

# 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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## EDITORIAL

### The Bread of Life

*"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."*

WHEN one has few companions, there is quite often time for candid reflection, and that is particularly true of those who set their minds on the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus. One evening, after we had finished "drawing water out of the wells of salvation" our mind settled into reflection, and we began to think of the various homes in which we had joined with the householder in our daily Bible readings. All were not the same. In some, the Bible readings were done hurriedly, and the daily newspaper became the object of eager attention. This was disappointing; but the climax in another home where the readings were omitted, and the evening was spent viewing television.

A third type of home presented a striking antithesis. Here the Word was read with dignified respect, and almost every verse received some comment, and some of them were subject of earnest and profitable discussion. When we finished, it was the general feeling that we had been sitting at the feet of the prophets and the apostles. While it is true that the first two cases cited could be considered extreme, nevertheless they illustrate the condition to which people will degenerate if the flesh is not kept in check, and "our minds are not centered on God's Word, upon His love, upon our absent Lord."

Introspection is a profitable mental exercise for all believers because of our daily contact with the world and the danger of becoming absorbed in its affairs beyond that which is essential in the performance of our duties while we "provide for honest things." If we are conscientious in its application, it will produce a form of discipline that will stir up courageous and righteous action. For, says Paul—

"For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it"—Heb. 12:11 (RSV).

Those of us who were not reared in a Christadelphian home, will well remember that when we came to a knowledge of the Truth, we discovered the Bible to be the most fascinating book we ever read. Our first love burned like fire in our bones when we became fully conscious of the great salvation revealed therein. The Word was sweet unto our taste. We meditated in its precepts, and prayed that our eyes might be opened, so that we could behold wondrous things out of God's Law.

*Do we still feel that way, and are our daily Bible reading our delight, or are we permitting the things of this life to crowd out the most precious thing in our possession?*

We have recently read from the prophet Hosea that "His people were destroyed for lack of knowledge." The knowledge of God does not come to us in a natural manner; it must be extracted from His Word, and that can only be done by persistent application of the mind to the written Word, as we read in Prov. 2:3-6—

"If thou CRIEST after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

"THEN shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

Of course we have read those words many times. But there they are, a silent testimony to a truth that cannot be controverted. We must read the Word of God daily—not merely from force of habit, but *thoughtfully and prayerfully* with an earnest desire to assimilate its teaching. One of the foremost reasons why the Bible should have first place in our lives is stated in Ps. 138:2—

*"For Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy Name."*

Paul must have realized this to a vast extent, for throughout his writings his love for the Word is strikingly revealed. To the many who came to him in Rome (Acts 28:23)—

"He expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."

His letters disclose a masterful knowledge of the Law and the Prophets. Not only from an academic viewpoint, but far more important, a comprehensive understanding of their application to the things concerning Christ. One of his most familiar and fundamental statements relating to God's Word is that which he said to Timothy—

"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

"All Scripture is God-inspired, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

This is another weighty reason why we should be persistent in reading and meditating on the Word. The place God demands of us is to *have Him constantly in our hearts and minds*. Jesus brings this forcibly before us when he defines the first and great commandment (Matt. 22:37)—

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart, and with ALL thy soul, and with ALL thy mind."

*We cannot love anyone unless we know them.* This applies to the Father and Son far more than to our fellow creatures, and the only way we can know them is to search the Word that reveals them to us. If we have a genuine desire to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," we will love God's Word, and read it and meditate upon it, "watching daily at Wisdom's gates."

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you RICHLY."

—said Paul. *But it cannot dwell in the mind of the flesh*; therefore we must overcome it by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

If, then, we read the Bible faithfully, we will soon discover that the application of the mind to the divine ideas, principles and affections that we find stored in the Scriptures, will give us the necessary strength to overcome the mind of the flesh, and we will be able to "set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth." Therefore, above all, let us not forget that—

"Man shall not live by bread alone; but by EVERY WORD that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"—Deut. 8:3.

—Editor

# Bringing in a Righteousness of Ages

By BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

*"Seventy heptades have been decreed relatively to thy people and to thine Holy City, for finishing the transgression, and for causing to cease from sin-offerings; and for covering iniquity, and for causing to come in a righteousness of ages, and for sealing the vision and prophet, and for anointing the Holy One of holy ones."*

IN THIS 24th verse of chapter 9, Daniel learned there were six particulars to become accomplished facts before an army should be given to the Romano-Greek Babylonian Little Horn, against the evening and morning sacrifice for the suppression of it, and the destruction of the holy city and people, and the consequent abolition of the Mosaic law and constitution. These important particulars were:

1. The perfecting of Judah's transgression;
2. The causing to cease from sin-offerings;
3. The covering of iniquity;
4. The bringing in a righteousness of ages;
5. The sealing the vision and prophet;
6. The anointing the Holy One of holy ones.

## 1. THE PERFECTING OF JUDAH'S TRANSGRESSION

IN CHAPTER 8 the reason assigned for the standing up of the "king of a fierce countenance" against Judah in the latter time of the north and south kingdoms of the Goat is:

So as to cause transgressors to fill up their measure."  
—which I take to be the meaning of *Kh' haph-pohshim*, rendered in the English version—

"When the transgressors are come to the full."

This is not true in fact, The transgressors in Judah had not filled up their measure in the latter time of the reign of the kings of Syria and Egypt, when the Roman power stood up in their place against Judah. This is evident from the Lord's denunciations of them 100 years after:

"Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers, ye hypocrites."

