

The Berean Christadelphian

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the exposition and defence of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints, with the object of helping to make ready a People prepared for the coming of the Lord. Opposed to the unscriptural teachings of the papal and protestant churches of the world.

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“They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many believed.”—Acts 17: 11.

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CHRIST IS COMING AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Ecclesial News

NEWPORT, Mon., England—Clarence Hall, Rodney Road (opposite Technical College)—Memorial 6 p.m., Lecture following.

We have little to report from this corner of the vineyard, yet we are thankful that, in the mercy of our heavenly Father, we are able to keep the lightstand of the Truth open. Few of our friends are interested in the Truth, even less trouble to heed its message; but the work must go on whilst the Master waits for the appointed time. So we must encourage one another, knowing it is an indication of "our redemption drawing nigh."

We have been able to visit the small number of the Household at New Tredegar each month recently and in so doing, we have strengthened one another on the road to the Kingdom. The words of exhortation encouraged us, stirring up our pure minds by way of remembrance unto those things written for our learning.

We, too, have been able to visit the brethren and sisters at Birmingham, on several occasions, and by our meeting together around the table of our absent Lord, have strengthened the ties between us and so encouraged us to greater efforts whilst we await the day of the Lord.

We desire to express our appreciation to our American brethren once more, for making available to us the recording of some wonderful messages of encouragement and exhortation to sustain us on our journey, which words we have been able to share with a few of like precious faith.

So, though we may be few, we are glad in the knowledge that we are amongst others who believe the same things, and have the same hope, the same goal in sight—may we each be found waiting, our lamps burning brightly, and with a little oil to spare.

With fraternal love to all of like precious faith from the brethren and sisters in Newport.

—bro. Ken Williams

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TORONTO, Canada—Leaside Memorial Community Gardens, 1073 Millwood Road—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Memorial 11 a.m.

It is now several months since our last report appeared. This is regretted, but now we shall bring our records up to date by first telling the readers that we have been strengthened, encouraged and stirred up by way of remembrance by the labors of bre. Harry Gwalchmai and Roy Sutherland of London. We were also privileged to hear bro. Oscar Beauchamp through the medium of a tape recording. By the means of exhortation, given by visiting speakers, we are drawn closer together in the bonds of the Truth, and made to realize more and more we are not alone.

The following visitors have encouraged us, and we thank God for the fellowship which we have with one another—bro. & sis. Harry Gwalchmai, bro. & sis. Roy Sutherland, and sisters Helen Boyce, Ruby Clarkson, Janet Hill, Edith Hunter, Louise Martin and Clara Sparham, all of the London ecclesia.

Once again we send fraternal greetings to our brethren and sisters in various parts of the world, and remind them that their ecclesial news is deeply appreciated. Some times we hear an occasional remark about our being few in number as though large numbers were essential to happiness and ecclesial prosperity and that, being few, we are failing in our duty to the Master. Let us not be discouraged; but let us rather think of Abraham and Sarah who were alone for many years. Another great example is Joseph, who was sold into slavery, and cast into prison because of false accusation, and remained there two years. Paul, too had two years in prison in Caesarea. These illustrious

examples should be sufficient to make us rise above our trials, which are but petty in comparison, and cause us to thank God and take courage. —bro. G. A. Gibson

EDITORIAL:

Godly Edification

"Grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ"—Ephes. 4:15

In the third chapter of his second letter, Peter speaks of the coming of the Lord Jesus, at which time all business, social and religious organizations, that go to make up the kingdom of men, will come to an end. They will then be replaced by the Kingdom of God, wherein dwelleth righteousness, which will result in the earth being "filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Therefore, says Peter, in v. 11—

"Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

One of the principal objects of the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, and the Truth in general, is the attainment and preservation of godly edification. This has its beginning in the knowledge and understanding obtained through the reading and study of the Word of God. By this we learn of the hope of salvation that God has set before us in His Word.

As we proceed, we learn a considerable amount about God, Who He is, and His comprehensive plan of redemption which He has presented to the human race by means of the Gospel, which, in turn, is based upon the promises He has made to Abraham. It is obvious that the promises are not absolute and to everyone—but *conditional*, and to *certain ones*—for we soon learn that God requires faithful obedience in many things; that we must maintain an unwavering faith in what He has promised; that we must love Him with all the heart and mind; that we must pray without ceasing, and in all things give Him thanks. For, says Paul—

"The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).

If, then, we would be edified unto godliness, we must do all we possibly can to strengthen our faith and hope, and fortify our determination to walk in the Truth. Many things have been left on record in the form of advice and exhortation by which, if we give earnest heed thereto, we will obtain the desired result. One of these valuable examples is found in Phil. 4:8, where Paul says—

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are amiable, whatever things are reputable, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, attentively consider these things" (Diaglott).

At the time of writing, Paul was a prisoner in Rome; but there is little in this letter to indicate his acute suffering. His thoughts were extended fair beyond his own circumstances, and were centered upon his brethren in Philippi. Among all his affectionate letters, there is none more radiantly beautiful, and none more inspiringly instructive in things pertaining to godly edification. It all seems to be brought to a focus in this eighth verse. Leading up to it, however, in v. 6 and 7, we have an appealing and lofty expression very characteristic of him—

"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

What could be more animating and encouraging than to realize that it is possible through continual godly edification, coupled with our prayers and supplications, to produce within our midst a community wholly dedicated to the service of God! We would then be elevated far above all mundane things until that *peace of God which surpasses all conception* should guard our hearts and minds by Jesus Anointed.

Do we fully comprehend the stupendous import of these words of Paul, or are we going to be content to drift along in a careless manner, being willing to agree to differ regarding the fundamental principles of the Truth? Have we the courage to face such a searching question, or are we spiritual cowards? If we are not, and have the courage of our convictions, let us enter into a chamber, and shut the door behind us, and ponder well the Name we bear.

What an exalted Name to which we are related because of the Gospel! It is *God in manifestation*; a Name that embraces all His attributes. When the Lord Jesus appears, he will select from among the called those who are worthy of being chosen for the Name. Among the qualifications are such attributes as humbleness, faithfulness, obedience, godliness and holiness. Many things are required to develop a character that will reflect these qualities; and there is much to do to continue holding them. One wise course is to avoid all speculative subjects because they will interfere with godly edification; and one of the most effective ways to cope with them is to be rooted and grounded in the Faith.

The Truth is not an inward product of the natural mind. To obtain a knowledge of it, we must be persistent in the reading and meditation of the Word; and to retain that knowledge, we must be just as persistent in the application of our minds to the things of the Spirit. The word of Truth is the Word of the Spirit. Therefore, if we understand, believe and obey the Gospel, and walk according to its precepts, the Spirit Word will dwell in us, and we will—

"Speak the Truth in love, and **grow up into him** in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephes. 4:15-16).

This edifying, or building up, or *constantly improving and deepening our knowledge and understanding of the Truth* is vitally essential to the development of a character that will be well-pleasing to our heavenly Father. What an inestimable privilege it is to know the Truth about God, and to know His purpose in Christ Jesus, and to know that He will bring order, everlasting beauty, and eternal joy and peace out of the present evil and confusion that fills the earth!

Therefore, let us give ourselves no rest while we follow after the things wherewith we may edify one another. If we do, we will be built up in love, and the fruits of the Spirit will have free course among us, and we will walk in the Truth with joy and confidence. —Editor

The Prince of This World

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

"The prince of this world shall be cast out."

Sin made flesh, whose character is revealed in the works of the flesh, is the Wicked One of the world. He is styled by Jesus, "the Prince of this world." *Kosmos*, rendered "world" in this phrase, signifies that *order of things* constituted upon the basis of sin in the flesh, and styled *the kingdom of*

Satan (Matt. 12:26), as opposed to the *kingdom of God*: which is to be established upon the foundation of "the Word made flesh" obedient unto death.

Incarnated sin, and *incarnated obedience*, are the bases of the two hostile kingdoms—of God and of the adversary. The world is Satan's kingdom; therefore it is that "the saints," or people of God—both Israelites outwardly, and "Israelites indeed"—are a dispersed and persecuted community. Satan's kingdom is the kingdom of Sin. It is a kingdom in which "sin reigns in the mortal body," and thus has dominion over men.

It is quite fabulous to locate it in a region of ghosts and hobgoblins, remote from, or under the earth, where Pluto reigns as "God of Hell." The kingdom of Sin is *among the living upon the earth*; and it is called the kingdom of Satan, because "all the power of the enemy," or *adversary* (Heb. Sahtahn), of God and His people, is concentrated and incarnated in it. It is a kingdom teeming with religion, or rather forms of superstition, all of which have sprung from the thinking of sinful flesh. This is the reason why men hate, or neglect, or disparage, the Bible. If the leaders of the people were to speak honestly they would confess that they did not understand it. Their systems of divinity are the untoward thinkings of sinful flesh; and they know that they cannot interpret the Bible intelligibly according to their principles.

