalmist's. There was a point of view from which life presented itself to our Lord himself as a golden day, and death as a cheerless night. *' I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work'* (John 9:4).

As we consider our own brief span, our "fleeting breath," well may we repeat the poet's words:

What need hath God  
Of this poor clay?

Thank God for the assurance that we shall not lie silent in the grave, but in the glorious Age of the future we shall show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9) -- him whose workmanship we now are, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. We therefore, with the Psalmist, rightly ask for life when we have in view the expending of our life to his praise.

*"Lord, be thou my helper."* In every duty, in every conflict, in every trial, in every effort to promote the Lord's cause, in every season of prosperity, in every hour we live, this short prayer is

suitable. If the Lord help us, there is no duty which we cannot overcome; there is no difficulty which we cannot surmount.

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing;  
Thou has put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;  
To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent.  
O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever. (Psa. 30:11,12).

To bless God for his mercies is the way to increase them; to bless him for miseries is the way to remove them. No good lives so long as that which is thankfully improved; and no evil dies so soon as that which is patiently endured. The concluding words of this psalm raise a responsive chord in our hearts:

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels (Isa. 61:10).

*"To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee."* This word "glory" is also found in the sixteenth Psalm (Psa. 16:9) and signifies "tongue," and is so translated in the quotation of this verse found in Acts 2:26. As light is the glory of fire (Exod. 24:17), so speech is the glory, the bright shining of the intellect. *"Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee"* (Psa. 63:3). What have we to do in the world as once and again his creatures, created anew unto good works, but to exercise ourselves in those, and by those to advance his glory? That all may return to him from whom all is, as the rivers run back to the sea from whence they came. Of him and through him, and therefore for him are all things.

I will sing of thy power;  
yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning;  
for thou hast been my defense  
and refuge in the day of my trouble.  
Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing:  
for God is my defence,  
and the God of my mercy  
(Psa. 59:16,17).

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart;  
I will shew forth all thy marvelous works.  
I will be glad and rejoice in thee:  
I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High (Psa. 9:1,2).

- WJ. Siekman

## The Mind Of The Master

*"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 2:5*

In Benjamin Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott* this verse reads: *"Let this disposition be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."* There is, perhaps, no passage of Scripture which throws a clearer, stronger light on the mind of Christ than the context in which this text appears. We quote the entire passage from the *American Revised Version*:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:5-8).

### He Was Rich

Our thoughts are carried back in time and upward in direction to Jesus' prenatal life, during which time he was a mighty spirit being, the *Logos* ("word" or "expression") of Jehovah (John 1:1). While existing thus in the form of God (spiritual), exercising the Father's power, and sharing his glory, our Savior was of a humble mind. He did not, as did Satan, conceive a plan to steal the divine authority, to exalt himself, or to seek a name more powerful than that which was rightly his. He had no thought of robbing the Father of *his* glory by making himself equal to God. On the contrary, he had the same spirit then that he later manifested on earth when he said *"...my father is greater than I"* (John 14:28).

Not only did he not seek to rob the Father of glory -- he did not even clutch at the glory of his own exalted state. He was so far from grasping at the splendor of exalted office -- as though it were a prize which he could not forego -- that he actually relinquished it. Yes, he divested himself of his royal robes and emptied himself of his glory.

This is the first picture which Paul presents in this context. If we question the motive of this abdication, saying "Why does the Son of God lay aside his princely estate?" the Apostle replies: "He is about to become a man, to be made in the likeness of men." If we still ask "why?" he tells us plainly (elsewhere) what he here assumes, that for our sakes the Son of God divested himself of his glory; he stooped so low in order to raise us high; he who was rich became, for our sakes, poor, so that we, through his poverty, might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

In effect, this passage teaches us that the self-inflicted humiliation of the Son of God was prompted by pure love and pity for men -- feelings so pure and powerful that they forced him to stoop down to our condition and to share in our situation. He is in God's form and shares his power; but this he resigns in order to accept a proposal from his heavenly Father that he become the savior of men, coming first to redeem, and later, during the times of restitution promised (Acts 3:19), to become its King and Deliverer: to regenerate men and enable them to regain the divine image they have lost.