The Roman power was allowed to overshadow Judah as a means of bringing their rebellion against Yahweh to a head, or to perfect it, according to Gabriel. Every reader of the apostolic writings must be familiar with the way this was accomplished. The Lord Jesus appeared among them as "The Heir" of the Kingdom and throne of David; and they said—

"Come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance."

They arraigned him before the tribunal of the Little Horn on a charge of high treason against it, because he claimed to be the King of the Jews, and therefore spoke against the imperial rights of Caesar. But Pontius Pilate, the Horn's representative in Judea, apprehending no danger, would have acquitted him with release, knowing that for envy they had delivered him. But he could prevail nothing; for the rebels cried out, saying—

"If thou let this man go thou art not Caesar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Caesar."

"Behold your King!" said the governor. "Away with him, away with him," they cried; "Crucify him!" The astonished Pilate exclaimed, "Shall I crucify your King?" But, the Chief Priest answered, "We have no king but Caesar."

Thus was the first particular of Gabriel's word accomplished. Judah's rebellion was perfected within a few hours of the expiration of the seventy times seven years from the passover of the 20th year of Artaxerxes, Ram-king of Babylon.

## 2. THE CAUSING TO CEASE FROM SIN-OFFERINGS

THE NEXT thing was to cause to cease from sin-offerings. This did not mean to put a stop to the evening-morning sacrifice; for that was not effected till about thirty-five years after the end of the seventy heptades. It was to cause them to be ceased from *by those who should partake in the righteousness* to be brought in through the covering for iniquity.

We read of no more sin-offering being presented by the apostles, who had been made clean through the word spoken to them by Jesus; nor did they enjoin sin-offerings upon those who received their teaching. "By the" Abrahamic or "Second Will, they were sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once"—

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—so that, having thus obtained a permanent remission, "no more offering for sin" was needed. Hence they were superseded by Messiah's sacrifice, though they continued to be offered by the rebels.

## 3. THE COVERING OF INIQUITY

A THIRD item to be accomplished before the passing away of the seventy heptades, or periods of seven years, was the covering of iniquity. The verb rendered thus is *khahphar*, to cover, or overlay, to hide. Hence, *khaphporeth*, a cover, and therefore applied to the cover of the Ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy Place of the Temple, called the Propitiatory, because propitiation or expiation was made for sin by sprinkling it with the blood of the sacrifices. It was also called the MERCY SEAT.

A good conscience is without shame or fear. Transgression of law, or sin converts a good conscience into a bad one, and develops shame and fear. Before he sinned, Adam's conscience was good; he was naked, but not at all ashamed, or afraid of the presence of the Elohim: but immediately after, his conscience being defiled, shame and fear caused him to hide himself, because he was uncovered.

This teaches us that sin needs to be covered. Adam felt this, and undertook to cover his own sin in the best way he could devise, being ignorant of the manner in which sin is covered by divine appointment.

But the Lord God stripped him of his own device, which did not recognize the principle of blood-shedding in the covering of iniquity. He taught Adam to shed the blood of a lamb, and to cover his nakedness with its skin. This was the lamb slain at the foundation of the world, and represented him who is the Lamb typically slain from the foundation of the world.

Adam and his wife were in this way clothed by Yahweh Elohim; and being thus clothed, their iniquity was covered.

The only Sin-Covering from the Fall to the resurrection of Jesus the world had ever known, was typical; or a yearly covering of sin that represented the covering foretold by Gabriel. The patriarchs, prophets, and others, who Abrahamicly believed the things covenanted to the fathers, and were dead, had died with no other covering for their sins than could be derived from the pouring out of the blood of bulls and goats. But—

"It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4.)

Their sins therefore remained uncovered and unexpiated; and as "the wages of sin is death," if the expiation of the seventy heptades had never been effected, they would never have risen from the dead to eternal life. Hence, speaking of the covering efficacy of Christ's death, Paul says (Heb. 9:15).

"For this cause he is the Mediator of the New (or Abrahamic) Covenant, that by means of death FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE TRANSGRESSIONS UNDER THE FIRST COVENANT (the Law) they which are called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance."

And Isaiah says—

"For the transgression of my people was he stricken."

Thus, the death and resurrection of the Mediator of the Covenant made with Abraham, brought it into force; so that the already dead who had while living believed the things promised in it, obtain a covering of their sins, the effect of which they will experience after rising from the dead to possess them for the age.

#### **4. THE BRINGING IN A RIGHTEOUSNESS OF AGES**

If Messiah the Prince had not been cut off for his people "a righteousness of ages" (the fourth item of Gabriel's word) could not have been brought in. Faith in the things of the Kingdom could not have been counted for righteousness to life in the future ages of glory without a propitiatory or mercy seat, sprinkled with blood. The cutting off of Jesus provided this indispensable *kaphporeth*, or cover for sin: so that he being slain and raised from the dead, the means of a sinner's justification, styled, "The righteousness of God," was brought in or completed within the period appointed.

Here then were the victim, and the covering provided by Yahweh—a victim of expiation for the sins of the faithful; the faithful who believed the promises covenanted to Abraham and David—a *covering garment to hide their sins* in putting on the victim by immersion into his Name. Thus invested or clothed upon, they are in Christ, who of God becomes to them thus—

"Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

When these things should be effected, sin-offerings, and the evening-morning sacrifices, which were merely typical, could well be dispensed with. In relation then to the taking away of the *tahmid*, and the destruction of the holy city, Daniel would perceive their accomplishment posterior to the fulness of the seventy heptades of years. Hence all those speculations that make Antiochus the Little Horn, and his oppression of the Jews, and defilement of the temple, and so forth, the fulfilment of chapter 8:11, 23, 24, are entirely inadmissible, and altogether unworthy of a respectful attention.