In their public exhibitions, they substitute their sermonisings for "reasoning out of the Scriptures," and "expounding out of the Law of Moses and the Prophets." (Acts 28:23, 31).

Thus they neglect the Bible, or use it only as a book of maxims and mottoes for their sermons; which, for the most part, have very little to do with the subject treated of in the text.

But the carnal policy does not end here. The neglect of the preachers might be supplied by the searching of the Scriptures by the people themselves. But this is discouraged by disparagements from the pulpit. The Word is proclaimed to be "a dead letter;" the prophecies are said to be unintelligible; the Apocalypse incomprehensible, and utterly bewildering; that it is necessary to go to college to study divinity before it can be judiciously explained; and so forth.

As for a college education in divinity qualifying boys for "preaching the Word," the absurdity of the conceit is manifest in the fact that the "college-bred divines" are all at variance among themselves upon its meaning. Call a convention of priests and preachers of all religious sects and parties, and assign to them the work of publishing a scriptural and unanimous reply to the simple question, "*What do the Scriptures teach as the measure of faith, and rule of conduct, to him who would inherit the kingdom?*"

Let it be such a reply as would stand the scrutiny of deep and earnest investigation—and what does the reader expect would be the result? Would their knowledge of all the languages living and dead; of Euclid's Elements; of Ligori, Bellarmine, Luther, Calvin, and Arminius; of the mythologies of the Greeks and Romans; of all the creeds, confessions, catechisms, and articles of "Christendom"; of logic, ancient and modern; of the art of sermonising; and of all religious controversies extant—would their acquaintance with such lore as this bring them to unanimity; and cause them to be manifested as "workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth"?

What can we reason upon this point, but from what we know? Experience, then, teaches us that their performance of such a thing, so simple and easy in itself, would be utterly impracticable; for "the thinking of the flesh, is enmity against God"; and until they throw away their traditions, and *study the Word*, which is very different from "studying divinity," they continue as they are, perhaps unconsciously, the perverters and enemies of the truth.

The kingdom of Satan is manifested under various phases. When the Word was embodied in sinful flesh, and dwelt among the Jews, the *Kosmos* was constituted of the Roman world, which was then based upon the institutions of paganism. After these were suppressed, the kingdom of the

adversary assumed the Constantinian form, which was subsequently changed in the west to the Papal and Protestant order of things; and in the east to the Mohammedan. These phases, however, no more affect the nature of the kingdom than the changes of the moon alter her substance. The lord that dominates over them all from the days of Jesus to the present time is SIN, the incarnate accuser and adversary of the law of God, and therefore styled "the Devil and Satan."

The words *ho archos* signify "the prince," or one invested with power. All persons in authority are styled *archontes* in the New Testament, such as magistrates, and chiefs among the people. Hence, the *archon* of the *archons* would be the chief magistrate of the kingdom.

Now sin, in its sovereign manifestations among the nations, executes its will and pleasure through the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of a state. What, then, is decreed by emperors, kings, popes, and subordinate rulers, are the mandates of "the Prince of the World," who works in them all to gratify their own lusts, oppress the people, and "make war against the saints," with all the energy they possess.

Taken collectively from the chief magistrate to the lowest they are styled *archai* and *exousiai*—"principalities and powers" —the world-rulers of the darkness of this age, who are the spirituals of wickedness in the high places of the kingdoms (Eph. 6:12). So the apostle writes of the rulers of the world in his day; and from the conduct they now exhibit before the nations in all their kingdoms, it is clear that the style is as characteristic of the rulers, and of these times, as it was in the first century of the Christian era.

Iniquity has only changed its form and mode of attack against the Truth. *The world's rulers, temporal and spiritual, are as essentially hostile to the Gospel of the Kingdom as ever.* They could not embrace it and retain the friendship of the world. This is as impossible now as at the beginning. But things are now quiet with respect to the Gospel; not because the world is reconciled to it, but because there are scarcely any to be found who have intelligence of it, faith and courage enough earnestly to contend for it as it was originally delivered to the saints.

In apostolic times, it was the privilege of the church to make known to the world-rulers "the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). This mission brought the disciples of Christ into contact with them, as is related in the Acts. When they stood before these men of sin, in whom the thinking of sinful flesh worked strongly, the Truth of God proclaimed to them brought out the evil of the flesh in all its malignity.

They imprisoned the disciples of Christ; threatened them with death; tempted them with rewards; and when they could not shake their fidelity to the truth, tormented them with the cruellest tortures they could invent. The apostle styles these "the artifices, or wiles, of the accuser" (Eph. 6:11), against which he exhorts believers to stand firm, being panoplied with the whole armor of God.

The war being thus commenced by an attack upon the strongholds of power, the magistrates, urged on by the priests, were not content to take vengeance against them when they came in their way; but they obtained imperial decrees to hunt them out, and destroy them. This they did with destructive energy and effect. They calumniated the disciples, charging them with the most licentious and impious practices; and employed spies and informers, who personated brethren, to walk among them, and watch an opportunity of accusing them before the judge.

These adversaries of the Christians, being actuated by the same spirit of sinful flesh, the apostle terms "your adversary the accuser;" and to express the ferocious spirit that impelled the enemy, he compares him to a roaring lion, walking about, on the lookout for prey. "Resist him," says he; not by wrestling with flesh and blood in personal combat; but continuing—

". . . steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are inflicted in the world upon your brethren."

To walk being dead in trespasses and sins, is to live "according to the course (*aion*) of this world" (Eph. 2:12). So says the apostle. The course of the world is according to the thinking of sinful flesh, in whatever way it may be manifested or expressed. If a man embrace one of the religions of Satan's kingdom, he is still "dead in trespasses and sins," and walks "according to the course of the world." To walk in sin is to walk in this course. Hence, the apostle terms walking according to the course of the world, walking according to the "Prince of the Power of the Air;" which he explains as "the Spirit now working in the children of disobedience."

The "power of the air," or aerial power, is the *political power of the world*, which is animated and pervaded by the spirit of disobedience, which is sin in the flesh; and styled above, the Prince of the Power of the Air. This is that prince of whom Jesus spoke, saying—

"Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the Prince of this World be cast out"

(John 12:31).

—that is, "judged." The key to this is given in what follows:

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."

The judgment of the Prince of the World by God was exhibited in the contest between Jesus and the civil and spiritual power in Judea. "Its poison was like the poison of a serpent" (Psa. 58:4), when "the iniquity of his heels compassed him about." "The battle was against him" for a time. They bruised him in the heel (Gen. 3:15). The Psalmist says (143:3)—

"The **enemy** smote his life down to the ground; and made him to dwell in darkness, as those that had been long dead."

But here the serpent-power of sin ended. It had stung him to death by the strength of the Law, which cursed every one that was hanged upon a tree: Jesus being cursed upon this ground, God "condemned sin in the flesh" through him.

Thus was sin, the Prince of the World, condemned, and the world with him according to the existing course of it. But Jesus rose again, leading captivity captive; and so giving to the world an earnest that the time would come when death should be abolished and sin, the power of death, destroyed. Sinful flesh was laid upon him, "that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," or sin in the flesh (Heb. 2:14): for "*For this purpose* the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil."

It is clear that *sin* is the thing referred to by the apostle in the word devil. The sting of the Serpent is its power of destruction. The "sting of death" is the power of death; and that, the apostle says, in one place, "is sin;" and in another, "is the devil." There are not two powers of death; but one only. Hence, the devil and sin, though different words, represent the same thing.

"Sin *had* the power of death," and would have *retained* it, if the man, who was obedient unto death, had not gained the victory over it. But, thanks be to God, the earth is not to be a charnel house for ever; for he that overcame the world *in his own person*, is destined hereafter to "take away the sin of the world," and to "make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Every curse will then cease, and death be swallowed up in victory; for death shall be no more.

The *works of the devil*, or evil one, are the *works of sin*. Individually, they are "works of the flesh" exhibited in the lives of sinners; collectively, they are on a larger scale, as displayed in the politics of the world. All the institutions of the kingdom of the adversary are the works which have resulted from the thinking of sinful flesh; though happily for the saints of God, "the powers that be" are controlled by Him. They cannot do what they please. Though defiant of His truth, and His

hypocritical and malignant enemies, He serves Himself of them; and dashes them against one another when the enormity of their crimes, reaching to heaven, demands His terrible rebuke.

If there were no *moral* evil in the world, there would be no *physical* evils. Sin and punishment are as cause and effect in the divine economy. God does not willingly afflict, but is long-suffering and kind. If men, however *will* work sin, they must pay their account with "the wages of sin," which is disease, famine, pestilence, the sword, misery and death. But let the righteous rejoice that the enemy will not always triumph in the earth. The Son of God was manifested to destroy him and all his works; which, by the power and blessing of the Father, *he will assuredly do*.

Paul a Christ-Appointed Model

BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but the companion of fools shall be destroyed"—
Proverbs 13:20

The truth embodied in this divine saying has an intimate bearing on our position as obedient believers on the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us occupy our minds this morning with one particular application of it, which we shall find to be very profitable. The application concerns the *apostle Paul*.

