

The Herald Of Christ's Kingdom

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EDITOR'S JOURNAL

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it." -- Matthew 26:36-27

Thursday, April 13 is the date for the Memorial' of our Lord's Supper!

Many Christians throughout the world will commemorate the anniversary of Jesus' death in a simple ceremony centering around a common participation in unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine.

While it is customary in the Christian world to emphasize the resurrection of the Redeemer with Easter celebrations, the death of the Savior is commanded in the Bible for the follower of the Nazarene: "After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:25, 26).

For many this simple ritual will have a deeper meaning than that of being only a memorial of the one all-sufficient sacrifice for sins on Calvary's cross. It will be a reminder of their personal commitment to share in his sufferings that they may also share in his glory.

Although the occasion being remembered is a sad one, it has a joyful side-the knowledge of the effect of that perfect sacrifice. Through the sin of one man, Adam, death had come upon the entire human race. Now, through the voluntary sacrifice of one man, Jesus, that penalty of death could be removed (1 Cor. 15:20, 21). It is this promise of life, life anew for everyone who has ever died, that gives joyful meaning to the crucifixion scene.

The Memorial also calls to mind promises of Jesus' return to complete the work he began at his first advent. "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29).

His disciples claimed these words as a promise of his return: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do skew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).

And so his followers have kept the simple feast for now nearly twenty centuries. Their hopes, like those of the Israelis who say, "next year in Jerusalem," is "next year anew with him in the kingdom."

This issue of THE HERALD is dedicated to the theme of Communion with Christ. Our opening article, reprinted from the *Peoples Paper of Australia*, is entitled *Christ in You*. It shows the personal relationship between the individual Christian and his Lord.

This relationship is well covered in the one word, "discipleship." Two articles examine different aspects of this association: *The Cost of Discipleship* and *The Joys of Discipleship*.

But, although there are many joys in a Christian's connection with his Lord, the followers of Jesus find that their lives differ little at times from the lives of others around them. They go through the same experiences, share the same sorrows, and react with similar emotions to their fellow man. "Why?" is a question often asked, "Why must the Christian suffer." The answer to this is probed in the treatise on *Suffering with Christ*.

There are over one hundred biblical illustrations on the unique union between Jesus and his church. Space permits looking at only two of these pictures: *Bride and Bridegroom* and *Soldiers of Christ*. The intimate love between the Bride and Bridegroom is even more clearly seen in the verse by verse Bible study of the Song of Solomon, chapter two: *I Am My Beloved's*.

The relationship of the Lord's Supper and the Hebrew Passover is probed by the author of *Pressing On in our Pilgrim Way*. Special emphasis is laid on the Passover as a preparation for the Exodus journey to the promised land.

Finally, The Question Box feature deals with why I Corinthians 10:17 mentions only the bread and not the cup in the discussion of the communion between Christ and his church.

We trust and pray that each of our readers will find the Memorial season of 1995 one of the richest yet in their spiritual lives as we each seek an ever closer personal relationship with Christ. May the Lord be with each of us as we partake of the emblems commemorating the Lord's body and blood, even as he so commanded.

CHRIST IN YOU

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." -- Colossians 1:27.

Reprinted from the Peoples Paper of Australia

Union with Christ is the secret of the Christian's life.

The expression "Christ in you" speaks of the special relationship we are privileged to have with our dear Master and, through him, with our heavenly Father. In John 6:44 Jesus said, "no man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." It is those who are called and drawn of the Father only who have Christ in them.

In the passage surrounding the theme text, Paul shows the special care he had for the church, those who had Christ in them. In verse 24 he speaks of the great sufferings and afflictions he was going through for them. Paul suffered perhaps more than any other of the apostles-severe beatings, scourgings, persecutions. All these experiences he gladly underwent; in fact he said that he rejoiced in his suffering! Why? Because he was doing it for the sake of Christ's body members to assist them in developing Christlikeness and character.

As he says in verse 28, it was so that "we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." This is the reverse of "Christ in you," but these two experiences are linked together. Only those who are in Christ as his body members have Christ in them. Paul's concern for the church is an example to us, as he said in 1 Cor. 11:1: "Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ." He was always prepared to do anything, to go to any lengths to help his brethren in Christ and these should be our special concern also.

Paul likens our Christian development to running in a race. It is an unusual race in that we can run the race and make our calling and election sure only if we spend our time helping the other runners to become winners and overcomers also. If we truly have Christ in us, our chief concern should be to assist others who are in Christ and have Christ in them. These are our brothers and our sisters, members of our own family, the new creation God is bringing into being. This is really an amazing truth -- creating a special family to share his nature and to live on his plane of existence. This is the ultimate result if we allow Christ to be fully formed in us.

In Galatians 4:19 Paul said: "My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." There is more than one sense in which Christ is in us, and Paul here speaks of his being formed in us. When Christ is fully formed in us it means that we have developed the likeness and character of our dear Master, just as he bears the likeness and character of our heavenly Father. As he said in John 14:9: "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father," then, in verses 10 and 11: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the Father

that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake."

Any suggestion that this passage of John 14 supports the trinity teaching is refuted in verse 20. The words of our Lord are: "At that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." This verse makes it clear that the Father is in Jesus, just as Jesus is in us. The passage really speaks of the oneness that exists between the heavenly Father, Jesus, and all the members of the family—a oneness of spirit, of purpose, of desire, of character. We are all at one with the wonderful divine plan of the ages which our heavenly Father has in hand, and we eagerly look forward to our part in it in the next age.

Our oneness with our heavenly Father, with his Son, and with each other is an ongoing development, not something that is achieved in just a moment of time. The forming of Christ in us is a lifetime work. To have Christ in us really means to have his mind in us. We recall Paul's words in Philippians 2:3-5: "let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

The mind surely is the most important part of the human body; it is with the mind that the important decisions of life are made. All our deeds and actions are governed by the mind. Scriptures frequently speak of the heart condition. We speak of a good-hearted person.

God says, "Give me thy heart." The term "heart" is used here in a poetic sense. It relates to the conscious decisions made by the mind—it is with the mind that we give our heart to God; it is with the mind that we decide to become a footstep follower of the Master and run in the race for the prize of the high calling; it is with the mind that we decide to strive to achieve Christlikeness within us.

First Corinthians 2:16 says we have the mind of Christ. This is the disposition, the character, that the indwelling of his holy spirit is developing in us if we allow it to do so. The mind of Christ is not something that we naturally possess; our fallen nature has many impulses and desires that would be quite contrary to the mind of Christ. So there must be a transforming work, as described in Romans 12:2, 3: "Be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Verse 3 seems to pinpoint one of the frailties of the natural mind before it has been renewed, that is, to think of ourselves more highly than we ought. It is a normal worldly tendency to have a feeling of self-importance, to want to be somebody, but we are not to be conformed to the world. Phillip's *Modern Translation* reads: "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God remake you so that your whole attitude of mind is changed."

There is a tendency on the part of many to have a desire to conform to the world, especially perhaps among young people. We sometimes hear the expression, "But everyone does it," referring to some particular activity that would not be appropriate. With us it is different, our desire above all else is to have the mind of Christ developed in us.

We note Phillip's translation again, "let God remake you." While this is not in the original text, it is a truth brought out elsewhere, for example in Philippians 2:13: "for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." Of our selves we are frail and weak, we cannot make progress in our own strength. But what a wonderful truth! We have the power and strength of the Almighty God working in us. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). All things are from God through Jesus Christ, so perhaps we should say that God is working through Jesus Christ who is in us. That seems to be the thought in the beautiful prayer found in John 17 of our Master on behalf of his followers.

In verses 9 and 10 of that chapter Jesus is speaking of his footstep followers, "I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." Then, from verse 20, "neither pray I for these alone, but for them which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me. and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."

"I in them and thou in me." God is in Christ Jesus, and Christ is in us -- in this way God is in us and working in us through Jesus Christ. Speaking of the heavenly Father and the sending of the Comforter, the spirit of truth, Jesus said in John 14:17, "the world seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but you know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." Again in John 14:23 Jesus said, "if a man love me he will keep my words and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

Let us now link these verses with 2 Corinthians 5:17: "therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [or new creation]: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and bath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

God has been in Christ throughout the gospel age reconciling to himself those he has been calling out of the world to be his special family and a bride to his dear Son. Soon this work will be complete; all of the firstfruits class will be gathered in, but the reconciliation work will continue on for another thousand years. During that time all of the willing of the remainder of mankind will be reconciled to God. Jesus prayed not for

the world not because they will have no part in God's plan but because it was not the due time. He will pray for them when that time comes, for he gave his life for all.

To return to the passage in Philippians 2 previously touched upon, and this time reading part of verse 12, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." One translation puts it, "work out your own salvation with reverence and self-distrust." This again would be a paraphrase but the thought is that we need never fear that God will let us down. He will always perform his part to the full; our only fear would be that we may come short.

These two verses teach an important lesson: while God works in us, we must work out our own salvation. God does not do that work for us; he works in us. He provides the strength and power, but we must make the effort, we must utilize the help our heavenly Father and his Son are offering. That power and strength becomes available to us only as we draw upon them in working out our own salvation. God does not take over our minds. He does not control us against our will.

We could take an illustration from the developing countries of the world. The more affluent nations often provide skills and technical know-how and often the machinery and the means to enable them to improve their position. It is entirely up to them whether they utilize the help provided. Just so in our relationship with Jesus and our heavenly Father: they are dwelling in us ready to provide all the help required for our spiritual development, but they will not renew our mind, they will not make of us a new creation, they will not make us perfect contrary to our will and desire.

We also have Christ in us as our example and 1 Peter 2:20, 21 bring out one way in which he is a pattern for us. The passage reads, "For what glory is it if, when you are buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? But if, when you do well and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable to God. For even hereunto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

God has not shielded us from the difficulties, trials, and experiences of life; these are necessary to develop Christlikeness in us. We learn to take them all without murmuring or complaining, without bitterness or antagonism in our heart toward anyone, even if they have not treated us fairly. Peter points out in this passage one way in which Christ is our pattern or example; but we are to copy him in all the affairs of life. When we come to the crossroads, when there are decisions to be made, we do not just please ourselves but ask the question, "what would Christ do?"

The word "example" in this passage is very interesting: it is from the Greek *hupogrammos*. This is the only place where it occurs and a Greek scholar says that it means "a written copy," such as is set up for children, or an outline or sketch for a painter to fill up, then in general an example, a pattern, for imitation.

At the last supper Jesus gave us a most important lesson in the washing of his disciples' feet. We find the account in John 13:13-15, "you call me Master and Lord and you say well for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."

The lesson here presented was not that we need literally "wash one another's feet" but simply that we should be prepared to perform the most menial tasks for each other, the most commonplace humdrum things, tiresome uninteresting duties. Jesus knew well that many would want to serve him in the bigger and what they thought to be, more important and honorable things.

In the Lord's sight nothing can be more important than the small, mundane, everyday tasks we can do for each other, pictured by washing each other's feet or the giving of a cup of cold water.

In all this our heavenly Father has set Jesus before us as the pattern to follow. Those who have Christ in them are gradually growing into his likeness, for we all bear the family resemblance to our elder brother and our heavenly Father. In Matthew 5:48 Jesus said, "Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." In Colossians 4:12 Paul, referring to Epaphras, states that he is "always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in the will of God."

We all have a strong desire for perfection, for completeness. We cannot be perfect in the absolute sense while in this body of flesh, but that is the goal and pattern set before us: perfection, the same perfection that our heavenly Father has-nothing less. As much as we would like to be able to do so, we cannot obtain absolute perfection, because of the weakness of the fallen nature. God desires that we develop perfection of character in heart condition, perfection of intent and desire. If we achieve that goal in this life, our gracious heavenly Father will make us perfect in the full sense on the other side of the veil on the resurrection morning.