#### **5. THE SEALING THE VISION AND PROPHET**

THE FIFTH particular to come to pass before the passing away of the heptades was "the sealing of the vision and prophet." We are informed that in the early days of Samuel, "The word of Yahweh was precious," for there was no open vision; and in Jeremiah it is said—

"They speak a vision of their own heart."

To speak the word of the Lord is for a prophet to speak what the Lord impresses upon his brain. We perceive before we speak; hence, to reveal our perceptions is to speak what we see, or to speak a vision. When a man speaks impressions made upon him by the Lord, and the Lord confirms what he speaks, he speaks "an open vision," and the confirmation is the sealing of it.

"Bind together the testimony; seal instruction among my disciples."

This was done in the ministrations of the Lord Jesus. He spoke an open vision, instructing his disciples; and his instructions the Father sealed, by the signs and wonders that accompanied them.

*In sealing the vision of the seventieth heptade, the prophet by whom the vision was spoken, was sealed likewise.* The confirmation of the vision was the confirmation of its prophet also. "Believe me," said Jesus, "for the works' sake." In another place, he says—

"The Father Himself, Who hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Have ye never heard His voice nor seen His form?"  
—the voice from the excellent glory, and the form of the dove. Multitudes had seen this, and were compelled to say,

"This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14).

The sealing of the vision and the prophet go together, and are therefore placed together in Gabriel's word; and have unquestionable reference to Jesus, who says of himself—

"Him hath the Father sealed" (John 6:27).

## 6.—THE ANOINTING THE HOLY ONE OF HOLY ONES

THE SIXTH and last of Gabriel's specifications in this verse is the anointing the Holy One of holy ones. This personage was the Messiah, a name signifying "an anointed one." There have been many anointed ones, but the one here referred to was to be pre-eminently such; and to be anointed within the limits of the seventieth heptade; that is, some time between the end of the sixty-ninth and the end of the seventieth, as appears from verse 25. Believing that Jesus is Messiah the Prince, we are at no loss where to place the anointing. Peter says—

"God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power."

And Luke, after relating the particulars concerning it, says:

"Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age."

This fixes the baptism and anointing at *three years and a few months* before the crucifixion. Thus (Psa. 45:6)—

"God anointed him with the oil of gladness above his associates."

*He is therefore the Holy One of those holy associates, or the Holy One of holy ones, as I have rendered the text; the Most Holy, or Holiest of All.*

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## God's Purpose with the Jews

By BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

*"It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass, saith the Lord that I will burst thy bonds. Strangers shall no more serve themselves of him"—Jer. 30:7-8*

PART SEVEN

The coincidence of the *restoration of Israel with judgment upon the nations* being obvious, it is for us to find out the connection (if connection exist) between the two things. In attempting to do this, it will help us if we glance for a moment at the present position of the Jews.

We behold them scattered up and down the earth as strangers wherever civilized man is to be found, sojourning as isolated individuals, subject to the authority that may exist where they are, unconnected by any political tie, without a national policy, without any organization, except the organization of the synagogue.

*How shall a nation so powerless be redeemed?* What force shall be brought to bear to gather them from their scattered homes, and re-unite them as one nation? A voluntary movement in times of peace might be effective enough as regards England and America, but even that would be prohibited in other countries where the Jews, only recently admitted to the barest privileges of citizenship are held as a sort of national property to be utilized for the national benefit.

If there would be a difficulty in times of peace, there would be an absolute impossibility in times of war. Recent events in the freest country on the face of the earth show that the liberty of even the privileged citizen vanishes before the exigencies of a government at war. The waste of warfare calls for men and the tardiness of voluntary enlistment necessitates conscription, and conscription compels the interdiction of departure from the country on the part of the inhabitants liable to the conscription.

Now it is certain that this approaching redemption of Israel occurs at a time when war is rife throughout the earth, and when therefore the Jews will universally be held in the grasp of military necessity just the time when a humanly-originated scheme for their restoration would be impracticable. This is said to be the time of Jacob's trouble—

"Alas! for the day is great. It is even the **time of Jacob's trouble**; but he shall be saved out of it; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bands, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him"  
(Jer. 30).

This being so, it is interesting to enquire what steps will be taken to effect their release? Doubtless the summons will go forth a second time—

"Let My people go that they may serve Me."

This would appear from the statement (Isa. 48:6)—

"I will say to the South, GIVE UP, and to the North, KEEP NOT BACK; bring My sons from far and My daughters from the ends of the earth."

This message to the nations is substantially identical with the proclamation mentioned in Rev. 14:7, which issues by an agency there symbolised as an angel—

"Fear God and give Him glory, for the hour of His judgment is come."

Those that fear God *will* give Him glory by hastening to deliver His people, and facilitating their transport to the Holy Land, by every means in their power; but this will not be the immediate result. The nations will not respond to the call before the hand of God's judgment is laid heavily upon them. They will ask like Pharaoh of old—

"Who is the Lord that we should obey Him?"

The religious education that the royal personages of the present order of things receive, will be no bar to this attitude, because that education is not of a kind to prepare them for the political development of Jehovah's purposes in the latter days. They are taught to associate God and religion with ghostly regions unknown to which they also confine the jurisdiction of Jesus.

Hence when he returns to the earth and interferes in the "temporal" affairs of men, they will never dream that *God is in it*, but will suppose that the demand addressed to them, is the impertinence of some fanatical religious faction, bent upon realising the crotchet of Jewish restoration, and they will doubtless reject it resentfully. The sequel is brought before us in the following portions of Scripture—

"Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty ones **shall** be taken away and the prey of the terrible **shall** be delivered.