## The Mind In Jesus Christ

This was his "mind," his "disposition," before he became a man. It continued to be his mind after he took our flesh and likeness. The Authorized Version and Revised Versions refer to the mind which "was" in Christ Jesus. However, scholars tell us that the Greek gives no verb here to correspond with the English word "was" (which is supplied in these translations). Furthermore, this limitation to his pre-human past is not expressed in the Greek. Because of this the text could properly be translated: "Let this mind be in you, which was and is in Christ Jesus."

He emptied himself of the spiritual glory that he possessed while existing as a spirit being. So also, he emptied himself of the glory of manhood by a voluntary humiliation during his human life. Wealth, rank, power,, learning, genius, fame: these are qualities which command the admiration of men. In these lay the glory, the splendor of human life, which Jesus sacrificed.

He might have set himself to be a great man, to exercise authority, to win reverence, to command service. Yet he declined these glories' Jesus lineage was honorable. His willingness to be the servant of all and his power to touch human hearts gave him the right to seek after such. So did wisdom, the wisdom of him who spake as never man spake; he alone was without sin and at no time transgressed the commandment. He was so good that the world received a new ideal of goodness, seen to this day. Yes, he who could have claimed the most splendid of human conditions, who deserved to be revered as hero, ruler, saint, declined all such honors just as he had previously divested himself of all spiritual glory.

What do we know of the sting and temptation of poverty and homelessness by comparison to him? What do we know of continuous dependence upon the generosity of others? !,, He had no place of his own on which to sleep. He owed bed, food, raiment to a few friends who ministered to him from their scanty resources.

Are we troubled by sorrows for which there seem to be no remedy? He bore *our* sorrows and carried *our* weaknesses. Do we dread death? He humbled himself and became obedient', to the Father even *unto* death. Do we dread shame more than death? His obedience to the Father lead him to the shame of the cross.

Or, have we felt the sharpness which is even greater than that of death -- the ingratitude, the indifference, the hostility of those whom *we*, have loved and served? He came to his own and his own did not receive him. He was rejected and despised by them -- the very same people for whom he had laid aside both the glories of heaven and earth.

## A Mind That Delights To Share

This was, and is, the mind of Christ. It was the mind that brought him down to earth; the mind that animated him when he ascended to heaven; the mind which even now animates him as the time for the establishment of his kingdom nears.

His is a mind that delights to *share*; a mind which counts nothing its own until all who are capable of receiving his fullness have had the opportunity to do so. His is a mind that could not be satisfied to enjoy anything thoroughly, until a way could be found (no matter at what cost to himself) by which we might be reconciled to himself and his Father, a way whereby we might be "... *purred, made white and tried...*" and thus fitted to share his joy. Once this had been accomplished it could truly be said of him that he might see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. His was a mind which moved him to divest himself of all splendor by which *we* also

were not blessed; to refuse every cup of blessing of which we could not drink; more still, a mind which compelled him to experience every poor and mean and painful condition by which we were tried, and to drink of every cup of shame and sorrow which we had poured for ourselves by our transgressions.

### **Our Pattern**

This disposition is to dominate every thought, word, affection and habit of our life. There were some in the church at Philippi (to whom these words were written) who were in danger of becoming self-asserting and vainglorious. Such danger is always present in the Christian church. Wherever there is an ecclesia in which there is real spiritual life, there Satan will also be active towards its overthrow. The Gospel not only fulfills its primary purpose, the animation of our affections toward God, it also animates men's intellects. Unless it is used to guide the affections there will, inevitably, be a collision of the intellects.

The great crises of the church illustrate this. During the Reformation the law of love was soon forgotten by the same minds which had been powerfully moved by eternal truths rediscovered. There is only one remedy for this situation. Watch. Pray. Look away from self and unto Jesus. This situation existed in Philippi and Paul could not keep quiet about it. He plies them with a loving argument for the unity of love:

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27).

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord" (Phil. 4:1,2).

Let us not judge these people too harshly. No, do not judge them at all. Rather, note the affection of the Apostle toward them and the delicate subject of which he must needs speak.