You are well aware that it is customary in our day, among what are considered the educated people of society, to estimate the apostle Paul very lightly. People will admit that he was an able, energetic and conscientious man, and that he did a great work and left a great example; but their commendation is always qualified in a way that takes away all practical meaning or usefulness from it.

They say Paul was all "very well *for his day*" which is as much as to say that in our day, he and his work are obsolete, and that he cannot be made useful in the circumstances of the present century; that, in fact, he is pretty much in the position of an early inventor, whose productions have been superseded by later contrivances (built, it may be, upon his foundation).

Now we, brethren, are acquainted with many and unanswerable reasons for taking a very different view of the case. We know that Paul and his work are of as vital consequence to us as to those on whom they were brought to bear in the first century; that through the invitation and instruction sent from God by his hand, we may attain to life everlasting; and that, apart from them, we have no hope whatever, however fine our philosophical or literary notions may be, or however high our conceptions may be of present century attainments.

It is not our purpose, however, to speak of those reasons, which belong to another time. Our object is to use the conviction we have acquired, and to bring Paul to bear upon us in such a way as will enable us to measure ourselves, and to *see ourselves as we appear in the light of the divine standard*.

Nothing is plainer in the whole course of the apostolic testimony than that *Paul is a Christ-appointed model for us to copy*. We have first Christ's own declaration concerning Paul to Ananias of Damascus—

"He is a chosen vessel unto me" (Acts 9:15).

A man chosen by Christ must needs be a safe example for all the servants of Christ to follow. Paul commands (and what he wrote were the commandments of the Lord—1 Cor. 14:37)—

"Be ye followers of ME, as I also am of Christ."

The sense in which he means this is made abundantly evident in many places. He tells us expressly, for instance, that he, though a persecutor, received mercy that in him first—

"Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering FOR A PATTERN to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" (1 Tim. 1:16).

Accordingly, to the Philippians, he says—

"Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, DO" (4:9).

"Mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example."

To the Corinthians he speaks thus plainly:

"Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

"For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways, which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Cor. 4:15).

To Timothy he commends his own example in saying:

"Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, charity, patience"

(2 Tim. 3:10).

And to the Thessalonians he says:

"Yourselves know how ye ought to follow us . . . We made ourselves an example unto you to follow us" (2 Thess. 3:7-9).

"Stand fast" (he tells them) "and hold fast the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle."

He also said,

"Ye are witnesses, and God also; how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believed."

It is customary in polite society to consider those sayings egotistical. The polite, however, judge by a false standard in the matter. It is not egotistical, according to the scriptural standard, for a man devoid of self-love to declare the truth concerning himself when that declaration is necessary.

Paul was no self-lover but if he was the appointed example from Christ of the sort of man Christ would choose from mankind for association with himself in glory, it was kind and necessary that Paul should testify this and hold the fact well in the front.

The fact stands so, and Paul has acted in accordance with the fact; and *our wisdom is to study the pattern, that we may copy it*, and stand with Paul in the day of resurrection, which is at the door.

It is our lot to live long after Paul's day; consequently, we have not the privilege of personal intercourse with him. It is in our power, notwithstanding, to study his character and realize our model. Perhaps it is more in our power to do this than if he were alive. A man's life can always be more accurately judged when looked at as a whole, and seen against the background of death, than when contemplated amid the bustle and prejudices and limited information of his own generation.

Let us look at a few of the points in the portrait of our beloved brother Paul, always remembering that we look at it for the purpose of copying a model, and that we *act inconsistently with our profession as brethren if we ever yield to the temptation of saying, "I am not Paul."*

At the first rough glance, what do we see? Why, that, as a brother has well remarked, Paul did not belong to the church of Laodicea. You remember the character of that ecclesia as sketched by Christ to John in Patmos. It was *lukewarm*—neither cold nor hot, and yet on very good terms with itself. It said—

"I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."

It was not aware that its spiritual attainments, so highly estimated in its own self-complacency, were of a very sickly and meagre aspect in the eyes of the Spirit of God—so much so as to lead Jesus to declare that they were—

"Wretched and poor and miserable and blind and naked."

Paul had no such high estimate of himself. He says—

"I count not myself to have apprehended (not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect); but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, **I press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling**"
(Phil. 3).

To the Corinthians he said (1 Cor. 9:27)—

"I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Nevertheless, though thinking thus modestly of himself, he was not afraid to declare before the Council (Acts 23:1)—

"I have lived before God in all good conscience unto this day."

And to the brethren in Corinth (2 Cor. 1:12)—

"Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."

Finally, at the end of his probation, his last words were of confidence—truthful but not vainglorious:

"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" (2 Tim. 4:8).

From this, it results that a man may be characterised by sentiments of self-deprecation, and yet consistently indulge in self-assertion, if a good conscience warrant it, *and the occasion require*.

Paul was as unlike the brethren of Laodicea as possible in their lukewarmness. If there is one thing about him that stands out more strikingly than another, it is his *earnest, ardent, thoroughgoing, uncompromising and warm-hearted identification with all things pertaining to Christ*.

His was no yea and nay, half-and-half addiction to the service. His earnest enthusiasm was such that he was reputed "beside himself." His answer is (2 Cor. 5:13-16)—

"Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God . . . for the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead—(that is, all died with the one)—that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again . . .

"Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh."

Again he declares—

"I count all things but loss for the excellence 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).

"For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21).

"I determined not to know anything among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified"
(1 Cor. 2:2).

The general aspect of his case is vigorously drawn in the following words:

"We are fools for Christ's sake; but ye . . ."
—the Corinthians, of whom he had just said, "Are ye not carnal and walk as men"—

". . . ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised.

"Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labor, working with our own hands.

"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat. We are made as the filth of the world, as the offscouring of all things unto this day."

You know also, his stirring declaration to the Philippians— that for Christ he had—

". . . suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but dung that he might win Christ"
(Phil. 3:8).

It is profitable to ask, "*What was the nature of this extraordinary devotion on the part of Paul to Christ?*" Was it merely the result of an ardent temperament? Was it mere peculiarity of Paul's natural man?

We should err greatly, and weaken much the power of his example, if we were to answer these questions in the affirmative. There can be no doubt that Paul was a man of a warm nature—the fitting soil for the good seed of the Kingdom— but even a man of a warm nature cannot be warm without something to be warm about.

Enthusiasm, however strongly it may exist in a man's breast, requires *something to stir it*. It is in the nature of the *facts before Paul's mind* that we are to find the true explanation of the zeal that led him to abjure the ordinary objects of human life, and to throw himself entirely into a matter that appeared bootless and without reason to the ordinary run of men.

The importance of recognizing this lies in the fact that *what stirred Paul's enthusiasm will stir ours*. We only require to believe the same things to experience the same results. A man's enthusiasm always runs in the way of his *practical convictions*.

The children of the present world are in earnest about present matters whenever they believe there is good in them. Let a promising commercial enterprise be brought under a man's notice—an opportunity of promotion—an avenue to honor— a way to certain wealth—and you will see the most sluggish man wake up and manifest enthusiasm in pursuing it.

Paul's was no irrational enterprise. On the contrary, it was highly enlightened and essentially logical and consistent. He had a *risen Christ* before his mind; he recognized Christ's present existence and controlling presence in heaven; he looked forward to the *certainty* of standing before his judgment seat at his coming, and of receiving at his hands the unspeakable gift of immortality, and a place in the endless Kingdom of God, if his present way were acceptable to Christ. He had constantly before his face the Eternal Creator of heaven and earth, Who, in the unity of universal presence, is near to every one of us, from Whom no creature is hid, to Whose eyes all things are naked.

With this mental picture of facts before his mind, it was impossible that he should be otherwise than earnest and enthusiastic. Any man with similar *assured convictions* must feel the stirring of a similar ardor of purpose.

It is a question of *faith*. Every man has a faith of some sort; and his works are generally—nay, invariably—in accordance with it. If his *professed* faith and his works are out of harmony, it is because his professed faith is not a *living* faith. He professes confidence in a man, but will not trust him, because he secretly doubts him. If he had real confidence, he would show it. Another man really has confidence in him, and shows it by putting himself, perhaps, entirely in his hands.

So with commercial enterprises or private affairs in general. *A man shows his faith by his works*. James may well say—

“Show me thy faith BY THY WORKS.”

A faith that does not express itself in acts accordant with it, is no faith. It is dead. Paul's faith was real, therefore his enthusiasm was strong, and his works in harmony.

It is simply disgusting to hear it set down to "temperament." Such a suggestion can only emanate from those who are strangers to Paul's faith. *If they had Paul's faith, they would understand Paul's fervor.*

All men have faith in money, and they *show it*, whatever their temperament may be. If all men had faith in Christ, they would show it, irrespective of peculiarities of temperament. This faith is conviction indeed, by acquaintance with the facts. The scarcity of it is due to the smallness of this acquaintance—

"Faith cometh **by hearing**, and hearing by the Word of God."