"For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee and I will save thy children; and I will feed them that oppress thee with their own blood and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine.

"AND ALL FLESH SHALL KNOW THAT I THE LORD AM THY SAVIOUR AND THY REDEEMER, THE MIGHTY ONE OF JACOB" (Isa. 49:24-26).

This reveals a severity in the judgments which fall upon the latter day oppressors of Israel quite equalling, nay, surpassing those inflicted upon Egypt. Only by such crushing visitations could the besotted nations of these Gentile times be brought to perceive the hand of God in the operations of the time, and to readily promote the restoration of His people. The result of the judgment is depicted in the following testimonies—

"The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might. They shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their ears shall be deaf.

"They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth.

"They shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee" (Mic. 7:16-17).

\* \* \*

"Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up My standard to the people.

"And they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders and kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens shall be thy nursing mothers.

"THEY SHALL BOW DOWN TO THEE WITH THEIR FACE TOWARD THE EARTH AND LICK UP THE DUST OF THY FEET" (Isa. 49:22-23).

\* \* \*

"It shall come that I will gather all nations and tongues (that is, by representation,) and they shall come and see My glory. And I will send those that escape of them unto the nations (Tarshish, Pul, and Lud) that draw the bow, Tubal and Javan and the isles afar off, that have not heard My fame neither have seen My glory.

"And they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles, and they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in, litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, TO MY HOLY MOUNTAIN JERUSALEM"

(Isa. 66:18-26).

\* \* \*

THE GLORIOUS results delineated in these testimonies will not be developed in an instant. It will take time; and it will involve the employment of agency on the part of God; for the trite saying that God works by means is emphatically true in this instance.

The question is, by whom will the operations be conducted which result in the deliverance of the Jews? Moses and Aaron were the channel of God's communications with Pharaoh; who will stand between God and the nations at the crisis of the grander second exodus? The question seems to be met in one of the passages last quoted:

"I will send them that escape of the nations."

*Who are these?* The answer is suggested by the words of Jesus (Luke 21:36)—

"Pray that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

Those who are adjudged worthy, "out of every kindred, tongue and nation," to be made the companions of Jesus at his coming, will "escape" the judgments which will descend upon the world, as indicated in the following—

"Come My people, enter thou unto thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee.  
"Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, UNTIL THE INDIGNATION BE OVERPAST;  
for behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity" (Isa. 26:20-21).

In Rev. 17:14, the class thus secreted in divine protection are said to be WITH the Lamb (called, chosen, and faithful) at the very crisis of national judgment described in Isa. 66. In Rev. 14 they are said to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," which in the language of Apocalyptic symbol, can only mean that they are *associated with him in everything he does*.

Hence, that they should be called upon to co-operate with him in the subordinate capacity of ambassadorship in the manner described in Isa. 66:19, is extremely probable. The principle of co-operation has been observed from the beginning of Christ's connection with his people. At his first coming, he came to seek "the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and in carrying out this work, he employed his disciples—the 70 and the 12—as agents, saying to them—

"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5-6).

On the point of his departure to heaven, he commissioned them to go unto all nations to do the work he was sent to accomplish, namely, to ingather his chosen ones by turning them from darkness to light; and at the death of the apostles, he signified his wish through Paul, that the work should be continued by faithful men, able to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2), so that the work of co-operation in Christ's present office now goes on, "the Spirit and THE BRIDE saying, Come."

When he comes to "be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe (2 Thess. 2) the work of cooperation is extended to the higher sphere of operations then inaugurated. He comes—

"To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel" (Isa. 49:6).  
—and in this work they are made to share. The mode in which they do so, as it seems to us, is set forth in the testimony from Isaiah under consideration. They are sent as his messengers throughout the world, to be agents in accomplishing it.

\* \* \*

THERE ARE several *obstacles* to the work which they have to remove. There is first the unbelief of the Jews. How will this be got over? Doubtless in the way in which it was overcome in the case of Moses. He was employed to work miracles in attestation of his mission, in case they should disbelieve him; and his exhibition of them had the desired effect.

So the saints will be able to convince the Jews by signs and wonders, that they are messengers from the God of their fathers, and induce them to entrust themselves to their guidance. Having effected an understanding with the Jews in the several localities to which they may be sent; for while Aaron and Moses were sufficient for the work of deliverance from one country—Egypt, in which the whole

nation was centered, it will take many messengers to accomplish a similar work extending over the entire surface of the globe. Not a Jew will be left ungathered. The testimony is—

"If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee" (Deut. 30:4).

And the testimony of Isaiah is—

"Ye shall be gathered ONE BY ONE, O ye children of Israel."

Having effected the understanding referred to, the next step will be to demand the consent of the powers holding them in servitude, to their departure to the land which by that time will have become the center of events unparalleled in history.

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

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## **"I Have Seen Thy Salvation!"**

*"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel"*—Luke 2:32

ONE VERY outstanding feature of the Truth is that all things are moving to a pre-determined end; and around the personality of the Son of God.

In our daily readings we are, by some connecting thought, generally close to him, the Lord Jesus Christ. Frequently in all three readings we are reminded of him in some way—his pre-eminence, character, work or destiny. This from promise, prophecy and type in the early beginnings, right through to the actual records of his personal mission, the establishment of its doctrinal significance, and the application of it to the way of life of the believer—all to a good, ultimate purpose.