If we have this desire for perfection of character, we can achieve it through the power and strength of Christ who is in us. We can achieve nothing worthwhile by relying on our own strength and might. His strength is made perfect in our weakness. If we have Christ dwelling in us, we have that desire for Christlikeness, and to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. Scriptures tell us that God is love, so if we would be like God, we must develop and grow in love-love for our neighbor, love for our enemies-and above all, we must obey the new commandment that our Master gave us, that "you love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34). "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8).

It is so important that we know God, not just about him but really know him; know and appreciate his character; know his love as manifest through his Son and his glorious plan of salvation for all mankind if we are to be perfect as he is perfect. We must have the correct pattern set before us; we must know just what his perfection is like; in other

words, have a correct understanding of his character. As we know, many have an imperfect understanding of the character of God; and the doctrines they believe and teach show him as being far from a God of love.

This is where Bible study and doctrine fit in—we study to know God and his Son Jesus Christ; we can truly know them only when we come to a full understanding and appreciation of the divine plan. We can obtain an insight into the character of God by looking around us at the many good and lovely people who are still in the world. We know that there is wickedness, but there are many who 'still have not fallen completely from the image in which God created mankind. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them" (Gen. 1:27).

The previous verse also uses the word "likeness," not the physical image and likeness but the character likeness. So by looking around us at the very best of men and women we can see in some small measure at least a reflection of the character of God. This is especially true when we look at our brothers and sisters in Christ, those who have Christ in them. They should all indeed be a reflection of the Lord. This is exactly the thought in 2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."

By looking at our brothers and sisters in Christ we do see in some measure a reflection of the character and love of our heavenly Father, bearing in mind that only one person has ever been a perfect reflection of God, and that, of course, was Christ. Let us keep this in mind when looking at our brothers and sisters in Christ and not expect absolute perfection.

It is evident that we are not going to achieve complete oneness of doctrine on this side of the veil, but let us not allow that to become a stumblingblock; let us not allow this to prevent our oneness in Christ in a spirit of love. It has been said that when we awake on the resurrection morn each and every one of us will find out that we wrongly understood many things. But let us rejoice in that we do hold so many precious truths in common; let us rejoice that we know our heavenly Father; we know that he is a God of love, as manifested by his glorious, divine plan. We know our elder brother Jesus and have the hope of being like him and seeing him as he is one day.

Let us be tolerant, forgiving one another whenever the occasion arises as Christ forgave us. Paul says in Philippians 4:5, "Let your moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand." The Lord Jesus is indeed at hand. He is with us always. He sees our every deed and action. Another translation renders the verse, "Let your sweet reasonableness be known to all men" (the Greek word means to be yielding or pliable.)

This sweet reasonableness is something the Lord would have us display at all times, even to those we might feel are being quite unreasonable. What a beautiful world it will be when all have developed this attribute! We who have Christ in us are developing that trait

of character now. Let us all strive to develop more and more the sweet reasonableness desired by our Master at all times, and especially towards each other.

That he would grant you, according to his riches in glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be *glory* in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.-Ephesians 3:16-21

Ready for Either

A Roman coin was once found with a picture of an ox on it; the ox was facing two things-an altar and a plough; and the inscription read, "Ready for either." The ox had to be ready either for the supreme moment of sacrifice on the altar or the long labor of the plough on the farm. There is no one cup for the Christian living. To drink the cup simply means to follow Christ wherever he may lead and to be like him in any situation life may bring.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

ECHOES FROM THE PAST

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." -- Luke 14:33.

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These words of Jesus, as well as others by him and by the Apostles, leave no room for doubt that the way of entrance into the kingdom of heaven, the way whereby any may obtain a place with him in the heavenly inheritance, was intended of God to be a costly way-away involving sacrifice and self-denial so far as the present life is concerned. Not that one can actually purchase for himself a place in God's Kingdom by enduring so much or by paying so much for it in the way of physical suffering or by the practice of self-denial. Something more important than these is involved, and that is complete and supreme loyalty to the will of God. It is only to the extent that sacrifice, self-denial, and suffering are the result of yielding the heart to him, full consecration to him, that they are counted by God as of any value in his sight.

The Pearl of Great Price

Various parables of our Lord constantly call our attention to the peculiar and difficult terms of becoming disciples of Christ and his royal Kingdom. The parable of the pearl of great price is amongst those that convey to the devout disciple an impressive message (Matt. 13:45, 46). In the days of our Savior pearls were represented amongst the most precious and most desirable jewels; and the larger and more nearly perfect the pearl, the greater was its value. The parable represents one of the pearl merchants as coming across the finest pearl he had ever seen. He considered it so priceless that he was quite rejoiced to sell or trade all of his other pearls and property that he might become the owner of that pearl.

This parable represents the Gospel offer of a place with Christ in his Kingdom as being superior to all other propositions in the world. The honors of the world, of name and fame, position and wealth, are truly desirable, as the Scriptures say-"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22:1); but when our eyes behold the pearl of great price, the Kingdom offer of joint-heirship with our Lord Jesus in his heavenly Kingdom and the blessed association with him in his ministry of service and love, which will mean the uplift and blessing of all the families of the earth, we realize that it is a priceless thing; worthy more by far than all the honor and dignity, emoluments, and treasures of the world. Those worthy to buy this pearl will gladly therefore exchange all earthly things, even their good name.

Cost of the Kingdom Pearl

Thus the Master virtually said that the pearl illustrated the value of the Kingdom with its glory, honor, and immortality, which he was inviting an elect company, a little flock, to share with him. Those who value it properly will show their appreciation by the amount they will willingly and gladly pay for it. Whether a man be wealthy or poor, learned or ignorant, influential or otherwise, the cost of this kingdom pearl of great value will be his all. It cannot be had for less. The wealthiest or most educated person in the world could not obtain a share in that Kingdom if he kept back one single atom of his possession. The price of the Kingdom is self-sacrifice, even unto death; and nothing less will secure it. Nor would any sacrifice that we could make secure a place in this Kingdom for us except as our sacrifice would first be made acceptable in God's sight through the precious merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice made at Calvary.

But besides and in addition to the sacrifice and self-denial involved in winning a place in the Kingdom of God, the "sufferings of Christ," sufferings because of being a Christian, are represented as a most necessary condition and phase of discipleship. This was made prominent by our Lord when questioned respecting the occupying of positions very dear to himself in the Kingdom. He said, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Matt. 20:22). His cup represents the portion or dispensation of experience, trials, sorrows, misunderstandings and finally the humiliating death of the cross. The same thought is represented in his baptism, which related to sacrifice, humiliation, and death. Our Lord continually reiterated this line of thought, at times using one figure or parable or another to impress the lesson. He spoke of the cross and the necessity of bearing it after him. He spoke of how his true disciples would be reviled, mistreated, and spoken of evilly, and added, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. 5:12).

Because the Darkness Hateth the Light

According to the words of inspiration, the messages of our Lord and the Apostles, much of the suffering incidental to the Christian life comes as a result of the gross darkness that exists upon the earth and because the masses of mankind are groping blindly under the influence of the great Adversary. Under these circumstances, as Jesus explained, the darkness hateth the light, and therefore the various agencies of darkness have been generally active in obstructing the course and in making very difficult the pathway of the true children of light, the children of God.

As strange as it may seem, the purpose of God has really been served and advanced unwittingly by those who have been the cause of suffering to our Lord Jesus and his faithful followers: "It became him," says the Apostle, "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:10). In other words development and refinement of character, proving and testing of character, the rounding out and ripening of character are realized in connection with faithful submission to the will of God, to his providences, through experiences *of* distress and suffering. The trial of our faith as Christians is likened to the gold tried, refined, purified in the fire. And again we are instructed that suffering because we are Christians yieldeth the peaceable fruit of

righteousness unto them that are rightly exercised thereby. All such learn to realize the sentiment set forth in beautiful verse:

*Let sorrow do its work,
Send grief and pain;
Sweet are Thy messengers,
Sweet their refrain.*

Our faith is greatly strengthened by considering the course of our Lord and noting the similarity between his experiences and those of his faithful followers. Both he and his Apostles were evilly treated and persecuted by their brethren of the Jewish household and faith. The entire Jewish nation professed to be God's people and our Lord recognized them as his own, as it is written (John 1:11). Again we have before us the strange paradox of those who have professed to be God's chosen people persecuting and rendering evil to their brethren. History shows that the majority of the persecutions and sufferings endured by Christians have come from those who professed to be the people of God, many of whom really thought they were.

Christ Left Us An Example

But the important consideration for the child of God is not so much who his persecutors have been or why professing brethren have persecuted him; rather the all-important question is how is he receiving the persecution; and what spirit is he of in the midst of his sufferings; and is he being properly exercised as he passes through these tribulations. Surely our Lord desires to see in his followers the disposition to triumph over the weaknesses and tendencies of the fallen condition and to follow in his steps. No one is properly able to do this in his own strength; therefore each one must fall back upon the Divine promise of grace provided, which is realized only in connection with the possession of a large measure of the holy spirit, the spirit of faith, of power, and of love.

Of the Savior it is written, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not" (1 Peter 2:21, 23). It is evident that to be reviled is to be made to appear vile, to be evilly treated, slandered. The natural tendency of all is to resent injustice, to render evil for evil, to give as good as we get and a little more, if possible. This is the inclination of the natural man; and because all of the Lord's people in the flesh still have the body marked with these natural proclivities, they are sure to realize more or less of a struggle in conserving the attitude of holiness and love that is dictated by the holy spirit. It was because our Lord Jesus was filled with the spirit and thoroughly controlled by it that we find his entire course and conduct the opposite of the spirit of reviling. No matter then how much we may be reviled, we are not to revile in return; no matter how much we are persecuted, we are not to persecute in return. This is undoubtedly the law of the new creation, that they are to bless instead of to injure. This would signify that if the person who had done us injury became involved in difficulty and needed help we should overlook altogether what wrong had been done to us and be just as ready to render help to him as to any other person.

Your Brethren That Hated You

The spirit of the Lord's people must not be anything else than the spirit of generosity and benevolence. They are to bless those who revile and persecute them by doing good and by explaining to them if possible the situation which evidently they have misunderstood. The true disciple is to bless his enemy by helping him, if opportunity offers, out of darkness into light.

It behooves the Lord's people to look with sympathy upon those who may be their opponents and persecutors. We recall instances where persecution has been carried on with the thought that the persecutor was doing the will of God. Those who persecuted the Lord Jesus were to some degree ignorant of who he was, as the Apostle Peter declared, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers" (Acts 3:17). Paul says, "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8). And when Saul of Tarsus persecuted Stephen and others of the early church, he thought that he did God a service, as he afterward tells us.

Sufferings and persecutions today are of much the same kind as those endured by the faithful in the past; and they come from those who profess to be the Lord's people. In harmony with this fact is the scripture which says, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Isa. 66:5). This statement, we believe, applies also to the members of the family of the one cast out who are not in sympathy with a clear statement of the truth; that is to say, persecutions coming from one's own family are frequently from those who profess to be Christians. And often their opposition is not for personal reasons but disagreement on some point they do not see in the same light as the one whom they would cast out and injure. If those who do the disowning and casting out possessed more largely of the spirit of our divine Master, they would show more tolerance, especially on nonessential points that do not constitute the foundation of the brotherhood in Christ.

Considering that we are living in the closing hour of the age, it appears that our day has a peculiarity other days have not had. The Divine Plan is now so beautiful that by its light it is manifest that the masses are in darkness. As this is the time when God is concluding his work with the church and preparing the last members for exaltation with Christ, the voice of God, the voice of conscience, the voice of enlightenment calls his true faithful children out of every condition of bondage and confusion; calls them to be separate from everything that misrepresents God's character, plan and word. But instead of feeling like bringing vengeance upon our enemies or those who would hinder, we should feel a compassionate sympathy for them-not with them, but for them. We should remember that with them it is as it was with the Jews in our Lord's day, and of others in the Apostolic period, who had they known what they were doing would have been ashamed of their course.