But people will not take the trouble to hear, which, in our day, means *read*. They turn wholly aside after pleasure or business, which monopolizes the mind and leaves the facts of God's Truth no opportunity of obtaining power with them.

The point to realize is that in Paul's non-Laodicean "heat" of mind towards the things that are Christ's, he is our appointed example, and that *we tread on very unsafe ground, if we excuse ourselves on the ground that "We are not Paul."*

If we are to stand with Paul in the day of approbation, we must stand with him now in this particular—that we must be in earnest in our love, and service, and obedience to Christ.

The next feature of the pattern is that Paul was a tender-hearted, sympathizing, self-sacrificing man, mindful of others, interested in the brethren, solicitous of their welfare.

Personally, as he told the Ephesian elders, he coveted no man's silver or gold (Acts 22:33). His own hands had provided for the necessities of himself and those that were with him. Yet, in frequent need, the brethren sent unto him—

". . . once and again unto his necessity" (Phil. 4:16).

If, in such a case, he appeared to desire it of them, it was not in the spirit of covetousness, but as a matter of service merely, and that—

"Fruit might abound to their account" (v. 17).
His exhortation was (Act. 22:35) that—

"So laboring, they ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said it is more blessed to give than to receive."
—reminding them that those who in these things served God sparingly would reap sparingly, while a bountiful service would have a bountiful reward (2 Cor. 9:6).

There were some from whom he was careful *not to receive anything*, probably because he observed a want of enlightened appreciation and an upbraiding spirit in the case. He tells the Corinthians that when he was present with them, and wanted, he was chargeable to none of them and that which he required, the brethren visiting from Macedonia supplied. In all things, he says, he had kept himself from being burdensome to *that particular ecclesia*, and intended so to do; adding, with emphasis, that no man should stop his boasting on that point.

So that Paul, while practising and inculcating the duty of giving, "made a difference," according to circumstances. *He only accepted fellowship in the matter where it was done in the spirit of true service to Christ.*

He had, likewise, a strong objection to helping those who leaned upon the kindness of the brethren. He had heard that in Thessalonica there were some of this sort "working not at all." He had even found it necessary, while personally among them, to lay down this doctrine, that—

"If any would not work, neither should they eat."

From this it follows that Paul did not favor indiscriminate almsgiving, but practised and enjoyed a robust-minded discernment as to the fitness of cases. This, however, was only a minor shade in his character—necessary, certainly, but *not the all-distinguishing feature, as with some when invited to be merciful.*

The principal feature was a benevolent concern of those who had been less favored in the distribution of God's bounties. Paul, himself a true shepherd, exhorted the leading brethren in Ephesus to feed the flock with kindness and care. Peter does the same thing, adding that—

"When the Chief Shepherd shall appear . . ."
—all such faithful shepherds shall receive a royal trust of larger dimensions. We are not all in the formal position of shepherds but all of us have an appointed care of one another—

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ"—Gal. 6:2

Obedience and Sprinkling

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" — 1st Peter 1:2

There are some passages of Scripture which, taken by themselves, remind us of a picture puzzle where there are one or two apparently unusable pieces; but when certain other pieces are placed with them they not only can be fitted in but are seen to be indispensable in forming a complete picture.

By way of illustration, let us look at Phil. 2:12-13—

"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always **obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling.
"For it is **God which worketh in you** both to WILL and to DO of His good pleasure."

For we note that v. 12 seems to assert that salvation may be worked for and *earned* as recompense for faithful service; then in v. 13 the very opposite statement would, to some, impart the idea that, after all, our service matters nothing since it is *God*, not ourselves, Who really works out our salvation. Not only the performance, but the very *will* to act seems here to be not of our own. Should this be actually what is meant, it would destroy the truth that every individual is allowed *freedom of will* to "work out their own salvation."

This apparent paradox is readily seen, in the light of the Spirit's instruction, as not only true, but beautiful in its ascription to God of the glory which is His due, while at the same time declaring the necessity for *our* doing the service assigned to us with "fear and trembling"—that is, "reverence and godly fear"—lest we forget that the Creator manifests great condescension in *so working in and through us*—creatures of His mercy.

In order to counteract any possible assumption that God's working in the individual saint "to will and to do" would eliminate their own free-will, we can fit in with it the humble, submissive phrase used by our Savior—

"Not **my** will, but **THINE**, be done" (Luke 22:42).

That Jesus had his own will can plainly be seen here, as well as from other passages, as John 10:18—

"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This **COMMANDMENT** have I received of my Father."

That this volition is also possessed by all must be admitted, otherwise men would be mere automatons and the continual admonitions and warnings to keep all God's commandments would be needless and meaningless, seeing they would be overruled by God's inexorable will regardless of their own volition.

When we use the phrase found in the prayer Jesus taught:

"**THY WILL** be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

—our minds are carried forward to the time when a great and glorious Theocracy will have been established over all the earth, bringing into subjection all lands and peoples. This is true and proper, nevertheless the will of God is being done at present by those who, like Jesus, subordinate their own will to that of their Father, Who is pleased by this recognition of Him as Guide and Instructor to those who aspire to become fellow-heirs with the meek and lowly Savior who said—

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me"
(John 6:38).

To those who see only a paradox in the foregoing admonition to "work out the salvation" that God is working in and through us to achieve, there would be much the same problem regarding Peter's declaration in 1 Peter 1:2—

"Unto obedience **AND** the blood of sprinkling."

Here the favor or grace of God is linked with what is really necessary—*obedience*—but which to some is superfluous, seeing the "blood of sprinkling" is—to them—all-sufficient. "*Only the blood*," they say. "*Acknowledge Christ as your personal Savior and you are already saved*," they blindly assert, disregarding entirely the oft-repeated admonitions to—

"**CONTINUE** in the Faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the Hope."
—and that only by "patient *continuance* in well-doing" we may attain to eternal life (2 Thess. 3:5; Rom. 2:7).

Willingness and obedience are vitally necessary, in order that the blood of sprinkling be graciously administered. When the children of Israel were told to make preparation for the sprinkling of blood upon the doorposts and lintel of their doorways, this *obedience* was preliminary to the sprinkling, even as obedience in baptism is preliminary to the washing away of sin, which requires not only water, but blood, since the blood of the anti-typical lamb is a medium for cleansing those only who by being "baptized into Christ" have "put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

This obedient approach to God is also linked with the sprinkling of blood by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews (10:22), showing that the washing of the body in baptism is accompanied by "*sprinkling of the heart*," or mind, and also intimating that the real approach to God necessitates that *both* have taken place.

This was also foreshadowed in the Mosaic "patterns of things in the heavens" by the Altar of burnt offerings and the Laver of washing *both* being placed first *before* the Tabernacle, so that real approach to God must have been preceded by a blood offering and a water baptism, or washing.

This "blood of sprinkling which speaks better things" is also mentioned in Heb. 12:24 as being the anti-typical sprinkling, under the New Covenant. Those thus washed and sprinkled to purge and sanctify them are described by Peter as—

"**Obedient** children, not fashioning themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance" (1 Peter 1:14).

This *holiness of life* is enjoined because of the fact that "He that called them is holy," but also the *other aspect* is referred to when he states in vs. 18-19 that the redemption was not secured by silver and gold (under the Mosaic Law a silver half-shekel was required—Exo. 30:13-15), but with the precious blood of Christ.

This obedient submission of the Israelites to the divine requirement in the matter of redemption or "atonement for their souls," was a beautiful and fitting foreshadowing of our obedience under the New Covenant, and nothing inconsistent or incongruous can be detected in type or antitype.

To many it appears illogical to join together "saving grace" and "obedience" as the means of salvation, but this arises from the influence of a false theology which continually stresses the way of salvation as merely "washing in the blood of the Lamb," and salvation as a thing accomplished and completed when anyone "accepts Christ." But the truth is that men are not "already saved," nor can they expect salvation until the *end* of their probationary career. Jesus plainly says (Matt. 24:12-13)—

"The love of many shall wax cold, but he that **endureth unto the end shall be saved.**"

The great apostle to the Gentiles did not feel that his salvation was an accomplished thing when he spoke of the danger—unless he "kept under his body"—that after preaching to others he himself should be a "castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). But afterwards, *at the end of his life*, having "finished my course," he knew there was "laid up for him a crown of life" (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

If salvation were already an accomplished fact at "conversion," surely the apostle, who was a "chosen vessel" of the Lord, as stated in Acts 9:15, would be far more able than we to affirm that he was already saved after God had given him a miraculous vision of Christ, who was thereforth to be his Lord.

The aged apostle John, in his first epistle (2:28), admonishes his readers to—

"Abide in him (Christ) that when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

—which shows it is possible to not abide in him, revealing what a mistaken idea it is to be over-confident when the journey is just begun, and the proof that they *will* "abide in him" is utterly lacking—even granting that they may really be "in him" at the start of their journey in the footsteps of the Master.