We are privileged to realize there is a purpose working out, one which meantime has its historic sequences, but which *must* consummate in the achievement of its aim at some time or another; and that further, in the economy of the Deity, *that point of time is fixed*.

We can already see, through the mists of the present, the brightness of that glad morning, and feel the comfort and incentive of knowing, without doubting, that the present chaos *will* give place to a divine order, in God's time and in God's way.

My brethren and sisters, the *general* view of God, of the Bible and the future, is a very sad one. Millions of people call themselves "Christian," but do not read their Bible. They rest their faith (if it can be so termed) on a strange accumulation of error universally called "Christian dogma" today. Steeped in this vain superstition, the plan, the Great Plan of God, cannot be known to them. We doubt whether they believe He *has* any plan—whether there *is* any predetermined consummation.

We once were just as blind, but our Father caused the Truth to be revealed to us. There came a time when our eyes were opened. This knowledge we have received as a precious gift, and we find that the whole concept revolves around this man Christ Jesus, and reaches from Eden, to Eden formed on earth again.

This knowledge broadens out into a sort of historical panorama in the mind, and resolves at the end into the glorious vision of the day of his glory when he shall be "Kings of Kings and Lord of Lords."

Though the full disclosure of that day of distinction will exceed mortal imagination, the mind reaches forward in the hope of the scriptures and forms from the various details given a picture of that happy state, whilst allowing that limited mortal vision must be far short of the mark.

The whole consideration—fed *day by day* by a loving application to God's Word, (pointing forward as it does to that 'Eternal weight of Glory' spoken of by Paul), and kept in the fore-front by attention to His business—leads to continual self-examination. Only *so* can we fit ourselves, and of course, *we so much want to be there!*

The word of exhortation is an especial call to that exercise, a stirring up of the mind, an urging to consider; and on the basis of the Truth of the Scriptures and the Faithfulness of God, it has a *large element of comfort*—the Sword of the Spirit with the Balm of Gilead. Our meditation may reveal that we are sadly lacking, but reflection assures that there is "hope in the end" IF we assure our hearts before Him and *rest upon Him so that He may help us win through.*

\* \* \*

IN THE present readings, we have insight into the life of that Great Son—his goings about, his work, his teachings. We can thus actually draw alongside him.

His words, so briefly given, are very precious; not only because they are rare in their brevity, but also because they are *Spirit and Life* and originate with the Father. "He went about doing good," but it was only part of a larger mission, the beginning of a new phase; there was the future. The chapter read has its own pictures. The Gospel readings are full of scenes for our enlightened imagination. They can only be seen, however, in that proper focus, *the larger setting of the Purpose*. If we apprehend not what this man is talking about, the whole presentation is faulty, and any sentimental dressing up of the scenes in lieu of the Truth (a habit of commentators) is valueless.

*Here is our privilege*, to behold the solid and substantial beauty of it as a vitally necessary contribution to the end in view. One must *know* that this Kingdom of God, the Hope of Israel, is still to be realized in a state far different from the present. That it is not a collection of believers in a so-called "gospel age," but a *divine conception of transcendently greater dimensions*. To ignore this is to discount the wonderful words associated with his birth in the opening of this very section of revealed Truth. We shortly come to them in considering a few things from this—Luke's record.

Luke is called by the Apostle Paul, "the beloved physician." They spent a lot of time together. He was with Paul in his later journeys at least, and was doubtless a physical, as well as a spiritual, comfort to the great apostle. We know little of his life, and nothing of his origin. On certain premises it is assumed he was a Gentile, a proselyte. Under God's hand, he contributes much to our information, in detail omitted by the other evangelists.

We go back to chap. 1, last Sunday's readings, a wonderful story, the miraculous facts of which we cannot lightly pass. In verse 3 he claims "having had perfect understanding from the very first" in speaking of this, a new beginning.

Let us take the full significance of these first chapters, against the background of history. Israel was definitely under the heel of the conqueror, the oppressor, but the hope of the deliverer, the Messiah, never died. Of this much Paul's words certify us. *But for 400 years there had been no voice nor hearing!*

Now, in the momentous hour of a new dispensation, the long silence is broken. How many understood the "Times" of Daniel, and in their *own* times were looking for redemption (consolation) in Israel, we cannot know. Sufficient to know that the hope existed, that it was a national one and consistent with the promises of God, a consummation to which "all the 12 tribes hoped to come."

Luke takes up the work on the threshold of this new order, a part of the larger cycle of the Purpose. To read with care is to be impressed with the superlative value and importance of his singular account, and the stupendous nature of the phase he relates.

Initiating this, an august personage is sent from the Throne of God, even the angel Gabriel. A fitting messenger! He it was who came to Daniel, and who gave the 70 week prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. He it is who now heralds the coming of both forerunner and Christ. Not with clarion

voice from the top of a mount ("Hear, O Israel"), but in a quiet way to the individuals first concerned. The result would in due time speak for itself. Note that out of all Israel, he came to *one* man and *one* woman, but the effect will reach to the end of time.

It is apparent from verse 12, that Zacharias (performing his service in the Temple) was afraid when Gabriel appeared. But the assurance came to him, "Fear not, Zacharias"—as it had been given long before, "Fear not, Daniel," and later would be, "Fear not, Mary."

"Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

"And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

"And he shall go before Him (the Lord) in the spirit and power of Elias . . . to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (vs. 14-17).

Zacharias' faith was sorely tried. *Worthy man, walking in a blameless manner, but his mind wavered at the marvel of it!* He said—

"Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years" (v. 18).

The answer seems to commence reproachfully (v. 19)—

"I am **Gabriel**, that stand **in the presence of God**; and am **sent to speak** unto thee, and to **show thee** these glad tidings."