How Are We Being Exercised Under Trials and Tests?

Our Lord's warning that men "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake" (Matt. 5:11) does not imply that those who malign the true Christian will say, "We do this to you for Christ's sake, because you are one of his followers." We have never heard of any one who was thus persecuted; and therefore such a course cannot be what our Lord meant. Evidently his meaning was that his followers-honorable, truthful, honest, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, like himself-would be highly esteemed amongst the nominally religious were it not for their loyalty to the Word of God. Because of faithfully pointing out popular errors, because of fidelity to the truth, they are hated by those who are still under the blinding influence of error.

These conditions and circumstances through which the disciples of Christ are passing are most certainly in the nature of a schooling, a test to prove whether they are willing to endure the terms of discipleship cheerfully as a part of the cost of being associated with Christ. If, under the pressure of these trials and tests, they would render evil or revile in return and slander and backbite, they would thus demonstrate unfitness for a place in the Kingdom. If, on the other hand, they receive these lessons with patience and longsuffering, they will develop more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and thus become more worthy of a place with Him in the future glory.

Our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13), may very properly be applied to all those of his followers who are obediently heeding his teachings and who accordingly are cultivating his character-likeness. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these faithful ones is preservative. This was evidently so in our Lord's case. That influence is still manifest in the world where true Christians live. Even today, although the truly -consistent, consecrated believers in the Great Redeemer are confessedly few in numbers, yet the soundness of the teachings of the Savior has a wide influence. In spite of it, of course, we see corrupt influences at work everywhere; but the wider our horizon, the more general our information, the more we realize that Christianity has had something of a beneficial and stabilizing effect upon humanity. It has not converted the world. It was never intended for that purpose in this age.

How truly comforting is the divine message, which assures us that the Lord's consecrated people belong so completely to him that in all their afflictions he is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9). When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the early church, our Lord called to him on his way to Damascus, "Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" And he said "Who art Thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9:4, 5). Saul was not persecuting the glorified Savior directly; he was persecuting the followers of Jesus; but so near were these to their Master that what injury was done to them was considered by him as done against his own person.

For Thy Sake are We Killed

Here then is the divine program for the age, as summed up in the apostolic teaching: As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so also will all those who are members of the church,

which is his Body (Eph. 1:22, 23). Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Peter 4:2). It is the flesh, not the new creature, that suffers. While suffering in the flesh, we are also being developed in the spirit; and the holy spirit will in time enable us to sing cheerfully:

*I fear no tribulation,
Since whatso'er it be,
It makes no separation
Between my Lord and me.
Since Thou, my Lord and Teacher,
Hast claimed me for Thine own,
E'en now with Thee I'm richer
Than monarch on his throne.*

In Psalm 44:22 we read, "For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter." The Apostle Paul shows that this statement is a prophecy applicable to the entire membership of Christ, of whom our Lord Jesus is the Head (Rom. 8:36). The day to which reference is made is the Gospel Day (2 Cor. 6:2), the great antitypical Atonement Day in which "better sacrifices" have been in process of being offered up. They began with our Lord and continue with his Body, the church.

In carefully examining and studying this subject we have seen that the real sacrificing began at the time of our Lord's consecration, which was the full surrender of his life to God to be used in any way the Father saw fit and his providences might direct. Those who are to be with him in his Kingdom and compose his Bride follow in his steps. Their consecration is their death to the world, to earthly hopes, human aims and ambitions. In our Lord's case we see that his sacrificial death not only meant the giving away of his physical strength in healing and teaching, but included also the suffering resulting from the opposition of those about him. Even from members of his own family he experienced ostracism. Thus the Savior died daily.

Dying Daily

Surely in proportion as we are faithful to our heavenly Father, faithful in carrying out the terms of our covenant, our consecration, we shall have similar experiences. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice will bring upon us opposition from the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Often our distressing experiences will come as a result of the treatment received from professing brethren who are not developed sufficiently to appreciate matters from the true and proper spiritual standpoint. The great Apostle, in speaking of his own case, said that he was dying daily. This statement is applicable to all who are laying down their lives in the Lord's service. Sometimes it is by the expenditure of physical strength; sometimes it is by an evil, unkind word from someone who is disposed to hurt and injure his fellow brethren with his tongue. In the picture in ancient times this kind of experience is represented, we believe, by the burning of the flesh outside the camp, a place which represents the outcast's condition. Thus the faithful servants of the Lord are sure to experience ostracism by the worldly-minded, as our Lord foretold. Their attitude of full consecration to the Father's will is not appreciated; to the world it seems foolish. True disciples of Christ are constantly, by their holy conduct, reproving others around them; as our Lord said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

The all-important consideration with all the Lord's people is, "We have a baptism to be baptized with and how are we straitened [how much difficulty we are in] until it be accomplished." To be faithful unto death is a part of the covenant of sacrifice. In some instances death may come early, in others it may come late. One of the early Church, St. Stephen, was faithful unto death, which came early in his Christian experience. St. Peter was also faithful, but met his death after a long lifetime. The promise to the overcomer is "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12).

We gravely fear that many Christians make the Apostle's word, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," the unconscious justification for a low standard of Christian living. It were almost better to overstate the possibilities of sanctification in his eager grasp for holiness than to understate them in his complacent satisfaction with a traditional unholiness.

Dr. A. J. Gordon

THE JOYS OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." -- Hebrews 12:2

Contributed

Frequently the requirements of sacrifice and suffering are associated with the Christian walk. Equally important, and an essential element for the disciple of Jesus, is joy. Joyfully counting all as loss (Phil. 3:7, 8) and joyfully enduring throughout the Christian walk is a reflection of the hope and trust in the scriptural promises. God often directs the paths of his children through his Word. The joy in sacrifice can be the difference between success and failure in attaining the prize of the high calling.

Joy Defined

The meaning of the word "joy" is "cheerfulness" and "sincere delight." Joy can be an emotion evoked by the feeling of well-being and happiness. The spiritual joy experienced by the disciple of Christ is elevated to a level above mere happiness. Also, the scriptures often refer to "rejoicing" as an expression of joy and instruct the faithful to rejoice. The Apostle Paul repeatedly reminded the Philippians to maintain a spiritual attitude of rejoicing in the Lord. "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 3:1; 4:4).

The initial joy of discipleship is experienced with new awareness of the privilege of the calling to be a follower of Christ. The breaking of the fetters of the old man allow the new creature to come forth. The spiritual thoughts of the mind and the sentiments of the heart combine to make one ready to receive the

grace of God and bask in the depth of his love. The true joy of discipleship is thrilling, and the newly begotten is spiritually energized by the holy spirit to serve the Master and his grand plan.

Great Joy to All

The glorious message announcing the birth of Jesus set the scene of "great joy." As the angel said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10). The joy originally associated with Jesus has continued to influence and encourage his followers, just as the joy that was set before him was an inspiration to Jesus to please the heavenly Father.

A Parable of Joy

In a parable consisting of one simple verse, Jesus explains the joy of sacrifice. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (Matt. 13:44).

The man in this parable immediately recognized the great value of the treasure. He willingly, eagerly, and without hesitation sacrificed his worldly possessions to purchase the field and attain the treasure. But his added element of joy is the quality that goes a step beyond the expected response, reflecting a heart that is unreserved in its determination to follow through with complete commitment.

This parable is an example of Jesus and the great sacrifice he joyfully offered to redeem mankind. He was delighted to do God's will. This parable pictures each consecrated heart freely and joyfully forsaking all personal preferences and ambitions, choosing rather to endure the cross. Following the example set by Jesus, the new creature "delights" in doing the Lord's will; just as Jesus expressed, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psa. 40:8).

A Fruit of The Spirit

Jesus offered comfort to his disciples, assuring them that if "ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." And then Jesus encourages them by saying, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15:7, 8). Christ links the instruction to bear much fruit with the assurance that the Father will respond to the needs of those who abide in his spirit. Thus, those who petition their heavenly Father for the spirit of joy will be blessed.

This responsibility to bear much fruit is elaborated in Galatians. The Apostle Paul instructs the Galatians to walk in the spirit (Gal. 5:16) and proceeds to list the fruits of the spirit (joy being second on that list after love). Paul is confirming the importance of joy in the character of the true followers of Christ.

Joy's Influence

Proverbs describes the effect of joy on the well-being of an individual. Without the spirit of joy, the new creature would be lacking the ability to praise God or bring glory to his name.

"A merry (joyful) heart maketh a cheerful countenance; but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken" (Prov. 15:13).

"A merry (joyful) heart doeth good like a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (Prov. 17:22).

Returning to John 15:11, we read that Jesus continues: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." The wisdom of

the Proverbs was understood by Jesus: the necessity of joy as a fruit of the spirit had to be emphasized to his followers.

Sacrifice and Joy

The elements of sacrifice and joy work in harmony throughout the Christian walk. The concept of sacrifice and joy combined may seem contradictory. However, the two qualities flow together as intertwining threads forming a strength that neither element could supply alone. As the joy and delight in serving God and his purpose for all mankind is cultivated, the sacrifice becomes a sweet savor to the heavenly Father.

The sacrifice of the Philippians on behalf of the needs of the Apostle Paul was acknowledged by him. He describes their efforts, "an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God" (cf. Phil 4:15-18).

Paul's Joy

The scriptures have provided a beautiful example of a joyful attitude in the character of the Apostle Paul. Though he suffered greatly, preaching the truth and nurturing fellow new creatures brought him great joy and strength. Paul says, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8).

Paul trusted in God to be the supplier of all his needs. (James 1:17) He suffered greatly without complaint, "For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears" (2 Cor. 7:5). And yet at the same time in verse 4 he says, "Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." In these verses Paul is revealing a perfect example of suffering combined with joy.

The Joy of Oneness

In respect to Paul's Christian character and faithfulness, consider his proclamation to the Philippians. "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2) .

Paul is declaring his personal joy in the spirit of oneness among his fellow servants. In the previous verse he explains that this oneness in spirit provides consolation in Christ, comfort of love, and bowels of mercy. Each member should also have this desire of oneness, recognizing the spirit of joy it provides.

A Joyful Walk

The joy of discipleship evolves and develops taking on new facets with each experience as the new creature embarks upon the Christian walk. Worldly possessions become worthless when compared to the opportunity and privilege of walking with our Lord.

The new creature finds his experiences a blessing, though the suffering and temptations encountered along the way would be interpreted by worldly understanding as being painful. A trial often blossoms into a beautiful opportunity to bring glory to the heavenly Father, and the overruling of God's providence is joyfully recognized. Each experience provides development of character and greater maturity.

Joy Unspeakable

The Apostle Peter describes this condition of the servant of God: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen . . . ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:6-8).

The joy of success is exceeding when it is realized by an ambassador of Christ. Paul describes the response to his preaching to the Thessalonians as their "receiving the word of God" and "becoming followers of Christ" (1 Thess. 2:13, 14). What a joy for him to witness the fruitage of his efforts! He expressed his love for the Thessalonians and rejoicing in the recognition of their faithfulness to their Christian walk: "For ye are our glory and our joy" (2:20).

Paul praises the spiritual condition of the "elect." He assures them that they are begotten unto a "lively hope" and "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away," for it is reserved in heaven for the faithful saints (1 Peter 1:4).

May the saints of God be aroused to joyful faithfulness when considering the mere glimpses that have been provided in the scriptures concerning the glory to follow.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:1, 2).

Indeed, joy rules over the consecrated heart in the opportunity to glorify God now in this age and to become a joint member of the body of Christ for the ages to come, thence to be able to glorify God forever.

Returning to the theme text, the Apostle provides a picture in which Jesus, the author of our faith, is seated at the right hand of the Father. Indeed, Jesus is the captain of our salvation and has successfully and joyfully completed his mission as the Savior of mankind. Let us have faith that God is a rewarder of those who are faithful. Jesus further confirms this, saying, "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. 5:12).

