

Personal Remarks
Br. Ted Smith

This item is the booklet entitled OUR LORD'S RETURN--His Parousia, Apokalupsis and Epiphania. This is the 1900 edition and was reprinted this year--1972. This booklet has been a wonderful help to the Lord's people all through the Harvest period. In the back of the booklet is a reprint of the 1916 Foreword of Volume II--THE TIME IS AT HAND.

December, 1972 will end three years of Discourse Service. We have appreciated the privilege of sending out discourses and papers that were original with brethren we felt were "sound in the Truth. We want to thank you all for the many letters of appreciation and encouragement which you have sent to us the past three years. We are watching the Lord's leadings, and will continue to serve in every way we can, and as long as we can.

We would like to use this opportunity to express a few words of caution. We have noted that there are a few differences of opinion on the part of the Lord's people IN THE TRUTH. We do not have in mind differences that are held by our brethren who think that "BROTHER RUSSELL WAS WRONG ON PROPHECY." No, we mean differences IN THE TRUTH. We ignore the differences of the brethren who think "BROTHER RUSSELL WAS WRONG ON PROPHECY."

Our word of caution is this--our minds do not always work the same. Our judgments and decisions and conclusions are not always harmonious, therefore we need to speak with restraint and not be dogmatic where we differ. There are certain subjects that we must allow each one to decide for himself. There is no need to attempt to force all to see some things exactly alike, for the reason that our fellowship in Christ and IN THE TRUTH is not based upon these subjects where there are differences. For instance, on the subject of the Great Company--whether there are any in the Nominal Church; whether spirit begetting is possible in the Nominal Church; certain questions regarding the Image of the Beast and its vitalization; yes, even on the reign--we need to exercise caution that we do not force one another. For, as we say, our fellowship in Christ, and IN THE TRUTH is not based upon these subjects, even though they are intensely interesting to all of us.

We have noted a tendency to be too greatly exercised to bring all of us to see exactly alike. This has the effect of polarizing the brethren, and there is no need for this at all. We must grant liberty to one another and not feel grieved over these differences; for if we do we will create little barriers between ourselves--this is sad and entirely uncalled for.

It all boils down to the recognition of the fact that our heads are not all alike, and we must

allow differences on questions that do not involve sound doctrine or Christian conduct. Why should I feel grieved at my brother in Christ if he does not see exactly as I do on such subjects as mentioned in paragraph four above? And why should my brother feel grieved at me if I do not see things exactly as he does? In allowing differences we maintain our fellowship on the things that are fundamental and heart-satisfying. We should feel free to express our honest conclusions, but in the spirit of restraint, with no attempt or desire to force others to see eye to eye on every detail of truth and prophecy. (Incidentally, we are restricting these remarks of ours to the differences mentioned in paragraph four above, so there will be no misunderstanding.) As a final thought--we think the reprint article on page 5981--THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION--contains vital information and advice for our guidance here in the end of the age.