And then, as if to say "How shall ye know?" continues—

"And behold thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season . . ."

Which they were in the sequel we will note.

\* \* \*

THE SAME illustrious personage comes to Mary (vs. 28-38):

"Blessed art thou among women. Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. Thou shalt bring forth a son and shalt call his name Jesus.

"The Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

And Mary says (v. 38)—

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

*How tremendous the issues from these simple statements!* Mary shortly visits Elizabeth, who, moved by the Spirit exclaims (v. 43)—

"Whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

At this time also, Mary is moved to magnify the Lord, and rejoice in spirit for His mercy (vs. 46-55), using phrases significant of the Hope of Israel.

John is born, and Zacharias, his tongue loosed after many months, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied (v. 67 and on) in similar terms. The tenor of these utterances, of the Holy Spirit, is also indicative of *faith in the end promised*.

Then we get the record of chapter 2, the birth of Jesus in the lowliest of circumstances, providentially arranged, in an apparently coincidental manner, in the place named in prophecy over 700 years earlier. To effect this, Mary and Joseph had to move from Nazareth to Bethlehem at exactly the appointed time.

Beautiful child stories have been woven around the terms of this chapter, and great stress is placed on the song of the angels, but *how could one apply it to any part, place or time of this "present evil world"?*

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (v. 14).

Truly that *will* be the *ultimate* effect of Christ's work, but how any could see it in the present, or even expect it by mere preaching, is of course past our comprehension. MacArthur, in his recent speech from Tokyo admitted: "*Past endeavours have failed,*" stating that the "*only solution is in lifting the character of man himself.*"

There is an element of truth in this, but how is it to be done? Not by the force of the arms of the world, but by the all-prevailing future power of him who is "called Faithful and True" (Rev. 19:11), who will sit upon the white horse, for—

"In **righteousness** doth **he** judge and make war."

He can discern the "thoughts and intents of the heart." He alone (and those who are taught of him) will in that day be able to detect and purge out the rebellious, and teach the remainder, leading them in the ways of righteousness— "*Israel's Hope and Earth's Desire.*"

\* \* \*

PROCEEDING with chap. 2. When the babe was taken to the Temple in fulfilment of Law relating to the firstborn, the devout old man Simeon (who himself waited "for the consolation of Israel" and to whom it had been revealed he should, before he died, see the "Lord's Anointed"), added his testimony. Taking the babe into his arms he said—

"Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

A little later (vs. 36-38) Anna the prophetess likewise—

"Gave thanks to the Lord and spake of Him to all those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" ('Israel' in the margin).

Now referring back to chap. 1, Zacharias, in his prophecy by the Holy Spirit "Blessed the Lord God of Israel" for the redemption seen, and *associated the past and the future* (as recorded in vs. 69-75)—

"As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets;"

"The mercy promised to our Fathers;"

"The oath which He sware to our Father Abraham;"

"That we being delivered . . . might serve Him without fear . . . all the days of our life."

Mary, in her magnification of the Lord (v. 46 and on) said—

"He hath holpen His servant Israel . . . In remembrance of His mercy, as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever."

All these declarations of faith and hope would reflect back on Gabriel's annunciation (vs. 32-33)—

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

"And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and OF HIS KINGDOM THERE SHALL BE NO END."

Continuing the story, Luke states (2:39-40)—

"And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

"And the child grew, and **waxed strong in spirit**, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."

Looking forward from this point, the natural view would expect an interesting tale of his childhood and youth, with pleasing details of his exemplary behaviour. "*What a fine guide*," one might think, "*for bringing up our children!*"

But WOULD it have been regarded, any more than other Scripture is, on that point or others? We hardly think so. We have sufficient, we can be sure to give us "the whole counsel of God" without it.

We *do* have an *indication* at the end of this chapter—the journey to Jerusalem when he was 12 years old, and his interview with the doctors in the Temple, when his understanding and answers astonished them. His words to his mother at that time, give us food for thought (v. 49)—

"How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

*These are the first recorded words of the Lord Jesus Christ.* The implication in them is rather, we believe:

"Why did you look **elsewhere**?—THIS is my Father's house."

We wonder why Mary, in particular (v. 50)—

"Understood not the saying that he spake unto them."

Would she not recollect the different things she had "hid in her heart" from time to time: specifically—

"He shall be called the Son of the Highest . . . He shall be called the SON OF GOD."  
. . . *and the words of Gabriel . . . and the angels' song?*

Of course, he went back to Nazareth with them, and was subject unto them. This, up to the time of his public ministry, was part of that holy life, God pleasing, of which we have no more detail, but which eventually brought him to Jordan, and John's baptism, and the witness from on high—

"Thou art My beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

As we read on, and feel his gracious presence, on the shores of Galilee, let us remember that *a great work is still before him, here, on earth . . .* and we rest on his assurance to his disciples—

"**I will come again**, so that where I am, there ye may be also."

You will remember that when reading from Isaiah in the synagogue (4:18)—

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor . . . to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."  
—he added, as he sat down—

"This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."

*And they wondered.* He was quoting from Isaiah 61 and by comparing, you will be able to see he stopped in the middle of a verse. The ensuing words are:

"And the DAY OF VENGEANCE of our God."

The following verses in Isaiah, and also the next chapters, are evidently prophecies of the Kingdom, where "the day of God's vengeance" is also "the year of His Redeemed."

\* \* \*

WE ARE most evidently living in the time of the end. "*The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.*" These are wonderful days. Faith is almost superseded. World events show a shaping towards the end, and the nations are taking their proper places. Who would have thought that Russia would rise to such power so fast!