PRESSING ON IN OUR PILGRIM JOURNEY

"And thus shall ye eat [the lamb]; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in our hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover." -- Exodus 12:11

By Charles Redeker

During the Memorial season the thoughts of the brethren instinctively turn to our Lord Jesus, to consider anew his life and to commemorate his costly sacrifice for us. To assist in these meditations our Lord instituted the Memorial supper with its very special emblems and meanings. Many of the Lord's people have also found it instructive to turn their attention to another ceremony, the original Passover, which was celebrated in the land of Egypt almost 1,650 years before our Lord's ministry began.

Why should we be interested in going back into the dim past of Israel to examine the Passover rite? It is because we are convinced that the Lord's supper cannot be appreciated in its fullness without a background knowledge of the Passover. These are not merely random events: they stand as type to antitype, as shadow to substance, as preview to reality. We might almost say that neither of these ceremonies--the Passover or the Memorial--can be understood fully without grasping the relationship between the two.

Hence we believe it will be helpful to look again at the events of the first Passover night in the land of ancient Egypt. Hidden away in the details of the type is a lovely, instructive picture that portrays the method God will use to bring salvation and blessing to the human family.

Various Pictures

When we think of the original Passover, several aspects come to mind. The larger picture shows the escape of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt across the Red Sea. There were many actors in this real-life drama: natural Israel represented the whole people of God, that is, all of the human family who will ultimately become reconciled with him. The Egyptians pictured the opponents of God, both men and angels; Pharaoh, the prince of evil and arch adversary of God. Moses represented Christ, the deliverer; and the Red Sea was a symbol of the second death.

Within this scene there are yet other pictures. Many of the things that happened to Israel were ensamples for the new creation and were meant for our admonition (1 Cor. 1:11). Especially do we feel this so in regard to of the Passover. Think, for example, of the first-born--how they were spared or passed over from the tenth and final plague of death upon Egypt.

Only the firstborn were subject to the possibility of death in advance of their brethren. By passing them over and sparing their lives God reckoned them as his own hallowed

possession. Later, during the wilderness wanderings, God exchanged these for the tribe of Levi. They were separated from their brethren, gave up all inheritance in the land, and became priests and teachers.

We can see how these fittingly pictured the Royal Priesthood class in training, who are subject to death (the second death) during the Gospel age in advance of the world. They are the "church of the firstborn," whose names are written in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Only they are sufficiently enlightened with truth and in covenant relationship with God for their eternal destiny to be placed "on the line," so to speak, at the present time.

Pilgrims and Strangers

There is another aspect of this firstborn class on which we would especially like to focus. It is the aspect of their giving up an **earthly** inheritance, which the church must do as it accepts instead the **heavenly** calling--the great hope offered in Christ Jesus. If the firstborn class gives up their right to earthly life and privileges, they might be considered as pilgrims and strangers in the land. And indeed that is exactly how the scriptures describe them!

Peter writes: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; . . . ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:11, 9).

In taking another look at the Passover activities to see what lessons what may be found for the new creature, thinking especially from the standpoint of pilgrims and strangers. In the grandest sense of the term, we are running for the prize of the **high** calling, towards a city whose builder and maker is God. We must be keenly interested in any instructions our heavenly Father has given that will help us to press on in the pilgrim way.

The Desired Goal

The first thing a traveler must have in mind is a destination -- where is he heading? Proverbs informs us that: "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (29:18). Of the ancient worthies, those outstanding men of faith in the Old Testament, we are told that "they desired a better country, that is, an heavenly"-the city prepared for them (Heb. 11:16). Regarding the children of Israel, about to make their momentous exodus from Egypt, their destination was evident. It was spoken of by God for many generations: "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians . . . (v. 6); and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God . . . (v. 7). And I will bring you into the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" (v. 8; Exod. 6). It was the promised land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey.

But what about the Lord's people today? What is our longrange goal? Where are we headed? Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Have we caught this vision of the kingdom, "the holy city, the new Jerusalem,

coming down from God out of heaven" (Rev. 21)-that blessed place where God shall wipe away all tears and there shall be no more sorrow or crying or any more pain? Where the saints of God shall live and reign with Christ the thousand years? (Rev. 20:4-6). If we can but keep a mental vision of this Kingdom in all its glory, it will help us endure the hardships of the way. As David expressed it, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Psa. 27:13).

Loins Girded

"To gird up the loins of our mind . . . signifies that we have determined upon a course of activity; that rest and ease are put aside . . . (that we] require all the strength we possess." C. T. Russell (Q448)

Let us note the manner in which the Passover meal was to be eaten: "with loins girded, shoes on, staff in hand, and eaten in haste" (Exod. 12:11). Let us consider these one at a time.

"Your loins girded." The Living Bible says, "with your traveling clothes on, prepared for a long journey." Literally, the Israelites simply drew up their long skirts and fastened them in their girdles; this had the effect of leaving the legs and knees free for active motion.

What does this mean for us? The Christian pathway is not a flowery bed of ease. It is a long and difficult way (Matt.7:14). We need to be prepared for the long haul, and we need to wear an outfit appropriate for our purpose. Pilgrims and strangers are not dressed in party clothes or anything else that will restrict their movement or hinder their progress. They have neither the time nor the inclination to stop for worldly pleasures. Their clothing reflects the journey to be completed, the battle of faith that must be carried out.

In another figure Paul writes, "If ye then be risen with Christ [if we share the same vision of the kingdom with him], seek those things which are above, . . . not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1, 2). Be diligent not to permit the transitory things of this life, whether it be job or family or earthly goals or anything else, to sidetrack us-to interfere with our making progress along the pilgrim way. Remember our Lord's example, of whom it was written that he set his face like a flint and was not ashamed (Isa. 50:7) He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened [that is, pressed] till it be accomplished" (Luke 12:50).

The new creature also has a staff upon which to lean: the promises of God sustain us each and every day of our pilgrimage. The more difficult the way becomes, the more we need the staff and the help that it affords. And so, in pressing on in the Christian way, let us make full use of the staff that our Lord supplies. Especially in the times in which we live, we need every precious promise the Lord has given. Let us go to the Scriptures, be continuously reminded of our close relationship to the Father and the Son, and be uplifted by their words; let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Let it be evident to all that we are using our staff-all along the way.

Shoes on Feet

Next they were told to eat the meal with "shoes on your feet." The Living Bible says, "wearing your walking shoes." The usual custom of Orientals is to remove their shoes when indoors, and the ancient Egyptians followed this rule. But the Israelites were not to

adhere to this custom. They were to be prepared to leave at once and needed proper footwear to tread the difficult path of the wilderness that lay ahead.

Christians also are not to be conformed to this world, nor to be wearing the slippers or sandals that might picture the comfortable life. We are promised to be led into paths of righteousness with the Lord as our shepherd. But this does not mean that the going will be easy. To the contrary we read, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). Also Paul says that: ". . . all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). So let us wear the traveling outfit that will protect from the sometimes harsh environment about us. Perhaps the shoes could also represent willingness to follow our Lord wherever he leads, even through the difficult terrain.

Staff in Hand

One other item was mentioned along with the clothing and shoes: they were to eat "with staff in hand." The Living Bible says, "carrying your walking sticks in your hands." Since it must have made eating quite difficult, this must have been an important item in the collage of instructions intended for us. The staff was an aid in walking and perhaps also in guiding the animals that accompanied them in the exodus. To any outside observer, it would have been abundantly evident that the Israelites were embarking on a long journey.

Eaten in Haste

The Passover meal was eaten in the night time that preceded the deliverance, typifying the night of sin and death. It was to be eaten in haste, for the Israelites were in the land of Egypt, longing for the promised land. They had to be prepared for Moses' command to assemble and to begin the exodus at a moment's notice. This was no ordinary meal, with relaxed participants taking part in casual dinner conversation, savoring the food, and relishing the occasion. They were to concentrate on the rigors of the journey ahead and not waste valuable time or be distracted from their mission.

In the antitype, the participants of this meal are to show by their conduct that they are indeed pilgrims and strangers in this world. There is little time for the customary frivolities and pleasures of the day. We are not to be conformed to such or be entangled in earthly affairs. Our chief duty is to be concerned with spiritual matters and to prepare ourselves for the kingdom of the Lord.

John tells us, "Love not the world, neither the things in the world" (1 John 2:15); and James adds, "keep [yourselves] unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Perhaps these admonitions are pictured by eating the Passover meal in haste. The hymn writer also reminds us "to touch lightly the things of this earth, esteeming them only to trifling worth."

Closing Thoughts

Let us look lastly at our pen picture of the pilgrim traveler from a negative standpoint. What would happen if he started out on his journey with no destination and with no preparation? Suppose he had no traveling clothes, good walking shoes, or staff in hand? And, we might add, no good meal? The results would be predictable and catastrophic. If a man has no goal and no destination, he obviously will get nowhere. And if he has not made proper preparation, he is not going to get very far.

Let us therefore heed the lesson afforded in this Passover type to assist us in our Christian journey during the night time of sin and death and keep to our steadfast goal before us. Deliverance will surely come in the morning! And may we be found worthy of having a part in the work of blessing all the families of the earth that will then follow.

SUFFERING WITH CHRIST

"Precious (costly, valuable, rare) in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." - Psalm 116:15

Contributed

What makes the death of one of the Lord's saints different from the death of anyone else? There is no experience Christians have that others do not experience. Christians "die like men" (Psa. 82:7). Death comes in all forms-natural or violent; sudden or drawn out; for supporting a righteous cause or in a seemingly insignificant role. Yet the death of his saints is very precious in the Lord's sight.

The last hours of life are not the focal point but the years leading to that end. The years of long suffering and patient endurance produce the Christ-like character acceptable to the Lord.

What is the purpose of suffering and trials of the saints? Is it more than a test of faithfulness?

The Cup

When our Lord gathered together his disciples just hours before his death, he introduced them to a new concept associated with his impending death. As Jesus gave them the cup at the Passover Supper, he instructed them to drink of it also (Matt. 26:27, 28). Earlier, when asked about their position in the Kingdom, Jesus responded, "You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" (Matt. 20:22 NAS) Jesus knew that sitting at his right hand in the Kingdom was an honor requiring a willingness to drink of the same cup he was about to drink. The disciples did not fully know what would be involved when they answered, "We are able." In time, as their minds were enlightened to the true meaning of our Lord's words, the disciples did not waiver from their commitment to drink of Jesus' cup. As each member of the body of Christ drinks of the Lord's cup, he shares in communion (Greek *koinonos*: partnership,

participation) with the death and sufferings of his Savior. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16).

Followers of Christ

Jesus called to his disciples, "Follow me." And they forsook all, and followed him (Luke 5:11). "Follow" means to be in the same way with, to accompany, to be in harmony with his road. "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21). "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth . . ." (Rev. 14:4)

Conformable to his Death

The Apostle Paul recognized spiritual types in the Law. He reflected upon the types as illustrations of Jesus' sacrifice and the sacrifices of those willing to drink of the cup of suffering. The church would "know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Phil. 3:10). ". . . as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation" (2 Cor. 1:7). "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (2 Cor. 4:10).

Pattern to Follow

The Day of Atonement sacrifices seem to picture the sufferings of the gospel age, beginning with our Lord and continuing until the completion of the church, resulting in blessing the people.

What happened to the bullock (a picture of our Lord), also happened to the Lord's goat (a picture of the church). Both animals were killed. Their blood was taken into the Most Holy. Their fat burned on the brazen altar. Their skins, flesh, and dung burned without the camp (Lev. 16).