This same apostle makes it clear that being truly "in God" or "in Christ" involves much more than just mere mechanical immersion in water in obedience to apostolic injunction, for he plainly states that those who "love the world" (2:15) do not have the love of God in them. This love of God is,

as he also reveals, the *distinguishing characteristic* of those who are God's children, and who are invariably found "walking in the light" of His revealed truth; in other words, those who "*keep His commandments*"—see John 1:6-7, where the two classes of called-out ones are contrasted.

It seems unnecessary here to repeat that the blood-sprinkling has become ineffectual in the case of those who *depart from the light* and walk in darkness, for he declares that those only who walk in the light are the subject of the cleansing by blood—

"**IF** we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

This effectually disposes of the theory that being "in grace" and thus being cleansed from sin can be effected without continual walking in the light of the Word of God while forming a character resembling that of their Master, whose every act becomes to them the perfect pattern which they must follow if they continue in his love.

The apostle Paul makes it clear that we must "suffer with him (Jesus)" if we desire to reign with him; and Jesus himself told us in solemn and thought-provoking words—

"Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mark 8:34-35).
—H.A.S.

Out of Egypt Have I Called My Son

PART THIRTEEN

"Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea"—Exodus 15:21

The echoes of the sublime song of triumph sung by Israel on the eastern shore of the Red Sea had scarcely died away when "the ransomed of the Lord" commenced their journey and entered the wilderness of Shur (Etham).

After a march of three days, during which they found no water, they came to Marah, where was a well or spring, but they could not drink thereof for the water was bitter:

"Therefore the name of it was called Marah (bitterness)."

Now, as the things which happened to Israel were for "ensamples" (by way of figure) and were "written for our admonition," we may discern, among other things, the reason for their being led into the wilderness, in the words, "that I may prove them," i.e., *try* them by bringing them into such circumstances as would disclose their true character, while at the same time making manifest their entire dependence upon God from day to day for the sustenance of life.

The absolute dependence of man upon God was the first lesson Paul sought to impress upon the Athenians when he visited them with the Gospel of salvation, in that exemplary address delivered to them from Mars Hill, wherein, speaking of God that made the world and all things, he laid special emphasis on the man-humiliating doctrine that—

"He giveth to all life and breath and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth . . . for in Him we live and move and have our being"
(Acts 17:24-28).

—a doctrine quite as much needed in our day as in Paul's by reason of the pride which is now, as then, natural to men, but which is *intensified by false teachers, both from a scientific and theological point of view*.

Acting then upon the principle laid down by the apostle in respect to the things which happened to Israel, may we not discern in the *three days' journey*, to which we have referred, the typification of the prophetic utterance concerning Israel contained in the words,

"After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight" (Hos. 6:2).

And may we not also be reminded, by their *want of water*, of the mental condition of David when he gave expression to those heart-felt experiences in his isolation, which must also be those of every true lover of God in these days of spiritual famine, saying—

"O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary" (Psa. 63:1-2).

There is yet another suggestion as to the three days during which they found no water, namely, that it may also have a bearing upon the three days' incarceration in the tomb of him whose words were spirit and life—the true Water of Life which was not found during those days; but by the resurrection of him on the third day, he became, as it were, the tree cast into the bitter waters which were thereby made sweet, and men were invited to partake thereof freely.

Seeing that Israel's experience in the wilderness was part of a divinely-arranged plan, and that the Designer thereof knew "the end from the beginning," it is not at all unreasonable to suppose that such experience served not only as a test of faith in God, but also as *a typical representation of the working out of the Great Salvation* to which they, as the chosen people of God, stood related—hence the application suggested. At the same time, we must be careful not to indulge in mere fancies in the endeavor to interpret the shadows with which the history and experience of Israel abounds.

The *wilderness probation* which lay between them and their entrance into the promised land towards which they were journeying, had also a typical significance; for even the possession of that land by them was not unconditional; and the Gospel had been preached to them and confirmed by the mighty signs done in connection with their deliverance.

The lesson of all this is so clear that comment is unnecessary. Israel's faith in God, when put to a practical test, failed them even on the third day of their experience in the wilderness, and they murmured, saying, "*What shall we drink?*"

This want of confidence in God, after so much tangible evidence of His presence and power had been granted to them, was very distressing to Moses; and from which it is manifest that they utterly failed to apprehend that for which they were apprehended of God.

With minds carnally intent upon self-gratification, they were totally unprepared for that discipline to which it was imperatively necessary they should be subjected, as the adopted children of God, preparatory to their introduction to the great goodness which was "laid up" for them in case they proved themselves worthy of participation therein.

In his distress Moses "*cried unto the Lord*"—in itself an eloquent indication of the bitter experience which lay before him in the awful responsibility of the charge committed to him:

"And the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet."

This evidence of Israel's want of faith was made the occasion for the deliverance to them of "a statute and an ordinance" for their future observance, in reference to which He said,

"If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought on the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee."

Leaving Marah, they came to Elim, where the household of Moses encamped. Here were 12 wells (springs) and 70 palm trees. This was a delightful oasis in the desert; the stately palm (date) trees, with their delicious fruit and evergreen leaves, constituting a pleasant shade from the scorching heat.

They probably stayed here a few days, and then moved forward on the way towards Sinai, encamping in the wilderness between Elim and Sinai, from whence the latter could be seen.

They entered the shadeless desert of Sin on the fifteenth day of the second month after leaving Egypt, by which time, it would appear, the supply of food which they brought with them from Egypt was exhausted, and they were apparently face to face with starvation and death; whereupon the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying—

"Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

From this it would seem that they now evidently had lost all faith in the word spoken to them by Moses and Aaron, and had adopted the unreasonable attitude of *despair and hopelessness, in the very presence of Him who had given them such miraculous assurances of His intended favour and preservation.*

How unreasonable of them to suppose that the Being Who had *destroyed Egypt* to effect their deliverance, and *divided the Red Sea* for them as a way of escape from their enemies; and Whose praises they but so recently sang with such glowing ardor in words of prophetic assurance, and in full confidence that He would bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of His inheritance, should, after having done such wonderful things in their behalf, leave them to perish in the wilderness.

How could they, reasonably, doubt His ability to provide them with such things as were necessary for their sustenance in the way in which He was leading them, or distrust His care for them in a situation which involved the continued exercise of that power and goodness in their behalf, which as yet had never failed them?

Nevertheless, their confidence had forsaken them in the apparent helplessness of the situation, and they gave way to feelings of distrust and angriness of spirit in words of provocation. Having heard their murmurings, the Lord said to Moses:

"I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no" (v.4).

With merciful forbearance came this divine assurance of their preservation by the miraculous provision of food from heaven. This was, of course, a necessity in the situation, which was of the Lord's own choosing—a choice which involved the *bringing before their eyes from day to day the fact of their divine election* as His people, and His constant care and kindness, and watchfulness over them.

And as to the typical signification of the heaven-provided food itself we are divinely instructed both by Christ and his servant Paul, and which we shall now consider.

(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH, IF THE LORD WILL)

Every Man Perfect in Christ Jesus

PART FIVE —COLOSSIANS 3:9 to End

"Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him Who created him"—Colossians 3:9-10

"Renewed in knowledge"—

"This is life eternal, that they might KNOW Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (Jn. 17:3).

Do we truly *know* God and Christ? To know in this sense is to be united with Him in harmonious understanding—to be of one mind, and interest, and character.

We do not know God when we are interested in passing, worldly things. To know God we must keep our minds set on the things that God is interested in, as He has revealed them to us in His Word.

"Renewed in *knowledge*." The natural man is based on ignorance—a creature of darkness, influenced only by natural things. But the new man is built on knowledge and light. He is instructed in the wisdom that is from above. By the light of the Word, lovingly and constantly studied, his mind is drawn upward to rest in heavenly things, and his character is made gentle and pure after the example of Christ.

"Put on therefore as the elect of God, mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (v. 12).

"As the elect of God." Are we the elect of God? There **MUST** be such, for the Scriptures so often speak of such a class, in language of great beauty—a glorious, separated few, knit together in divine holiness.

"The elect of God, holy and beloved." It seems like tremendous presumption to consider that we, of all the earth's millions, may be such.

But if we fulfil the simple requirements that the love of God has specified, we are the "elect of God, holy and beloved." This honor is free and open to all, yet it is very exclusive, for so few seek it with *all* their heart, and only such can ever find it.

Many seek it with *part* of their heart—sometimes a *large* part—but that is not enough. God's elect are those few who give God *all* their heart—who yield themselves *completely* to Him.

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as Christ forgave you" (v. 13).

A divine, mutual kindness is one infallible mark of the True Bride. Where that is lacking there is no spiritual life.

"And **above** all these things **put on love**, which is the bond of perfectness" (v. 14).

Above all these things—*beyond* these things—*over* all this mutual mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, forgiveness—put on *love*.