It is time for the Tarshish power to enact one of the last scenes of her destined role, that of "bringing Zion's sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, to the land brought back from the sword." The stage will then be set for the finale. "How long to the end of these wonders?" Daniel enquired about this. So do we.

But if the Lord is to call away his own people for judgment *before* he steals upon the world as a thief in the night, that time would appear to be upon us. *Let us be ready—let us be working.*

He is the Son, the Elder Son, over his own house—

"Whose house are we IF we hold fast."

The zeal of that house absorbed his whole being—

"The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up."

We are adopted sons and daughters, and the responsibility for part of the work now rests upon *us*. God has to *work with us*, and He cannot do so unless we *do* work.

We are "workers together with God" (beautiful thought!), and we must ALL be "about our Father's business," diligent to "make our calling and election *sure*." —G. G. Sr.

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### **"THIS IS LOVE, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS"**

Love is the fulfilling of the law only in the sense that it is the sentiment that leads to the spontaneous doing of what the law enjoins, and abstinence from what it forbids.

IT WILL NOT DO TO PUT "LOVE" IN THE PLACE OF OBEDIENCE; this is characteristic of the false religions of the day. We must always guard against the misapplication of good principles, that we may see the right fulfilment of all in the Kingdom of God. —**Bro. Roberts**

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## **Grow in Grace**

### **PART FOUR**

*"Praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"*—1 Peter 1:7

Are we interested in "praise and honor and glory?" Is this the motive of our obedience, or is it selfless *love*? The praise and honor and glory of which the Scriptures speak are different entirely from the praise, honor and glory of the world, for *they* are based on truth and reality and are an essential part of the goodness and joy when all things will be in harmony with God.

Good will be triumphant, and all the upright will rejoice in that fact, not personally and selfishly, but because it is for universal good. Those who have sought the good and made God their portion will be in the ruling places of the earth, with the wisdom and power to teach and enforce the

ways of God in all the earth, and they will glory that they are taking a leading part in the universal goodness.

Praise and honor and glory are empty things in themselves, but when they are related to the triumph of righteousness and victory over sin and evil, they are wholesome and beautiful and sound and desirable.

\* \* \*

"*At the appearing of Jesus Christ.*" All hope and expectation is centered on that event. For that glorious appearing all creation waits. How infinitely sad that the religious systems of the world have confused and obscured this great central truth—"Until he come."

\* \* \*

"Whom, having not seen, ye love" (v. 8). Why do we love him? John says (1 John 4:19)—

"We love . . . because he first loved us."

The love of which the Scriptures speak is not a natural thing. *We should be very clear on this.* The term "love" is applied to many things. *This* love is the first of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), which Paul very distinctly *contrasts* with the "works of the flesh." It is something, therefore, entirely outside the realm and comprehension of the natural mind, for Paul again clearly says (1 Cor. 2:14)—

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither CAN he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The Bride says of Christ in the Song of Solomon that he is "*altogether* lovely." He stands before us as the perfect manifestation of all that is good and desirable, with no fleshly weakness or changeableness to mar the beauty of the picture. Only perfect goodness can inspire perfect love.

And it is not a dead, mechanical goodness. The essence of the way of salvation is its *living, personal* nature. We are not asked just to love and strive toward goodness in the abstract. It is all intensely *personal*—a personal Father, and a personal Elder Brother who seeks, by the inspiration of a loving self-sacrifice and a perfect example, to raise us up, through love, to the fulness of eternal glory and joy.

\* \* \*

"In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory" (v. 8).

THIS WE MUST HAVE—"Joy unspeakable, and full of glory." IT IS THE ONLY POWER THAT CAN OVERCOME SIN. It is the only power that can hold an ecclesia or a fellowship together in soundness and truth. We MUST be sufficiently deep in the Truth to lead us into this fixed and consistent state of "rejoicing in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory." As Nehemiah told weeping and repentant Israel—

"Mourn not, nor weep . . . for the joy of the Lord is your strength!" (Neh. 8:9-10).

\* \* \*

"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (v. 9).

"Receiving" salvation is a *process*—parallel to "working out your salvation"—ye rejoice that ye are in the way of, and on the way to, salvation.

"The salvation of your souls." The word here translated "soul" occurs about 100 times in the New Testament. It is translated about forty times as "life" and about sixty times as "soul." The following are examples of its use—

"I lay down my **life** for the sheep" (John 10:15).

"He that loveth his **life** shall lose it" (John 12:25).

"To give his **life** a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28).

"He laid down his **life** for us, and we ought to lay down our **lives** for the brethren"

(1 John 3:16).

It is clear from these passages that the word "soul" (here translated "life") *really means LIFE*, and does not mean some "immortal essence" within us. We cannot lay down an "immortal soul" for our brethren. The "salvation of your souls" is well illustrated by Jesus' words (Matt. 16:25)—

"Whosoever will save his life (psuche—soul—same word) shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life (soul) for my sake shall find it.

How can we lose our life, or "soul," for Christ's sake? Understood as an immortal essence within us, it is an absurdity, but understood according to the scriptural meaning of *soul*, it is quite clear. Jesus explains it at the same time

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me, FOR whosoever shall save his life (soul) shall lose it, etc. . ."

If we try to keep our life for ourselves, we lose it; but if we give up our life for Christ—denying ourselves—denying our own natural desires and pleasures—yielding our life even unto death if need be, we save it. The unscriptural orthodox idea of an immortal soul confuses all this.