"Outside the Camp"

For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high priest as an offering for sin are burned outside the camp. Therefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his *own* blood, suffered outside the gate. Hence, let *us* go *out* to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach.-Hebrews 13:11-13 NAS

Following Jesus includes the bearing of his reproach. As the skin, flesh, and dung of the bullock and goat produced a stench outside the camp, so the living sacrifices of Jesus and the church bring reproach from the world. "We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things" (1 Cor. 4:13). "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me" (Psa. 69:9). Jesus was "despised and rejected of men." He was esteemed "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isa. 53:3, 4). Jesus told his disciples, "

. . . the world hateth you The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you . . ." (John. 15:19, 20).

Burning in the Court

The fat and life organs of the bullock and goat were burned on the brazen altar in the court. Life organs (heart sentiments, best powers offered in self denials) were burned quickly because of the fat (zeal). Jesus' sacrifice was consumed quickly in three and a half years because of his zeal. "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2:17). When the love (zeal, fat) of our inmost being is laid on the altar, it increases the fire of God's acceptance. The more love in our consecration, the more quickly the offering may be consumed.

Incense in the Holy Place

Simultaneous with the burning outside the camp and the burning in the court, incense was burned in the Holy. The incense (perhaps representing Jesus' perfection) was burned (consumed by obedience) by fire (trials), producing fragrance (a sweet perfume to God). "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8). "Walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor" (Eph. 5:2). Through the perfections of Jesus, the obedient sufferings of the followers of Christ also are a sweet savor to God. "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved . . ." (2 Cor. 2:15).

Seated in the Heavenly Places

The new creatures of the church, like the new creature of Jesus, developed in the Holy place while the bullock and goat were consumed in the court and without the camp. God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). In the Holy, Jesus and the church feed at the table of shewbread, the Word of God, for strength and refreshment. They hold forth the word of life to others (Phil. 2:16). The "golden candlestick" represents the church enlightened by truth from the holy spirit (olive oil), and thence being lights in the world (Matt. 4:16; Matt. 5:14; Rev. 1:11). At the incense altar, prayers of the saints are offered (Rev. 5:8).

Ram of Consecration

In another picture, the blood of the ram of consecration was put on the tip of the right ear, right thumb of the right hand, and great toe of the right foot of Aaron (Jesus) and his sons (the church) (Lev. 8:22-24). As with Jesus, so with the church; spiritual ears are opened by faith to hearing God's Word. (Psa. 40:6-8; Rom. 10:17). Spiritual hands physically doing the service of God (Phil. 4:13; Eccl: 9:10). Spiritual feet walk in newness of life, walk by faith, walk in the spirit and walk in the light (Rom. 6:9; Eph. 4:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; Gal. 5:16).

Sympathetic Priesthood

During Jesus' years of ministry it is difficult to imagine he could experience every problem and trial common to man from Adam to the present. There are problems since his time to which he never would have been exposed to, and yet he is our High Priest of whom we read: "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15 NAS). The Greek *sumpatheo* means to feel "sympathy" with, to commiserate. It is from the root, *sumpathes*, to have a fellow-feeling, mutually commiserative.

The risen Lord Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest. He knows what we are going through. He understands and is there to encourage us to keep up the good fight and to resist the world, the flesh, and the Adversary. Misery loves company. What better company could one ask for than to have a sympathetic Lord Jesus near us at every moment down through the age. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Our privilege is to use our experiences today to make us sympathetic to the sufferings of the world that we may help them up the highway of holiness in the next age. Each experience is intended to bring out the best in our character. Each painful lesson is custom designed to mold and shape us for a unique place in the body, so as a whole, the body of Christ may be better enabled to serve in lifting the groaning creation up from the miry depths of sin.

When we have been chosen of the Lord to experience a severe trial, he knows we have the ability to withstand it. It is a sign of his confidence in our ability to overcome. He would not allow such experiences to fall upon us if we could not handle it. He will not leave us to flounder about, helpless, alone. He will be there to supervise each moment. The greater the suffering, the higher the honor.

"There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

The Fulness of Christ

The Heavenly Father graciously provided for the afflictions the church would experience. Jesus experienced affliction, but there was additional affliction to be shared by his followers. It was not just a coincidence, but part of his great plan to ". . . fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ . . ." (Col. 1:24). The church is the fullness of Christ, the body of the Head (Eph. 1:22,23).

No wonder our experiences are no different from the world's. No wonder we live unsheltered from pain and distress. Overcoming, in spite of these obstacles, gives purpose to the life of the church. and makes their death more valuable (precious) in the sight of the Lord. As the church was patterned after Jesus in the way of suffering and death, so the church will be like Jesus in their resurrection. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).

"Beloved, think it not strange, concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Peter 4:12, 13).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John. 3:2).

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him . . ." (2 Tim. 2:11, 12).

BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM

"As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." -- Isaiah 62:5

By Michael Brann

In thinking about the Memorial season, our thoughts often lie in two main areas: (1) what the Lord has done for us; and (2) what is our personal relationship to him on account of this?

We are very thankful to recall with deep sentiment the fact of our heavenly Father's sending his only begotten Son into the world to die on behalf of Adam and his fallen race. We are likewise thankful that Jesus faithfully carried out his Father's plans and died as a ransom sacrifice. To us, this means every human being shall be given a full and complete opportunity for everlasting life.

However wonderful these things are, they are not the full end of blessings for which we are thankful!

Our personal relationship with him in these things adds another dimension which we do well to investigate.

The Apostle Paul describes a very special relationship between Christ and his footstep followers in 1 Corinthians 10:16 with these words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [common union] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion [common union] of the body of Christ?" The word "communion" is from the Greek word *koinonia* (Strong's #2842) and has the idea of partnership. Other words which give the same meaning are "associate," "sharer," and "fellowship."

There are many areas in which we may have communion, participation, or fellowship with one another. We may be associated together by birth, as fathers and mothers are to sons and daughters, or we might be brother and sister. We may choose certain friends with whom we enjoy spending time. In the ecclesia we are related spiritually and thus have spiritual union or fellowship with one another.

In the holy Scriptures many different pictures and illustrations are used to help us understand our relationship to the Lord. Each one in itself serves to teach us certain features no single picture or illustration could do. For instance, the captain and soldiers picture stresses loyalty and strict obedience; the master and pupils picture teaches humility and subjection; the shepherd and sheep show implicit trust and confidence; and the vine and branches demonstrate permanent dependency.

On the natural plane, there is not much doubt that the closest type of communion or association is that of husband and wife. Genesis 2:23, 24 describes it this way: "And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The Scriptures further develop this relationship between husband and wife, drawing many parallels to that union which exists between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:21-23).

Everyone who has entered into such a union as husband and wife is immediately struck regarding the intimacy of such a picture between Christ and his church. The marriage union carries with it many beautiful qualities intended to help us understand the depth of our relationship to the Lord. Qualities such as love, joy, loyalty, faithfulness, trust, and commitment are all elements of this union.

One further aspect related to this close relationship of husband and wife puts before our mental vision an unparalleled picture of a wonderfully unique communion with the Lord. It is the picture of a bridegroom and his bride.

Bride and Bridegroom

The illustration of a bride and bridegroom pictures a time when plans are being made for the wedding day. Both are often in a state of nearly mindless bliss and joy. Both bride and groom are so eagerly anticipating their marriage and their new life together that they are often said to be "floating on air" or "love-struck." Some lose their appetite, others find it hard to concentrate on simple tasks. They seem to ignore the world and those around them, not out of spite but simply because their minds are so excited and stimulated by their love toward each other.

Anyone who has chosen to love and then to marry has gone through some of these similar feelings and emotions.

As strange as it may seem to think of our Lord having such strong and tender feelings towards us as his prospective bride members, it seems this is exactly the idea the scriptural picture of bride and bridegroom is intended to convey. This intense love he has towards us, in spite of all our faults and blemishes, will hopefully inspire us to become transformed into the character each member of that bride class must have to partake in the marriage.

According to eastern custom, often the father selected a bride for his son. Oftentimes the intended pair would meet to approve of his choice. It is apparent in the Scriptures that the heavenly Father has been selecting the bride members for his Son (John 17:24). They, in turn, are mutually attracted to one another and desire to become united as husband and wife. Probably the most beautiful and striking picture of this is the account of Isaac and Rebekah, found in Genesis 24.

As we examine this passage and other scriptures in detail, we find that both the bridegroom and the bride are actively engaged in certain activities in preparation for the most joyous of all occasions, the marriage of the Lamb. We have no doubt that our Lord is doing his part of the preparation. All that remains is to see if we are doing our part!

Preparations of the Groom

There are two noticeable things a bridegroom often does in preparation for his marriage: (1) he establishes himself, and (2) he prepares a home for the two to live in.

In modern society a man establishes himself with a good job and education, with hopeful plans for the future. This is quite attractive to a prospective bride. Likewise, having a place to live where the two can discover the joys and experiences of becoming one is important to the prospective bride.

Our Lord, as our bridegroom to be, is doing these things on a spiritual level. Isaiah 61:10 states: "as a bridegroom decketh [himself] with ornaments [margin, *priestly coronet*]." This has the idea of both priestly and kingly garments. He has established himself as far superior to any earthly being. He is to be not only a priest to bring all mankind back into relationship with the Father but he is also to wear the garments of a king, to have power and authority to rule the world in righteousness. How attractive he is to us! How worthy he is for us to long to be his bride! He is the one altogether lovely, the chiefest of ten thousand (Song of Solomon 5:10, 16).

Our Lord told us that he is now preparing a home for his bride. John 14:2 says: "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to **prepare** a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." What a glorious home awaits us, understanding that the Lord himself has been preparing it for nearly two thousand years! Our finite minds can only approximate what conditions, joys, and comforts are there to welcome his faithful bride.

Preparations of the Bride

There are likewise two special preparations the bride makes as she anticipates her forthcoming marriage: (1) she prepares to leave home; and (2) she makes a wedding dress.

In modern day society a young woman will often build up a "hope chest" filled with things to make her new home pleasant and comfortable. These things are indications that some day she will leave the home of her parents to live in a new home with her husband. For that special day she wants to be dressed as beautifully as possible, and thus she prepares a finely woven and decorative dress befitting the joyful occasion.

Both of these aspects are drawn to our attention in Psalm 45. Verses 10 and 11 say: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord." For

us, his bride-to-be, we are asked to consider the magnitude and scope of such a glorious and magnificent prospect. It is nearly beyond belief that the Lord offers us such a hope.

After appreciating this hope, we are advised to begin plans to leave our earthly ties and associations behind us as we anticipate our union with the Lord. Are any earthly ties, sins, and fleshly desires valuable enough to keep if by keeping them it would mean our marriage to the Lord would be canceled? We can well imagine the disappointment of an earthly bride whose impending marriage was called off. We gladly suffer some measure of earthly loss and disappointment now in the putting away of these things rather than to suffer such irreparable spiritual disappointment in the future.

Verses 13 and 14 say: "The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." This part of the preparation describes the necessity of working painstakingly with slow and meticulous care intricate design and brocade into the dress. Small precious jewels were often interwoven into the lace and trim (Isa. 61:10). All of this symbolizes the need to develop in us the fruits and graces of the holy spirit. These are qualities and character marks very pleasing to the Lord. This "design work" is the work we are to be engaged in every day, as we seek to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. It takes time, hard work, and patience to accomplish this.

Motivated for the Marriage

We must find great inspiration to keep us busy in developing the necessary qualities for our upcoming marriage. How is it that we might accomplish such a tremendous task as this? Let "the joy of the LORD is your strength" [Neh. 8:10] be our daily motto. Reflect on the power, love, wisdom, and justice of the Lord. See these displayed in the universe, in creation, in the divine plan of the ages, in your brethren, in yourself. Do not let the past rob you of the future. Do not allow present conditions and circumstances (as good or bad as they may appear) alter our prospects of a bright future with the Lord. Exercise faith in the exceeding great and precious promises (2 Peter 1:4). Communicate with the Lord's people (Mal. 3:16).