There was much to commend in this church. If we may estimate the caliber of this church by the tone in which Paul addresses them, we note the tenderness, affections and maturity with which he handles them. They had been established only nine or ten years before. Except for occasional visits by Paul and his helpers, they had been largely left to themselves, and yet they exhibited remarkable growth in the Lord. They were full of love and good works. They remembered the needs of Paul and offered practical assistance. They responded to deep doctrinal teaching as well as to the simplest appeals of love. The glorious power of the Gospel had been manifested in them.

However, the evil previously mentioned, began to raise its head. They tended to separate into cliques, sections -- a trouble which had injected itself into an otherwise happy circle and threatened to disrupt it. Somehow the spirit of division had come between the two dear sisters mentioned: Euodias and Syntyche. "Self" came between them; jealousy and grievance separated them. From this unhappy state Paul sought to rescue them. His appeal is personal and he calls upon Clement and his fellow workers to help these two sisters on to a better state of mind -- a better disposition -- by all the arts of Christian friendship.

## Intellectual Agreement Or Unity Of Disposition?

This oneness of mind is not to be confused with intellectual agreement on the intricacies of difficult doctrinal points, things upon which even inspired Apostles differed. Consider the example of Peter and Paul. Peter freely admitted that there were things Paul taught which were difficult to be understood. Yet, more intellectual agreement can be reached in an atmosphere of spiritual oneness than would be otherwise possible. It is a law of this present life that we know only in part. While this is so, different understandings will result -- if many minds are working and each with its own partial knowledge.

The *spirit* of our mind is different, however. Our attitude, the state of mind in which we think, is to be corrected without delay -- as our thoughts are brought into captivity to him. The way to escape the miseries of dissension, then, is to stand firm in him. Whether the dissension be between two friends, or two enterprises (organizations), two churches, if the dissensions are due to mistakes of the head and not of the heart we can allow no hardness to arise toward another. There is no room in Christ for envy or retaliation or the ambition to greatness or combativeness for our own opinions. Standing firm in Christ, the Euodias and Syntyches of all ages must *tend*, they cannot help but tend, to be of one mind, one attitude, one disposition. If they are not so disposed it is because they are not in Christ's mindedness.

No one would claim that Paul ignores the intellect. Here, however, his chief appeal is to the attraction of love, personal love, for out of the heart (the center of our affections) are the issues of life.

What is the power which Paul says leads men to righteousness? "*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ...*" (Rom. 10:10). The poet Longfellow repeats this emphasis:

It is the heart and not the brain  
That to the highest doth attain.

*"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"* (Prov. 4:23). The "heart" has long represented the "will," "intention," or "purpose." Our will -- being the power which governs our life -- must be kept pure and centered in God. Blessed, said our Master, are the pure in heart. He refers to those whose purpose is fixed upon God and towards righteousness. Even though our mind may be made up to follow God, it is itself subject to other influences. If our thoughts are impure, unjust, unholy, the power of our will is impaired. Obviously, therefore, we must not neglect to supervise our thoughts if we are seeking to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord. We must not browse in any mental "pasture." Our mind must be disciplined, as the Apostle suggests:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (Phil. 4:8).

## **Thoughts Determine Character**

A man is what he thinks (Prov. 23:7). As the years pass, our habits are indelibly impressed upon our character. This fact is so sure that trained observers can often determine a person's occupation by their behavior. There is an indescribable something about each habitual way of thinking, whether teacher, banker, or carpenter, which results from continually thinking in one general direction. So it is with our character. If we are occupied with good thoughts the tendency is to become good.

## **Thoughts Are Controllable**

If thoughts could not be controlled, we would have reason for concern if they determine our character and hence our destiny. If we had no control over what we think, we would surely be in a pitiful condition. We are comforted to realize that our thoughts are within our control. Not perfectly, but to a considerable degree we can decide what occupies our thoughts, and thus we decide what our character and destiny shall be.

Let us state this plainly: We can, in the main, control our thinking. If it has not been true of us in the past it may yet be true of us in the future. Someone has said that "God's commands enable." Indeed, it is axiomatic. He would never have commanded us to keep our heart if he did not intend to supply the power necessary for us to obey that command. Our Lord's chosen vessel, Paul, would not have been allowed to exhort the Philippian brethren to "think on these things" if they were to be denied the mental strength to do so.