The only true love in all the world is that divine oneness of heart and mind that unites the elect of God in pure and perfect affection—the bond—binding together— *of perfectness*.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren"
(I John 3:14).

Have *we* passed from death to life? Is *love for the brethren* our distinguishing characteristic? Love has infinite patience and kindness—even toward all men—but *above all* to the *brethren*. Faithfulness often makes rebuke necessary, and sometimes separation, but even this **MUST** be done in love, with meekness—a true sympathy, recognizing the mutual weakness and limitations of poor, fallen human nature—and above all, not a hypocritical, self-righteous, lip service "love."

"And **let** the peace of God rule in your hearts" (v. 15).

*Let it rule—permit it to—*God desires His peace to preside over us. We are exhorted to *allow* it to do so. It is a blessing that He is anxious to bestow. Perhaps, of this whole epistle, this is the one thought to keep uppermost in our minds, as the crowning blessing of all—

"LET the peace of God rule in your hearts."

Give yourself over to its healing and relaxing influence. Let us try to remember to say this to ourselves from time to time during the course of each day—"LET the peace of God rule in your hearts."

This word "rule" is very interesting. It means to arbitrate, to preside, to be an umpire, to settle questions and problems, to determine who is the winner, to award the prize. This is the only place the word occurs, though the related noun occurs twice as "prize." The apostle urges us to permit God's peace to rule supreme in our hearts, presiding over all issues and settling every conflict, awarding the joyful prize of godliness.

Are we opening our hearts to Him and allowing His peace to work its marvellous work within us, or are we in fleshly blindness missing this transcendent comfort? — "careful and troubled about many things," when only one is needed—a discernment of the beauty and value of the "peace of God."

"And be ye thankful" (v. 15).

It is a sad commentary on human forgetfulness that we should need to be constantly reminded to be thankful. But we *do* need it. *We entertain so many moods and desires that are utterly incompatible with thankfulness. We cannot be thankful and irritable at the same time—or thankful and discouraged, or thankful and impatient.*

Thankfulness is a pleasant and joyful mood—a recognition of eternal and all overshadowing goodness. It is inseparably linked to God's peace. It is not the little passing *flashes* of thankfulness that is meant—like that of a dog for a scrap of meat—but the calm, cheerful thankfulness that is a consistent, all-pervading frame of mind and way of life.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

Here again—*let it, permit it.* Is the acquiring of wisdom from the Word as easy as that—just let it come?

Yes, *IF WE CLEAR THE WAY* and set our whole hearts upon it. But we cannot fill our minds and interests with other things and still expect the word of Christ to force its way in. It requires effort, and study, and application—not just because God wants to make it hard and discouraging, but because

He will only open Himself up to those who love Him sufficiently to give their whole lives to seeking to know Him.

Unless the love of God, *desire* to know Him, *desire* to please Him, dominates our whole lives, the word of Christ will never dwell in us richly in all wisdom, and all our talk about "poor memories" and "inability to understand" is but a pitiful evasion. *The problem is not memories, but hearts.*

"Teaching and admonishing one another in hymns and psalms and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (v. 16).

This is a beautiful instruction and worthy of deep consideration. It is far more significant, in terms of basic principles, than we are apt to realize.

Do we associate the spirit of song with our teaching? This is the kind of teaching that gladdens and transforms—

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" (Isa. 52:7).

Our teaching and admonishing—even our *ADMONISHING*, we note—must never be harsh, or cold, or merely technical and intellectual, but in the gentle, joyful spirit of singing with grace in our hearts.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to our God and Father by him" (v. 17).

He is not just speaking of things to do with the Truth—he is speaking of *everything* we do. This is clear from v. 23, where, concluding his instructions to servants, he says—

"**Whatsoever ye do**, do it **heartily**, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that **of the Lord** ye shall receive the reward."

Our weekly paycheck is "of the Lord." He is our true employer. All others are incidental. All we do is actually just between Him and us direct. Therefore every word, every deed, should be done with the consciousness that it is *unto God*. "Do it *heartily*"—give it everything you have.

Does this seem an extreme and impossible command? It all depends *where our heart is*, as to whether this is an insufferable burden or a joyful delight. The apostle goes even further in writing to the Corinthians (2:10:5).—

"Bring into captivity every **thought** to the obedience of Christ."

No man can serve two masters. No man can give his heart to a divided allegiance. All the power and joy of the service of God is in its all-embracing *completeness*—its utter and intense singleness of heart and soul.

* * *

Chapter 4 is principally occupied with sundry greetings to and from the brethren. We know so little about these earnest and faithful men, and yet these personal sections add so much to the living power and beauty of Paul's epistles. Think of what a loss the omission of these parts would be—

Tychicus—a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord.

Onesimus—a faithful and beloved brother.

Aristarchus—Paul's fellow-prisoner.

Marcus—nephew to Barnabas, whose youthful failure of courage years before was the cause of the sad rift between Barnabas and Paul.

The Colossians have a special commandment to welcome him if he comes to them. Why? The circumstances of the separating of Paul and Barnabas would be bound to be known throughout the brotherhood. Even years later it would be remembered. It would create a very difficult path for Mark to tread, wherever he went. There would often be embarrassment on both sides as he met the brethren.

But he seems to have overcome, and established himself as a worthy and useful brother. In Paul's closing days he wrote to Timothy that Mark was profitable to him for the ministry, and there were few who stood by Paul at that time.

We cannot help being saddened by the incident that separated Paul and Barnabas, after they had endured so much together. We never hear of Barnabas again. He drops right out of the story, his place taken by a new companion—Silas.

But right at the end of Paul's life, he speaks with appreciation of the help and support of Mark, so we can feel assured that Paul and Barnabas were fully reconciled.

And there was a brother with Paul called Jesus. How strange it seems for a brother to be called Jesus—though this is the Greek form of Joshua—a common name among the Jews.

These, said Paul, were his fellow-workers unto the Kingdom of God, who had been a comfort to him. How wonderful is the comfort afforded by faithful brethren!

Epaphras, a servant of Christ, always laboring fervently in prayer.

Luke, the beloved physician. Why does Paul mention him in this way—"the beloved physician"?

From Luke's *first* appearance in the record, at the time Paul saw the vision of the man of Macedonia—right to the *end of Paul's life*, Luke seems to have attached himself to Paul.

Wherever we see the word "we" in the Acts, we can discern the faithful Luke attending Paul in all his travels.

And in Paul's very last epistle (2 Tim.), when he was old and about to be put to death, he said—

"Only Luke is with me."

Can we not see one who, in love to the Truth and to the apostle, had given himself as a constant companion to minister to Paul in all his trials—"Luke, the beloved physician."

The terrible hardships and maltreatment that Paul constantly endured would affect the health of the strongest, but there are several indications that Paul also suffered from physical disabilities.

A gentle minister of healing would be a great comfort to one whose life was composed of such labor, pain and distress, and who gave every ounce of his strength in the service of his brethren—

"Pressed out of measure, above strength, despairing even of life."
—that is how he himself describes the path he trod for Christ.

"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it" (v. 17).

Who Archippus was we do not know. Whether this is a reproof or an encouragement we cannot tell. But its value lies in its lessons for us—

"Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received."

Like Archippus, we too have a ministry of the Lord. We have work to do—principally within ourselves, but also in relation to all with whom we come in contact—to manifest to them the beauty of the divine pattern of godliness and holiness.

The apostle concludes: "*Remember my bonds.*" We are told to remember many things. Remembrance—keeping in memory—holds the issues between life and death.

Why "Remember my *bonds*"? We are taken back to his words in the first chapter—

"I REJOICE in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind in the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his Body's sake."

In all that you do, *remember my sufferings for you, and the suffering of Christ.* Let the remembrance of them soften and purify your hearts, and raise your minds to higher and more noble things than your own selfish desires and interests.

"Grace be with you."

Do we have a clear idea in our minds what "Grace be with you" means? Grace is a broad inclusive word, a balanced combination of many beautiful characteristics. It is the sum-total of graciousness. It includes both the attitude and operation of God *toward* the believer, and the manifestation of godliness *by and in* the believer.

It is defined as loveliness, favor, kindness, goodwill, thankfulness, pleasantness, friendship, beauty of character—

"*Grace be with you . . . Amen*"

—G.V.G.

The Smoke of the Incense

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

So said the apostle Paul to the believers at Rome; and it comes with equal truth and force to us as we seek for strength in time of need. It is then with confidence that we turn to our daily readings (Lev. 9 & 10).

The details of the instructions given to the children of Israel are many and varied. Each year as we peruse these injunctions we are impressed with new items of Divine Wisdom and Beauty. Our pausing to consider their lessons and search out their hidden meanings is always productive of a reward for our labors. It is recorded that—

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter"
(Prov. 25:2).

To those who have been called to be kings and priests with Jesus Christ; the path of honor lies in a consideration and analysis of the Word of God, for, said Christ, this Word is Life.