Rejoicing and celebration are associated with nearly all references to the bride and bridegroom. As we prepare our hearts for the Memorial, may this special relationship just described refresh and encourage to greater faithfulness to keep our wedding garment spotless and free of wrinkles (Eph. 5:25-27). Take care to remove any stains of sin by applying to the throne of grace for forgiveness and strength to overcome. Be active not just fighting against sin but find ways to actively serve the Lord and his people. As one has said, "wrinkles come from sitting," so let us be up and energetically engaged in being about our Father's business.

Martin Luther on Death

"What is our death but a night's sleep? For as through sleep all weariness and faintness pass away and cease, and the power of the spirit comes back again, so that tar the morning we rise fresh and joyous; so tar the last day we shall rise as if we had only slept a aright, and shall be fresh aid strong." *Martin Luther (R408)*

I Am My Beloved's

I am my beloved, and his desire is toward me.—Song of Solomon 7:10

A verse by verse Bible study in the second chapter of the Song of Solomon.

Nowhere is the mutual love of Christ and his church more intimately shown than in the beautiful love poem of the Song of Solomon. The term "beloved" is used no less than thirty-three times in this short book. Here we see both the tenderness and the passions of a full-blown love relationship. In vivid imagery we trace a picture of the ever-deepening love of Jesus and his spiritual bride.

In the second chapter we find the opening sentiments of the two lovers. A brief statement by the male is followed by a more lengthy description of him and their relationship by his companion.

The Beloved - Verses 1 and 2

I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

As the beauty of flowers in the springtime, so does the beloved present himself to his church. Unpretentious, yet their color and aroma fill the fields of northern Palestine. According to Nelson's Bible Dictionary, the rose of Sharon is different from the roses of which we know: "Most authorities think that the rose referred to . . . is not what we know as the rose today, but a low-growing bulbous plant producing from two to four yellow flowers on each stalk. This flower is noted for its fragrance." Similarly, the lily referred to is not the large water lily, but a small white field flower. Its simple attractiveness is remarked in the New Testament as well (Matt. 6:28). These simple floral illustrations not only call attention to his beauty and the sweet fragrance of his life but to the time of year as well—springtime, when life springs up anew from its winter rest.

He notes a similarity between himself and the woman he loves. He is "the lily" and she is "as the lily"—so closely does she seek to emulate his beauty. Her beauty is highlighted in his eyes by his comparison with those around her: "as the lily among the thorns." The comparison here is between the good and the bad. "Thorns" is better translated "thistles," referring to weeds that grow next to the lilies in the field, a similar illustration to that of Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares. This seems evident by the use of his word, translated "thistle," in Job 31:40: "Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley. The words of Job are ended."

Matthew Henry grasps the thought well: "God's people are as lilies among [thorns], scratched and torn, shaded and obscured, by them; they are dear to Christ, and yet exposed to hardships and troubles in the world; they must expect it, for they are planted among thorns (2:6), but they are nevertheless dear to him; he does not overlook nor

undervalue any of his lilies for their being among thorns, When they are among thorns they must still be as lilies, must maintain their innocency and purity, and, though they are among thorns, must not be turned into thorns, must not render railing for railing, and, if they thus preserve their character, they shall be still owned as conformable to Christ."

The Bride's Response - Verses 3 to 7

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

As the Lord had compared her to a lily among thorns, so she compares him to the apple tree among the trees of the wood. Here the contrast is not between good and bad, but between good and the best. The excellence of the apple is shown in the simple analogy of Proverbs: "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (25:11). Some authorities believe it is the apricot that is here referenced. The apricot was thought to be an aphrodisiac and was often called "the love apple."

It is not the fruit alone to which she refers but also to the shade of the tree. Shade is a welcome blessing in the heat of Palestine. Metaphorically, the shade also gives the thought of protection. Taken from the apple tree of the wilderness into the banqueting house she notes with pleasure the banner over the festive table bearing but one precious word: "Love." Here she is feted with the apples falling from her apple tree (v. 3) and flagons of wine, that fruitage of the spirit which will revive her in her fainting ["sick of love"] condition. Her beloved gently wraps his arms around her and there, still embracing, he falls asleep in the joy of giving comfort to the one he loves.

The daughters of Jerusalem in this poem appear to represent natural Israel (see 5:8). Once the church of Christ is complete, the next phase of God's plan is to restore Israel to the position of prominence which she will occupy in the kingdom of Christ (Acts 15:16, 17). Thus the petition here is that natural Israel not rush the work of God until he please—until he has completed the work of selecting the church. The charge is given by, or for, the "roes" and "the hinds of the field," symbolically representing the completion of the work of restitution.

The Lord Returns - Verses 8 to 13

The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice. My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig

tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Once again the scene changes. The beloved is now awake. He is returning from a journey, like the nobleman in the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:12). There is no dawdling here, but he runs and skips like the roe and the hart. Her whole being is aroused to his coming, yet she cannot see him. He is standing behind a wall, the wall of invisibility. But though we cannot see him, we can discern him for he peeps in at the windows and shows himself through the lattice work, giving us hints of his arrival. It is through the interwoven lattice work of prophecy that he must be discerned for, as he told his disciples of old, "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more" (John 14:19).

"Rise up!" What beautiful words! What a welcome sound! For nearly two millennia the church has awaited these words: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Rise out of your graves for, at my return, "the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

"Rise up!" Awaken for it is springtime, the time for the resurrection to begin. The signs are there. "The winter is past" (see Matt. 24:20; Jer. 8:20). "The rain [both 'the early' and 'the latter' (see Joel 2:23)] is over and gone." Not only is it time for the flowers to reappear and the birds to sing their odes to spring, but even the voice of the turtle dove, a migrant that returns to Palestine in early April, is heard once more.

It is significant that the turtle dove is singled out from among the other birds, for it was also a dove that announced the beginning of a new age to Noah (Gen. 8:8-12) and it was a dove that announced the beginning of the Christian dispensation at the baptism of Jesus (Matt. 3:16). It not only symbolizes the holy spirit, but also the advent of peace on the earth. Nelson has the following to say about the dove: "Doves appear to express affection, stroking each other, and 'billing and cooing.' They mate for life, sharing nesting and parenting duties. They are gentle birds that never resist attack or retaliate against their enemies. Even when her young are attacked, a dove will give only a pitiful call of distress."

Other signs also portend the return of her Lord from his wilderness wandering. "The fig tree putteth forth her green figs"—Israel once again is restored to divine favor and begins to produce spiritual fruitage (See Matt. 24:32; Jer. 24:1-8). "The vines with the tender grape give a good smell"—the church has brought her "fruits of the spirit" to full ripeness (see John 15:1-5; Gal. 5:22, 23).

Once again he repeats his invitation, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." The invitation is sincere, the response is up to us.

The Final Prayer - Verses 14 to 17

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is

comely. Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes. My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether."

The attention of the church is now turned to the one she loves. He is now the dove for he has come as the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). He is also the lawgiver, dwelling as Moses before him "in the cleft of the rock" (Exod. 33:22, 23), waiting for God to give him the law of the New Covenant as he gave the law of the old covenant to Moses.

Now is the time for the church to see his countenance. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). This will be the time to hear that sweetest of all voices which up to now we have heard by faith alone.

Yet one task remains to be accomplished, the removal of the small flaws, the secret faults, "the little foxes," which can so easily spoil the fruit of the vine. It is the tender grape, the newly formed fruit, that is so tasty to the young predators. And, wily as the sly fox, how easily the small sins creep in to rob the Christian of his fruitage..

My Beloved Is Mine

Then the cry of triumph, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." How wonderful to consummate our love for our Bridegroom. This has been the dream of the Christian all through the age. But this is only chapter two, and there is still much room for growth. Now the cry is possessive, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Our priorities must change. It is not until the sixth chapter that she improves on this expression. Here the call is: "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine" (6:3). We must grow until we realize that it is more important that we are his than that he is ours.

Yet there is still room for more growth. She arrives at her final stage of development one chapter later when she calls out, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me" (7:10). Now the possessiveness is gone. It is enough to belong to him and to be assured that he looks upon us thoroughly.

"He feedeth among the lilies." While the love of Christ is individualized to each Christian, there can be no jealousy of one individual against another. They are content that he loves them each, with no desire for one to have a preeminence of that love over another. As the disciples battled with the wish to be the nearest to him and, thus, the greatest; so has this battle continued down through the age.

Such is the union of Christ and his church at the present time. But this is only the beginning. How we long for that perfect day when "the day break" and the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his beams (Mal. 4:1); when the shadows of the past flee away, fully absorbed into the realities of the future. With what eagerness we await that day, looking for and "hasting" its arrival (2 Peter 3:12).

How we join with the prayer of the Shulamite, "Turn, my beloved, and be like a roe or young hart upon the mountains of Bether." Haste with the speed of a gazelle. Come, my beloved, and be at my side.

Bether means division or separation. These mountains were so named because they separated Jerusalem in the north from Bethlehem and the shepherd's fields in the south. It is to this period of time, between the nativity and the first advent and the Jerusalem reign at the second advent, that our lessons apply. Soon these mountains will be topped and the Lord will assume his rightful throne on the Temple mount.

"Haste, O my beloved, for I am sick of love."

QUESTION BOX

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ. For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

QUESTION: The passage says we are all "one bread, and one body." Why does this passage not also say we are all one cup? Are we part of the loaf but not part of the cup?

ANSWER: Since we have a communion in both the body and blood of the Lord, would it then be logical to conclude that the church is both one loaf and one cup? We think yes. In essence 1 Corinthians 10 is saying this very thing. Verse 16 presents two facts, our communion in the bread and the blood. Verses 17 to 21 contrasts our partaking of the bread and cup with partaking of the bread and drink offered in idol sacrifice.

Verse 17 says "we being many are one bread and one body." Then it explains how we are "one bread, and one body" saying, "*for* [or because] we are all *partakers* of that one bread." So being *partakers* of the loaf is what makes us a part of the loaf.

Now notice the parallelism in verse 21. Regarding the cup, Paul says, "Ye cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be *partakers* of the Lord's table, and the table of devils."

Paul describes us as *partakers* of the Lord's table. The bread and cup are on that table, so being partakers in the cup would then make us a part of the cup, just as partaking of the bread makes us part of the bread.

Peter Karavas

SOLDIERS OF CHRIST

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." - 2 Timothy 2:3

A soldier's role demands total loyalty and strict obedience!

By Carl Hagensick

The Bible abounds in figurative language. The picture of warfare is apt. It describes the battle we fight within against the myriad temptations of the flesh, and the larger battle for truth and justice worldwide as Christ and his armies joust with Satan and his legions (Rev. 19:11-16) in the "battle of the great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14).

The enemies of Christ are described as arguments, or "imagination," as the King James Version has it. Each thought must be captured and converted to Christ. Victory in this war is not accomplished even at death. Then the lessons learned by the Christian soldier will be used to attain obedience in the rest of the human race: "to punish every act of disobedience, **once your obedience is complete**" (2 Cor. 10:6 NAS).

A Soldier's Qualifications

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3). Enduring hardness is only one of the many qualifications of a good soldier. Training, attention to orders, obedience, cooperation with one's fellow-soldiers, and battling the loneliness and other temptations peculiar to military life are others.

To be able to endure hardness is a fundamental purpose of a soldier's basic training. Strenuous daily exercise toughens his physical muscles. He must learn to live with bare necessities. Constant humiliation by his drill sergeant subdues his individuality, so that he is willing instinctively to obey orders and become part of a team. He is trained in the weapons he will use and in his responsibilities toward his fellow soldiers. Thus he is fit to become part of a well organized military machine.