## **Do These Things**

Psychologists say that our thoughts tend to express themselves -- either in word or deed. Some thoughts find expression, others are suppressed. Indeed, we would act upon each thought as it arises if it were not turned aside by another thought before it reaches the motor center of our brain. In a sense, the thought that reaches the motor center of the brain first is the one that decides, at that moment, what we say or do. The spoken word or the deed performed results from a particular thought. Viewed from this standpoint our lives may be seen as an internal battle ("fightings within," 2 Cor. 7:5) for supremacy. Each thought is seeking access to the brain in order to gain expression.

Obviously, if we would always behave properly we must always think correctly. Our "habit of thought" (cf., Daily Heavenly Manna for Feb. 9) must be developed. What happens when we face a difficult decision or a strong temptation is like a battle in our mind. In every case the question is the same: which viewpoint, which conclusion will gain ascendancy. If our mind is trained in righteousness it will be those thoughts that are expressed. Charles Kingsley gave good counsel when he said,

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;  
Do noble things, not dream them all day long.

It is a common error to dream much and to do little. Doubtless this weakness was responsible for the common saying: "The road to hell is paved with good intentions."

Intentions are valueless unless they are expressed in word or deed. Every good intention, every generous impulse, every lofty emotion should be permitted to find expression. Each time they are

allowed to evaporate without results another opportunity for strengthening the will and developing the character has been missed.

Our minds have been likened to railroad locomotives standing idle under power. The machines vibrate with reserve power, but unless the power is connected to the wheels and fuel which is burned is wasted in the plumes of smoke which arise from their exhaust. Lives, too, may be wasted. No matter how noble the thoughts, if they are not permitted expression there is no profit. It is not enough to think on these things. Note how Paul carries his thought forward: *"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you"* (Phil. 4:9).

How these words remind us of the closing of the Sermon on the Mount:

"Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matt. 7:24-27).

May we, who call ourselves by Christ's name, be granted his spirit, his mind, his disposition in rich measure. Let us empty ourselves of every honor and clutch at nothing which we cannot share with our brethren. Like Paul, let us spend and be spent in the service of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren (2 Cor. 12:15), that all may know that we have been with Jesus and learned of him -- that we do indeed have a mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16).

- P. L. Read

## **Entered into Rest**

Robert Alexander, OH  
Laurel Vernon Davis, NY  
Cecylia Gmiterek, IL  
Edward Krewatch, DE  
William J. Siekman, IL  
Horace Anderson, TX  
Anthony Franco, CT  
George Kollack, MO  
Vera McKeen, PA  
Elizabeth Schnitzlein, MD



## Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute, Inc. will be held (D.V.) on June 4, 1988. Reports will be rendered and matters discussed concerning the activities of the Institute. There will be an election of Directors to serve during the coming fiscal year.

We remind members that they may nominate brethren whom they wish to elect as directors. The Institute's affairs are committed to seven brethren elected from among the Institute's membership. Those now serving are:

Buss, J.L. Albuquerque, NM  
Gonczewski, A. West Suffield, CT  
Jarmola, A Chicago, IL  
Pazucha, P.J. Milwaukee, WI  
Petran, L. Racine, WI  
Webster, L.R. Topsfield, MA  
Webster, J.B. Haverhill, MA

A Christian spirit dwells among us and we believe that the Lord has blessed our association in this ministry. We would gladly continue in this service but recognize that our reelection is not essential. We would see the Word of the Lord proclaimed with the greatest efficiency and it is always possible that those involved with the intricacies of any work may not see opportunities that are apparent to others. Changes in office can be beneficial if the membership feels that others are better fitted for this service.

Pray about this. If the Lord leads you to nominate other brethren, forward their names and addresses (with their consent) to this office before April 3, 1988. Directors of the Institute must be members of record for at least 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The list of nominees will be published in the May-June issue of the HERALD.

Anyone interested in becoming a member is reminded that membership is open to all who love our Lord and sympathize with the aims of the Institute. There is a \$5.00 membership fee. There are no annual costs beyond subscription to the Herald. There is no statement of belief to which members must subscribe.