The Law of Moses impresses the lesson of the *relationship of man to death*, yet not without the *offering of life* through the tender mercy of God. God's majesty, His supremacy, His mercy and His love are declared in all His instructions. He is also shown to all as the Provider of all things, Sustainer of life, and the Protector from harm and danger, to those who put their trust in Him.

Man is shown in his fallen state, *a creature entirely dependent upon the mercy and compassion of a wise Heavenly Father*. He is shown in His proper relation to God and the correct position he must maintain in reference to the Creator.

Though these precepts were primarily designed for Israel as a nation, they give the double benefit of directing the mind of the righteous to a fuller realization of their calling and position in Christ. These details of the Law were understood with varying degrees by the Israelites of old. Nevertheless the truth was there for those who diligently searched these matters.

The Jewish race generally were in ignorance of the import of their Law as Paul illustrates in 2 Cor. 3—

"Their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart."

But through the ministration of Christ Jesus and the apostles we behold these things more clearly, the *way into the Holiest of all* being made manifest by the offering of the body of Jesus, therefore—

"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" (2 Cor. 3:18).

As a complete understanding of the will of God in all things prepared Jesus Christ to the position of being God manifest in the flesh, so *our* assimilation of the Word of Life will bring us to the image of the man in Christ Jesus.

There is one appointment of the service of God which, though briefly mentioned, has a very important place in the Mosaic economy and which carries an important typical significance for us today. It is the *use of incense in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle*.

The details surrounding the compounding of the material of incense and the law of its use are very exact and fall under the strict appointment of God when He said that all things should be according to the pattern shown in the Mount.

The incense which was used was compounded of very aromatic substances, finely ground together, resulting in a material which would give off an acceptable odor in the Tabernacle when fire was placed under it from the altar of burnt offering. The offering of incense was prepared and placed on the Altar of Incense morning and evening, outside the veil, toward the Mercy Seat, which constituted a perpetual odor arising in the precincts of the Holy Place. The High Priest was particularly commissioned to perform this service with strict instructions against any others presuming to do so unbidden.

What then do these details and the events surrounding this ordinance convey to us by way of exhortation?

The very nature of incense and the way it rose as a cloud in the Tabernacle speaks not only of the acceptable sacrifice of Christ in the eyes of God—

"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."
—but also of the prayers of the righteous as they rise before God, being directed toward *our* mercy seat, Jesus Christ. Yet we are not left to conjecture upon this matter, for frequent reference is made to just such a comparison in other places of the Word of Truth. David says—

"Let my prayer be directed before Thee as incense" (Ps. 141).

Christ in the Revelation makes this application and association of prayer and incense. Speaking of the opening of the Seventh Seal and the consequent judgments upon the wicked world, such judgments are represented as being in answer to the prayers of the righteous—

"Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much **incense**, that he should offer it with the **prayers of all saints** upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand" (Rev. 8:3-4).

The feature of the entreaty of the righteous toward God for the fulfilment of His plan of redemption is repeatedly stressed in the Scriptures. Though the righteous are always before the eyes of God and He ever watches over their needs and cares for them in every respect, still Christ earnestly besought us to remember the *urgency of prayer* by the use of the parable of the unjust judge. The parable illustrates that even an unjust person if entreated long enough will be moved by supplication. This being the case how much more will the Father speedily avenge His Own elect. Therefore it is concluded that—

"Men ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18:1).

Consequently the righteous are pictured as *crying unto God night and day*, a continual incense before God, a constant supplication and thanksgiving for His mercy, His protection and provision, and His manifold goodness to the children of men.

These considerations are in harmony with the continual burning of incense in the past. None must presume upon the mercy and benevolence of the Creator. Even though God knows our necessities far greater than we may ever know them, He desires, yea, is well pleased that we approach Him making known our righteous, godly and honest desires from the heart unto Him in the appointed way. David comprehended the desires of the Lord in this matter, and so declared,

"Praise ye the Lord, Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the Name of the Lord. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's Name is to be praised"
(Psa. 113:1-3).

The advice of Paul is very much to the point—

"Pray **without ceasing**. In **everything** give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thes. 5).

It is well for us to repeatedly try to enumerate the daily blessings we receive at the hand of God. It makes us continually conscious of the source of our help. David repeatedly reviewed the history of his people in this light and came to the conclusion that there was a *necessity* that men should continually praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men—

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (Psa. 107).

Paul admonished Timothy that God was the Provider of all things, and all were acceptable if received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the Truth (1 Tim. 4.3).

Paul carries his point further when speaking of the collection for the needy believers at Jerusalem when writing to the Corinthians. He illustrated that God had blessed the Corinthians in temporal things, but that it brought great opportunities for them in respect of their brethren, to the rendering of thanksgiving to God not only by the giver but also of the receiver—

"The administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God" (2 Cor. 9:12).

The rendering of thanks and praise unto God is not a matter for casual concern or occasional remembrance. This is well illustrated by two features of the Law. The offering of incense was a continual appointment and the preparation of the incense was to result in a finely pulverized compound, nothing lumpy would suffice. Therefore we must give diligence to the thoughts we direct to our Heavenly Father. Says James (5:16)—

"The **effectual fervent** prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

So we must be conscious *always* of the source of our blessings, and continually ascribe the glory and praise which is due alone unto God as unto Him in Whom we live and move and have our being. In this we shall indeed prove acceptable to God. Yet with the repeated bounties of the hand of God we are inclined to lose sight of the greatness of God's care.

As Jesus was passing through Samaria and Galilee upon one occasion he saw ten leprous men standing beside the way. When they implored his aid, he gave them instructions for the cleansing of their lamentable condition. As they carried out his instructions one noticed his healed condition, returned to Christ, and with a loud voice glorified God. Christ marvelled that *only one* had returned to give thanks.

The lesson is pointed for all, and searches us with the thought: Do we remember to thank and praise God for His goodness, or are we of the nine lepers class who pass on unheedful of the mercies we receive? The Gospel writer closed the incident with the words: "*And he was a Samaritan.*"

A casual expression, yet one full of meaning for the unheedful, unfruitful Jewish race. It was directed at the exalted, man-glorifying, superior Pharisees, and taught that they completely missed the *spirit* of the Law, while they strained at its letter.

The Parable of the Pharisee and the publican fits this picture well and portrays right principles and a correct estimate of ourselves in approach to God. God knows all the circumstances and all the state of the heart. To God belongs the glory, not to man. Said the Pharisee—

"I thank thee, Lord that I am not as other men are."

Vain, exalted person!

"God be merciful to me a sinner."

—said the publican. The incense of the latter was well prepared of the correct ingredients and rose before the throne of grace as a sweet smelling savor. Solomon in wisdom declares,

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is His delight."

Those things which do not harmonize with the plan of God or do not declare the truth in relation to man are similar to the admixture of foreign substances in the incense, and the use of strange fire in causing the combustion of the incense.

These processes were strictly prescribed and specified in relation to the priests in the past, and have a definite bearing upon the true believer today. The fire which was to cause the incense to send forth its acceptable odors was to be taken from the altar of burnt sacrifice. This was an important injunction as will be seen from the consequences of departure recorded concerning Aaron's two sons Nadab and Abihu of which we read today from Leviticus.

The fire from the Altar represented the consumption of sin in the flesh by the sacrifice of Christ. It prefigured the redemptive work for the human race effected by the perfect life of obedience even to the death of the cross. It is a cardinal point in the whole transaction.

The use of the fire from *this* altar for the burning of incense inseparably links the true believer with Christ, not only in the matter of his burial and death by baptism, but also of the mortification of the deeds of the flesh, the crucifixion of our old man and his former lusts, the entrance upon a new life of acceptable sacrifice in all things.

From those who are *related to Christ* by the appointed means and in consequence of their deeds of service to God, there will arise an odor well pleasing to the Father. The incident of Nadab and Abihu clearly shows that God can only be approached through the Saving Name of Jesus, by those who are expressly called to salvation by a knowledge, belief and obedience of the will of God.

These men presumed upon a service which did not relate to them. The High Priest was expressly detailed to perform the service of caring for the incense. Not only so, they missed the main point behind the operation, that in the flesh dwelleth no good thing, and that a humble recognition of its state comes before acceptable approach is made to God. To miss this point is to presume upon other means of salvation than that which is clearly set forth from Genesis to Revelation. Such is entirely foreign to God Who is supreme and dictates the terms of salvation for man. And He in consequence will ultimately visit eternal death upon the presumptuous one.

To Nadab and Abihu the service of God did not appeal in the seriousness which it entailed. They chose to serve God in a manner which they preferred themselves. Is there not great warning for all of us in these things? God stands supreme in the Universe now as then. *His requirements of conformity to His will are as immutable as they ever were.*

Though He does not openly manifest Himself as in the days of Moses, yet His witness of Himself in the earth is clear and unmistakable and leaves all without excuse. Therefore we, in espousing the cause of Christ, accept no insignificant or secondary undertaking.

It is of prime importance to all to see that the requirements are carried out *as God has decreed* through the mouth of His Son and the apostles. Indifferent service will not do. We are servants to God and He requires service from the heart in everything. Whatsoever we do let us do it as unto the Lord.