The Christian, too, needs strong muscles-spiritual muscles. He must be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Eph. 6:10). His basic training includes constant repetitive spiritual exercises so that "by reason of use" he might have "his senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14). Jesus set a sterling example of soldiers living under spartan conditions, so much so that it is said of him, he "hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). He knew the pangs of loneliness, especially when his own disciples deserted him. "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16:32). How that loneliness increased on Calvary's cross when he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

The need for implicit and immediate obedience is well illustrated by the centurion who approached Jesus to heal his servant. Not wishing to impose, he suggested that Jesus merely say the word and not bother himself with coming personally. His reasoning was that of a military commander accustomed to obedience from his men: "For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it" (Luke 7:8).

The rigors of a soldier's life leave him open to many temptations. Constantly faced with the danger of dying he wants to be sure to enjoy all the fruits of living. Tasting the fruits of power, the whole world seems in his grasp. Being separated from wives and loved ones, he longs for female companionship. Having idle hours at his disposal, there are myriads of pleasures competing for his attention. It is little wonder that Paul adds the admonition, "no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life" (2 Tim. 2:4).

Paul: A Model Soldier

The Apostle Paul is a model for the Christian soldier. He holds himself up as an example in 2 Timothy 3:10, 11: "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me." Here Paul outlines nine ways in which he exemplifies one who has learned to endure hardship.

DOCTRINE: This word would be better translated "teaching" or "instruction." Paul spent the greater part of his ministry admonishing the early church on the necessity for fortitude in facing the loneliness and difficulties of the Christian way.

MANNER OF LIFE: Not only did Paul teach what true Christianity really means, he lived it. His litany of sufferings in 2 Corinthians 11:23-30 set a standard of devotion to a cause that perhaps has never been equalled.

PURPOSE: A soldier must believe in the rightness of his cause. As most armies are used to establish the rulership of their masters, so the Christian army is for the purpose of removing the forces of evil which seek to prohibit the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. One objective Paul saw in his Christian warfare was helping others experience the freedom in Christ: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10).

FAITH: A good soldier must believe in the rightness of what he is doing and have confidence that his side will ultimately be victorious. He must be sure that while defeats may occur on the battlefields of life, these are but temporary setbacks. He must "**know** that all things work together for good," because he is one of those "called of God."

LONGSUFFERING: Constancy in bearing up under burdens is another necessary attribute for the Christian soldier. Literally, the Greek word suggests a "long temper." Anger is a constant temptation to the soldier because of the opposition he receives. The good soldier must hold back subjective anger in order to carry out one's duties.

CHARITY: Charity, love, is not usually thought of as a necessary attribute of a soldier. Yet who has not seen pictures of soldiers on the battlefields of this world befriending children and the homeless in the lands where they are sent. This same kind of compassion should be the mark of the Christian warrior.

PATIENCE: Distinct from longsuffering, "patience" refers to constancy of composure under trying circumstances. Warfare can easily lead to depressions. Patience keeps the Christian soldier at his task. One of the biggest problems every military establishment faces is the case of the AWOL (absent without leave) soldier. When the Christian lets his zeal run slack he is spiritually AWOL and useless as a soldier.

PERSECUTIONS: An army's foes resent its presence; often it is disliked by the ones they seek to help. Jesus and the early church found it to be so when frequently the Jews were their persecutors more than the Romans. As Paul said: "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me" (Rom. 15:3).

AFFLICTIONS: The Greek word really means hardships. Paul was buffeted by enemies without and struggles within: "without were fightings, within were fears" (2 Cor. 7:5).

The Spoils of Victory

Soldiers often are spurred on in battle by dreams of booty from their conquests. As Abraham refused all such spoils after his victory (Gen. 14:23, 24), and the Israelites were not permitted to take of the spoils of Jericho (Josh. 7:11), so the Christian is not to exercise materialistic greed in his warfare. There is a spoil nevertheless, which is freely his: a promotion to a higher office, to reign with Christ over the conquered possessions. This spoil should be an ever present incentive in battle, even as it was with the Master. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

There is yet another spoil in this warfare. The battle is against Satan and his hosts. In the beginning he stole life and its attendant pleasures from the human race. After his defeat, this life will be reclaimed by Christ, shared with his church, and eventually returned to its rightful owners, the redeemed human race. We can trace this disposal of the spoil in the following verses:

(1) "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil [take a spoil of] his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house" (Matt. 12:29).

(2) "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong [the church]; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12).

(3) "Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame [mankind] take the prey. And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity" (Isa. 33:23, 24).

Fellow Soldiers

Close camaraderie binds soldiers together in lifelong friendships. Often they owe their very lives to a fellow warrior. One that Paul especially calls a fellow soldier is Epaphroditus of Philippi:

"Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."-Philippians 2:25-27

Willingness to become physically sick in the service of a companion is a true mark of a faithful Christian soldier. An example of the closeness of those who share the battlefield together is furnished in the case of the centurion who beseeched Jesus on behalf of his sick servant. "And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant" (Luke 7:2, 3). The word translated "dear" in this verse is from the same Greek word that we derive our word "intimate," describing the closest of human relationships.

Our Captain

The role of Jesus as captain is clearly spelled out in Hebrews 2:10: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

The word "captain" is not the most accurate thought for the Greek *archegos*, which should be more accurately translated "prince." It describes a similar relationship as that of a captain to his troops. In the Septuagint, Numbers 13:2, 3, it is translated by the English words "ruler" and "heads": "Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a **ruler** among them. And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were **heads** of the children of Israel."

In biblical times the good captain did not send his army into battle, he led them. Frequently in the forefront of the fray, it was not uncommon to find the captain dying in battle. He directed as much by example as by precept. He led nowhere he was unwilling to go himself.

Our Armor

Nor does a good captain leave his soldiers unprotected; he gives them a full panoply of armor, the whole armor of God:

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.-Ephesians 6:14-17

THE GIRDLE OF TRUTH: The girdle kept the clothing close to the body for better protection; its tightness strengthened the stomach muscles so that the warrior could better perform in close conflict. Assurance that one's cause is right and just performs these functions for the Christian soldier.

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: In 1 Thessalonians 5:8 it is called the "breastplate of faith and love," for these are the component elements of righteousness. Because the breastplate covers the heart and other vital organs, it is an essential defense. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8).

SANDALS OF PEACE: It seems odd that the soldier's armor would include an article of clothing representing peace. Actually it is the "preparation of the gospel of peace." Now is not the time for peace in the world, for reconciliation between God and man; but it is the time for the "word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18, 19). Another prophetic battle scene calls our attention to the "feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace" (Isa. 52:7). Our warfare is one that truly does have peace-not just the peace of the victor but also the peace of the vanquished-as its objective.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH: Like a shield, faith is mobile. The battle Paul describes is unequal. Instead of there being two warriors locked in hand to hand battle, one of the adversaries is equipped with fiery darts and can fight from a distance. These darts are doubts that must be met with faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith" (1 John 5:4).

THE HELMET OF SALVATION:

In 1 Thessalonians 5:8 Paul calls it "the hope of salvation." The best protection against attacks on the Christian's intellect (his head) is the assurance of salvation. He knows that the Lord is judging him on what he does with the knowledge he has. "Nevertheless the

foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19).

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT:

The only offensive weapon in the Christian's panoply is the sword of the spirit. Described elsewhere as a "two-edged sword," it is used for applying the principles of God's word to ourselves as well as to others. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

Being therefore fully armed with the whole armor of God, let us not be slack in marching forth into battle so that at the end of our course we can say with the Apostle Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).

NEWS AND VIEWS

Herald Magazine Now on Tape!

The Herald is now available on cassette tape. Each issue is complete on two tapes. The cost is \$4.00 per issue. Tapes can be ordered from Carl Hagensick, Managing Editor, 2929 Hillside Lane, Darien, IL 60561.

Announcement of Annual Meeting

If you are a member of the Pastoral Bible Institute, you are entitled to attend the annual meeting of the Institute, which is held according to the by-laws each June. It is at this meeting that the general business of the Institute is conducted, financial reports are given, and the new Board of Directors is elected. Also the editors of the Herald are crucifixion. appointed by the Board of Directors. Terms of service to the Board and as Editors are one year. The 1995 Annual Meeting of the Pastoral Bible Institute will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 3, in Wausau, Wisconsin at the Mission Evangelical Church. On the following morning, those who wish are invited to attend the meeting with the brethren in Wausau. If you plan to attend, you should contact the brethren in Wausau for lodging. If you will come, and if you need reservations, please contact: Delores Anderson, 924 Meadow Rd., Wausau, WI 54401, phone (715) 675-7560. If you will need a pickup from the airport, or bus station, please contact Loyal Petran, 607 Ross Ave., Wausau, WI 54403-6972, phone (715) 848-6073. If you have not received a ballot and wish to vote, you should immediately contact James Candle, Secretary, by phone, at (206) 671-8661. As an institute member, your vote is important. We encourage you to participate in the affairs of the Institute as you are able.

Pilgrim Trip

Carl Hagensick, director and managing editor, completed a pilgrim trip throughout the east coast. He visited brethren in Canton, Michigan; Tillsonburg, Ontario; Hamilton, Ontario; Toronto, Ontario; Schenectady, New York; Kerhonkson, New York; Union, New Jersey. During the trip, he and those traveling with him visited many isolated brethren. These trips are part of the mission of the PBI. Another such trip, to the West and Southwest, is being planned for March and April. If you know of brethren who could benefit from a visit by one of the pilgrim trips, please contact Carl Hagensick at:

2929 Hillside Lane, Darien, IL 60561.

Annual Memorial Supper

The evening of Thursday, April 13, 1995, after six o'clock, will be the proper time for the celebration of our Lord's Memorial Supper: the Jewish system of reckoning was introduced about the fourth century after our Lord's death and is still used today to calculate the anniversary of the Jewish Passover. That celebration begins the next evening at sundown and lasts a week. We do not celebrate the Passover but the killing of the anti-typical Passover Lamb. The Jewish method of reckoning, with the day beginning in the evening ("the evening and morning were the first day") is according to the Genesis account of creation. By this method of reckoning Jesus was crucified on the same day [12:00 noon, according to the Jewish calendar] that he celebrated the supper with his apostles, probably about the prior midnight. On our calendar, with the day beginning in the morning rather than the evening, the Memorial takes place the evening before the calendar day of our Lord's crucifixion.

Bible Student Activities

From July 24-28, an International Seminar for young people will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This will precede the Bible Students General Convention in Grand Rapids, but is not associated with it other than for travel convenience. There will be a maximum of 120 youth attending, including some from Poland, Germany, France, Ukraine, Romania, and the United States. Because these young people are being sponsored by brethren in the United States, they will be able to spend time in the United States and travel to various conventions between July and September. Anyone wishing to help with the expenses of the seminar may contact Len Griehs, News and Views editor, for information.

Around The World

United World Effort to Reshape The Middle East

Editor's note: Each day brings more news of extended involvement in the Middle East by countries from all over the world. Ezekiel 38 discusses the gathering of all nations to Jerusalem in preparation for the final battle preceding Israel's deliverance and the inauguration of Christ's kingdom. Also, note Zechariah 12:3, "And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." As we note the growing attention toward the Middle East, it is a verification that the day draws closer. Following is a roundup of the many countries involved with the Middle East. The source is The Jerusalem Report, brought to our attention by "Bible Light on the News," a publication out of Kansas. The order given is geographic, not order of importance.

Canada: chair of the multilateral talks on refugees and bibliographic coordinator of Middle East economic projects.

United States: co-chief sponsor of multilateral talks; chair of multilateral talks on water; co-chair of multilateral talks on arms control; coordinator of vocational training projects.

Britain: coordinator of financial markets projects.

Germany: coordinator of regional trade projects.

France: coordinator of transportation and communication projects; French companies have put forward proposals for major road and rail projects.

Spain: coordinator of agricultural projects.

Morocco: host of multilateral talks on economic development.

Italy: coordinator of the planned Egypt-Gaza gas pipeline and lobbying to build the Red Sea-Dead Sea canal.