God's judgment in the matter of the sons of Aaron may seem severe upon a first consideration. However we must remember that it was the final product which was important in the eyes of the Creator. If He had winked at this infringement, a basis for further departure from His will would have been established and His righteousness ignored. Herein His love is shown that His ways are unswerving and form a basis of confident trust for those who truly seek Him in sincerity. Does not this warn us also against accepting standards of truth and righteousness that are below divine precepts?

The product of the fire of Nadab and Abihu was strange and repulsive to God. So the works of those who profess to be followers of Christ, yet who do not give their whole heart and mind to His service will be just as strange and repulsive.

Israel of old arrived at such a condition that they honored God with their lips but their heart was far from Him. Consequently God advised them that the smell of their feasts was obnoxious unto Him and He desired not their sacrifices. God complained that they had robbed Him in the matter of their offerings; not that they did not perform the service literally, but *their hearts were not in it*. They chafed at His requirements instead of seeing the necessity, the love, and the beauty of Divine arrangement.

Turning to ourselves in respect of these considerations, we also have been called out as a *separate and peculiar people*. Responsibilities of a serious nature rest upon us, whether young or old.

To the young, full of zeal and enthusiasm, comes a cautioning note that energies must not be misapplied by an incorrect basis of labors, as personal pride, or misguided ambition.

Yet also it might be a lack of due consideration for our brethren and sisters who are working together for the wellbeing of the body of Christ. *Fundamental principles must be maintained that the whole body do not ultimately suffer.*

To young and old alike there may be a tendency to minimize the gravity of our high and holy calling. Perhaps years of familiarity have dimmed our senses to the blessed position in which we stand. Yet again we may have felt the importance of ourselves in the service of God, that we are inseparable elements in the working out of the plan of God. Caution is required in all our ways, for by unobserved trends in our lives we may come to offer strange fire to our Heavenly Father.

Our calling is too important, our salvation too great to miss by false steps. Such a blessing the world does not possess, nor can it possess it except according to Divine standards. Our position is the greatest blessing that anyone can possibly receive: yet being possessed also of human nature as we all are we must guard against familiarity and commonplace regard of the things of the Lord.

Uzziah, king of Judah, comes to us as just such an individual to illustrate our point. He followed in the precepts of God many years in his life. However being lifted up by the blessings God caused to come upon him, he lost sight of God in his own importance. *He presumed to offer the incense upon the altar in the Temple*, which was a conformity with the practice of the kings of the world surrounding him, when they were victorious over their enemies.

Let us not in any matter cause ourselves to so lose sight of our humble position before God that we temper the will of God with what we deem expedient by a knowledge of the world, and its ways.

We must seek to honor God by constant concern for the performance of His Will—attendance at the meetings of the brethren and sisters whenever possible, giving our minds wholly to the object of our meeting, whether to the daily readings, the exhortation, or the celebration of the Lord's supper.

By so doing we shall retain in mind the prime object of our various arrangements and the Divine beauty behind them. The more we are exercised in this way, the more likely we shall be to retain constantly the true relation of ourselves in God's sight and consequently prove acceptable in all our offerings.

Yet the bearing of this point does not cease with our assembly together. It carries on in every department of our walk before God. And this is all-embracing. It regulates all we do, say, or think. Performance of the will of God gives scope for the qualities of each individual, which indeed vary with each servant of God. Nevertheless service to God will find employment for the hearts and minds of every true servant.

In all things however we must analyze *the motive behind our service*, whether we are pleasing our own desires or catering to our own wishes, rather than performing a work which will advance God's honor and glory. Only by strict adherence to the place of God in our lives can we hope to please Him and finally receive approval at the hands of His Son.

Our weekly assembly to rededicate our lives to the service of our Elder Brother provides an excellent opportunity to examine the motives behind our actions; yet this should be a continual process. Let us once again determine that our service to God shall be pure, lovely and of good report, not mixed with strange ingredients or foreign materials. Then shall we be performing the sacrifice of praise unto God and He will be pleased with the sweet savor of our offering. —F. H.

Signs of The Times

"What hast thou to do with peace?"

As this article is being written, the "big story" in the newspapers is about the expulsion of four or more top communist leaders who have up till now held high posts in the Soviet government; all of which would seem to indicate an almost complete change in Russian policies toward other nations, particularly toward the satellite countries.

However, the recent drastic move on the part of Nikita Krushchev, party leader, seems to be the climax or culmination of a policy which had been taking shape even during the last years of Stalin's rule. It is the consensus of opinion that this move on the part of Russia's leaders does not signify any change in basic policies, but a move to accomplish the same things in a different way. In other words, to try catching flies with the honey of peaceful relations instead of the vinegar of force and repression.

Doubtless the refusal of Tito of Yugoslavia to bow to Russian dictation, the uprisings in Poland, and more especially the determined and bloody revolt in Hungary, which shocked almost the entire world, served as warning signals that Russia must change her course or else the entire world, even her own satellites, might be arrayed against her.

To the "watchers on Zion's towers" this recent move by Krushchev and his cohorts has but one vital interest — its relation to the signs of the times. Does it indicate weakness, or does it presage a new era for Russian progress and expansion? While time alone can give us the full meaning and the real purpose behind the new Russian policy, in our humble opinion, Russia will be strengthened, rather than weakened by her more liberal policies toward other nations.

It is unquestionably the hand of God. He is hastening the development of His purpose. There can be no doubt in the minds of faithful watchers that we are living in the era when Russia is to "attain to her plenitude of power." There cannot be a doubt that we are nearing the time foretold in Ezekiel 38:1-7, when the hand of God takes hold on Gog and causes him to do what God's prophets foretold, 2500 years ago, that he should do in the time of the end. We are confident that we have arrived at that period of time because **Russia is, for the first time in her history, in a position to fulfil the prophecy.** She has become the powerful, overshadowing, dominant leader of nations as described in Eze. 38 and Dan. 11, and, regardless of her peaceful pretensions, world domination is her desired goal.

There is another angle to the situation created by the expulsion of the pro-Stalinist group from the Soviet government, coupled with peaceful gestures and liberal concessions on the part of the Krushchev group. It is to be noted that this latest move on the part of the Russian leaders comes upon the heels of new and more liberal concessions on the part of Russia in regard to reduction of armaments and the testing of nuclear bombs. Whatever Russia's actual purpose is in these latest moves, it appears certain that it is slowly, but surely weakening, if not breaking down, the stone wall of distrust and suspicion which heretofore has prevented the Western nations from having any confidence whatsoever in anything Russia says or does.

And so, it is not only conceivable, but highly probable, that we are now entering the last stage of international affairs so closely related to the time of the end. It appears to be the beginning of the fulfilment of that strange prediction of the Apostle Paul in 1 Thess. 5:2-3, where he shows that the time when the nations are girded for war, and the last and most terrible conflict of all time is at hand, "They shall say, Peace and safety," just before destruction comes suddenly and unexpectedly upon them. And there is another link in the chain of circumstances leading to Armageddon which has not yet been supplied by past events and circumstances. It is that Israel is to "dwell safely," or confidently at the time Gog descends upon the land. Is it not probable that these peaceful moves on the part of

Russia may lead directly or indirectly to a situation which will give Israel that feeling of peace and security which the prophecy requires?

Though in a somewhat cautious vein, statesmen and foreign news analysts are quite generally agreed that Russia's recent moves gives hope for peace. Just a few comments:

"It is a good omen of peace in our time . . . because in such an enormous program the Soviet Union must have peace for at least 15 years." — Wm. Ryan, foreign news analyst.

Gov. Averill Harriman of New York, former ambassador to Russia, says the removal of V. M. Molotov from Soviet leadership signifies a desire for world peace on the part of present Russian leaders.

Deputy Premier Mikoyan of Moscow says that the present shake-up in the Soviet government means that "forces for peace in the Soviet Union have won out," and that Russia's policy of "peace, friendship and coexistence" will now go forward.

Let us, as the Apostle Paul warns us, not allow these illusions of peace and safety cause us to "sleep as do others" and relax our watchfulness, knowing that God rules in the kingdom of men, and whatever Russia's intentions are, or however others may view the matter, the budding forth of "all the trees" points unerringly to the solemn fact that the end is near. Are we ready? — O. B.

Death of Bro. Thomas Phipps of Birmingham

It is with deep sorrow that we record the falling asleep of our beloved brother Thomas Phipps, at the age of 68, on May 23.

Our brother has stood firm for a sound position in fellowship all through the sad and troublous events of the past few years.

We pray that those who remain will be comforted in their sorrow by the tender compassion of the loving Father of us all, and that we may all soon stand joyful and united in the glorious presence of His Son, returned from heaven to gather his elect and banish sorrow from the earth in a divine kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Joy cometh! O, that it were come
To wake the song that now is dumb,
To rouse the mourner, soothe who weep,
And bring again the dead who sleep.

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