Egypt: host of multilateral talks on refugees.

Japan: chair of the multilateral committee on the environment and coordinator of all Mideast tourism projects.

Oman: host of multilateral talks on water.

Qatar: host of multilateral talks on arms control.

Turkey: interested in fostering major water pipeline projects.

Russia: co-chief sponsor of the multilateral talks and co-chair of the multilateral talks on arms control.

Holland: host of multilateral talks on the environment.

Austria: coordinator of regional electricity projects.

Sweden: coordinator of projects for the welfare of refugee children.

European Community: chair of the multilateral talks on economic development.

Other countries currently petitioning to be involved with the administration of the new Middle East are Romania, Poland, South Africa, and South Korea.

Israel

Three Christian tourists were forced to leave the Temple Mount in Jerusalem after they started to pray. Arab officials and police told them that prayer on the Temple Mount was only permitted by Moslems. A Christian journalist later wrote that he had organized the prayer to verify reports that Christians and Jews are forbidden to pray on the Arab-controlled site.

(Jerusalem Post, 9/94)

Israel's burgeoning role in the Middle East is moving into the energy market. Some of the biggest names in the oil industry are lining up to do deals with Israel. Nimrod Novik, vice president of the Merhav Group of Cos., an Israeli multinational that is building a \$1 billion oil refinery in Egypt with Egyptian partners, says, "It's still too early to talk about a Middle East common market, but some degree of regional convergence is already taking place, and it's happening in the area of energy." Better relations with Arab neighbors has allowed Israel to get its oil from a closer source than Norway or Mexico. It also hooks Israel in closer to Egypt and Jordan for possible joint electricity generating capabilities. Enron Corp. of Houston, Texas, is developing a \$4 billion liquefied-natural-gas facility in Qatar that would ship natural gas to Israel and India. Virtually all of the Gulf nations are exploring business opportunities with Israel openly, except for Saudi Arabia. The strictly Islamic country objects to Israeli control of some Muslim holy sites. Energy experts say that Israel itself is too small to be an energy force in the Middle East. However, regional projects, especially for natural gas, could increase Israel's importance in the energy arena.

(Wall Street Journal, 1/16/95)

Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin visited Oman in December. He is the first Israeli head of government to visit a Persian Gulf state. Rabin met with Sultan Qzbus, Oman's monarch since 1970. Observers said it is the latest sign of erosion in the unified wall of Arab hostility toward the Jewish state. Israeli officials described Oman's move as significant because they believe the move must be supported by Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabian support will be critical to an Arab-Israel permanent peace agreement.

(Washington Post 12/27/94)

The Society for the Study of Mardeiro, with a membership of 200, provides information to Brazilians who believe they are descendants of Marranos, Sephardic Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity during the Inquisition and subsequently immigrated to Latin America in the 1500s. Many of the modern-day Marranos wish to become Jewish again, and some would like to live in Israel. Stephen Bayme, director of the Institute on American Jewish-Israeli Relations of the American Jewish Committee in New York, observes, "There's a reawakening of Jewish consciousness all over the world in places

you never imagined. There's a lot of rumor mongering about these so-called lost tribes. It's a historic fact that the tribes were exiled 2,700 years ago, but most have assimilated and disappeared into the dustbin of history. Millennialists interpret this surge as a sign that the end of the world may be near." The discovery of millions of potential new Jews has some intellectuals and politicians in Israel worried. They believe that the 1993 peace accord with the Palestinians introduced a new era of post-Zionism and that a potential flood of immigrants needs to be headed off even if it means repealing the Law of Return, enacted in 1950 to make it easy for Jews anywhere in the world to move to Israel.

(Washington Post, 11/26/94)

Despite firm official denials by Israel and Iraq, Arab officials insist that the two governments have engaged in secret talks. According to the sources, Saddam Hussein ordered Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations to open up contacts with his Israeli counterpart. New York meetings were followed up in Morocco. The talks were supposedly on the issue of reopening the Baghdad-Haifa oil pipeline and the resettling in Iraq of at least 150,000 Palestinian refugees now in Lebanese camps. Iraq sees the Palestinians, most of whom are Christian or Sunni Muslim, as a needed counterweight to the rebellious Shiite masses in Iraq.

(U.S. News and World Report, 9/26)

A look at the status of Arab-Israeli peace:

Egypt: Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty in 1979. Although relations have been cool ever since, Egypt has become an enthusiastic mediator between Arab countries and Israel.

Palestinians: Israel and PLO are still negotiating the autonomy of Gaza and Jericho. The PLO demand for a state with east Jerusalem as the capital is being pushed off until negotiations are completed, sometime in 1996.

Syria: Israel-Syria talks are now centered around the Golan Heights, captured by Israel in 1967. Israel appears prepared to give up the Golan.

Lebanon: Israel occupies a, small piece of southern Lebanon to prevent attacks from Iranian-backed Hezbollah radicals. Peace with Beirut could come through Syria, chief negotiator.

North Africa: Morocco and Tunisia have established diplomatic relations with Israel.

Iraq: Reports of secret contacts (see separate story)

Libya: No known contacts with Israel.

Some Gulf states such as Bahrain and Qatar are close to establishing diplomatic and trade relations with Israel.

(Christadelphian Watchman, 12/94)

United States

The killings of two workers at abortion clinics in Massachusetts has caused some of the nation's most prominent Catholic and Protestant leaders to discuss whether protest should be abandoned in favor of prayer within the church.

(New York Times, 1/5/95;

A new law aimed at notifying communities about the presence of sex offenders led two vigilantes to the home of a child molester where they beat up the wrong man, police say. Both suspects were charged with harassment, conspiracy and a possible sentence of 10 years in prison. Civil libertarians who had opposed the law said they weren't surprised by the attack. "We hope this is the first and last such incident," said Chuck Davis, spokesman for the state Attorney General's office.

(Associated Press, 1/11/95)

A recent national survey conducted by CBS television about the bill of rights revealed a changing attitude in America: Three-quarters of those surveyed believed that the government should restrict the right of peaceful assembly for government protests; a majority believe that free speech should be abridged for criticism of the government the right of criminal defendants to confront witnesses, the guarantee against double jeopardy and the privilege against self-incrimination; one-third said it should be all right for the police to search people's homes for drugs, guns and evidence without a search warrant; twenty percent believe that criminal trials should be secret.

More states are allowing people to possess concealed weapons to arm themselves against crime. As public concern about crime has increased in recent years, a quiet but successful campaign has occurred to liberalize laws to allow private citizens to carry concealed handguns. David Kopel, executive director of the Independence Institute, which has provided the intellect behind the movement says, "The recognition has taken hold that the police can't be everywhere. People want to be able to defend themselves."

(Investor's Business Daily, 1/16/95)

Economic

Many developing countries are feeling a financial squeeze. Investors are chasing rapidly growing economies, and those poorer countries are suffering as a result of a lack of capital commitment. Wolfhard Graetz, chief investment officer for Bank J. Vontobel Co. Group in Zurich said, "We have a crowding out spreading like a virus in a crowded room. If you have an epidemic, the weakest will be affected first. I won't say they will die, but they will suffer while the strong organisms will get through it much better. That is what is happening now in financial markets." Overall, though, economists say that the world

economy is rosy. "Hardly ever before has the global economic outlook been as positive as now," says one money manager. Others, however, are not as optimistic. Some say that storms could develop. "There is a lack of the confidence in the ability of governments to pay back their debt. It's apparent in Sweden, in Southern Europe and in Latin America," says Graetz.

(Dow Jones, 1/12/95)

Christendom

Pope John Paul II offered a hard-nosed bargain to the Chinese through his radio message in Beijing: recognize papal authority over China's Catholics in return for the Vatican's acknowledgement of the country's officially sponsored church. If the offer is accepted, Chinese authorities would be faced with a foreign intrusion into its country's affairs that it has not allowed before. Vatican spokesmen say it is the aim to open the way for a new relationship with Beijing on its own terms, and to allow Catholic missionaries to evangelize the huge nation. Presently, about 3 percent of Asians profess Catholicism. The Vatican has been training a task force of more than 40 missionary priests who will form the core of the Chinese Catholic church connection to the Vatican.

(New York Times, 1/15/95)

Many philosophies now compete with Christianity for influence, including secular humanism, relativism, feminism, eastern religions and New Age philosophies such as witchcraft and earth and goddess worship. Accompanying these comes a new set of moral standards that work within the context of a new world view. These groups are actively trying to undermine the Biblical family unity. Abortion is now legally performed in most Western countries. Euthanasia is growing in popularity. Relativism is a driving force in school systems, stating that all creeds and philosophies reflect truth in different ways. The Bible is held as a source of bigotry, hypocrisy, and oppression.

(Christadelphian Watchman, 10/94)

NOTICE:

Beginning with the last issue, THE HERALD magazine will be available on tape. Each monthly issue will be recorded on two tapes and be available for a cost of \$4.00. Those wishing this service, either on a subscription basis or for a single issue, should send their request with payment, to the managing editor: THE HERALD, 2929 Hillside Lane, Darien, IL 60561.

BOOK REVIEW

The Keys to Revelation by Frank Shallieu

As the turn of a millennium approaches, more books are appearing on eschatology (the study of end times) and prophecy than at any time in the last 150 years. Most of the books take on a particular author's twist on chronology or prophecy to develop an expected date for the wrap-up of earth's affairs. A recent example of one greatly hyped, but failed prediction, was that of Harold Camping president of Family Radio. In his book 1994? he predicted Christ's return and the "rapture" of the church would occur sometime between September 15 and October 31. Needless to say, when the month of November rolled around, sales of the book fell dramatically. Other authors, such as Hal Lindsay, write a new book every few years as current events dictate, in which they spin a Bible "yarn" based on Jesus' discussion of **the end times** and the deliverance of the church, culminating in the destruction of the earth. They weave a tale that rivals the best selling fictional novels. Though mentioning dates, *The Keys to Revelation*, however, stands far above any of these venues.

Shallieu is a Bible Student from Staten Island, New York, who along with fellow Bible Student August Tornquist, spent many years of his life exploring the Great Pyramid at Gizeh before pyramid study became fashionable. The two are still recognized today, even by Egyptian authorities, as experts on the pyramid. This book is the culmination of a lifetime of research into another area of great interest to Shallieu-the symbols of the Book of Revelation, but it is more fitting as a reference and research tool than as a reading book. The author describes his unique viewpoint in the preface: "To attach sufficient weight and importance to the Book of Revelation, the reader must realize how carefully God guided and directed all the details... leading to a close examination and careful search for the meaning of those visions.

"No explanation of the prophetic and highly symbolic Book of Revelation and its 'secret things' can be heartily received with assurance, nor accepted by discriminating minds, unless all its component parts are taken into consideration and given a complete and harmonious application.

"The purpose of this publication, therefore, is to satisfy the truth seeker who, being less interested in a smooth fiction-style, sermonizing rendition, is more concerned receiving an explanation of the vision in all its minutiae."

Indeed, the author incorporates great detail on each symbol of Revelation. Unless a reader is already familiar with the biblical book, he or she may have difficulty with the writing. Apart from this difficulty, every reader will be intrigued by the 17 appendices which accompany the book and which for the most part bear no relation to the subject. They are short, well-written and contain interesting material. Note the following examples: Appendix 1 dealing with ancient Israel's High Priest's breastplate, presents extensive comments about the arrangement and symbols of the stones, and the names of the tribes they represent; Appendix 4 asks the question, Eden and the Flood-Does Eden Still Exist? (you'll have to get the book to answer this!); Appendix 5 speculates on the nature of the cloud which protected Israel during its sojourn in Sinai (this was especially fascinating); Appendix 15, The Exodus (it's not like you saw in The Ten Commandments).

Every serious Bible student ought to have a copy of this book on the shelf for reference. It is available from the author, whose address can be obtained upon request.