*"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you" (v. 10).*

For 4,000 years the children of God looked forward with keen anticipation to the manifestation of the woman's seed who should bruise the Serpent and destroy the power of sin.

Much was written concerning this glorious coming personage. In type, figure and prophecy he was the theme of all the Scriptures. Many prophecies were clear, but much, too, was strange and obscure. Majestic prophecies of royal power and universal dominion were strangely intertwined with those of suffering, humiliation, rejection and death.

Little wonder that God's faithful prophets sought to comprehend these hidden mysteries of godliness—the Seed of the Woman, a Light to the Gentiles, a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, a Prophet like unto Moses, a Lamb led to the slaughter, a King on Zion's royal hill, a Servant of the people, a Ruler of all nations of the earth, the Root of David, and his Offspring—at once David's son and David's Lord.

\* \* \*

*"Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (v. 11).*

"The Spirit of Christ which was in them." John records in Rev. 19:10 that—

"The Testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The spirit—life, meaning, power—of all prophecy is the Testimony of Jesus. All centres in, and radiates from, him—

"He is the Head of the Body (the Ecclesia)—the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead: that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Col. 1:18-19).

How keenly the prophets would desire to know the time, and the manner of the time, of this great manifestation of godliness! Truly, as Paul wrote to Timothy, *great was its mystery*—

"God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels . . ."

What is the significance of that—"seen of angels"? Paul, in the majestic opening chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, portrays how much greater in honor and glory the Son of God was than any of the hosts of immortal angels that surround the throne of God and fulfil His will throughout the vast universe.

And Peter continues, in the next verse (12) of this chapter we are considering, by revealing that not only all the prophets and faithful of old, but the *angels themselves* earnestly desired to look into the revelation and consummation of this great mystery—the Son of God, the Word made flesh!

As we think upon this aspect that Peter reveals of the keen angelic interest in the fulfilment of the purposes of God, we are given a striking insight into the glories of the future that await the redeemed, who shall be equal unto the angels in endless immortal vigor and interest and joy—working with God in all His future purposes.

"Which things"—the glories enfolded in Christ—"the angels desire to look into" says Peter. "Wherefore," he continues—in view of the infinite and universal greatness and magnitude of your calling to be part of this God-manifestation that the angels long to see—

*"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind!"*

What a fitting and expressive form of words! The "girding up of the loins" was the gathering together of all the loose folds and ends of the flowing eastern garments—drawing them all up together compactly between the legs and into the waistband, so as to leave the legs free and untrammelled for travelling or strenuous work.

*Workmen, pilgrims, runners, wrestlers, soldiers*—all "girded their loins," and all are used as types of Christ's brethren. The Israelites were to eat the Passover with "loins girded" (Exo. 12:11)—vigilant and intent upon their salvation, partaking with alertness, *ready to go instantly* at the given signal. Jesus said (Luke 12:35-36)—

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord."

"*Gird up the loins of your mind.*" This is what we have to KEEP ON DOING, if we hope to make any accomplishment in the way of godliness. Our minds naturally are loose and undisciplined, wandering according to passing fancy or interest, always seeking pleasure, entertainment, diversion.

Particularly in these days of the subtle, demoralizing, stupefying, mentally-degenerating influences of such worldly things as television, we need this stirring exhortation to keep our minds firmly and tightly girded and applied to the things of godliness—not as a matter of enforced and reluctant duty and suppressed desire, but with a spiritually-enlightened, sensible, thankful realization of the stupidity of this creeping form of mental slavery and debasement, and relief that we have been called out of such hopeless darkness into the glorious, purposeful light of eternal reality and godliness.

*"Gird up the loins of your mind—AND BE SOBER."*

Be sober. Other versions render it "Be vigilant," "With strictest self-control," "Self-restraint." The meaning is a personal, watchful vigilance against the wandering of the mind and interests to things that have no profit as regards salvation. No empty, frothy, shallow lightness, but a serious, intent directing of the mind into profitable and *eternally-satisfying channels*. There is no *real satisfaction and peace* in the ways of the flesh, no matter how desirable and appealing they may seem to be. There is just a constant, frustrating, elusive *seeking* for satisfaction—"Seeking rest, and finding none."

"Be not deceived, God is not mocked." He has planned life a certain way. We *must* do it *His* way if we hope for satisfaction and success. How stupid of us to think that we can outwit Him—prove Him wrong—find satisfaction and peace where He says there is none!

Men of the world spend years of self denial to obtain a corruptible crown that soon ends in the grave. Peter exhorts the brethren and sisters to constantly keep *their* minds centered on the eternal, incorruptible joys of their great destiny of God-manifestation throughout eternity. Foolishness, fleshliness, worldliness, are a degrading of that which was made in the image of God—a debasing and prostituting of the high calling to which we are called—a mockery of God's great and holy purpose of forming a pure spiritual Temple to His everlasting honor and glory. Therefore, intensely and prayerfully—

*"Gird up the loins of your mind!"*

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

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## 1959 Texas Gathering Report

*"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"—Heb. 10:23-24.*

### PART THREE

CONTINUING our discussions and thoughts upon spiritual things, the assembly was brought to attention on Wednesday by the exhortation of Paul—"LET US HOLD FAST THE PROFESSION OF OUR FAITH WITHOUT WAVERING" (Heb. 10).

"Holding fast" is taking a firm grip with the hands. A man in danger of his life grips tenaciously to a lifeline. We all hold fast to something in life—our possession, our professions, our occupations. Paul encourages us to cling to our high and holy calling, in the army of Christ. It is a military profession. Our solemn covenant with God and Christ is to defend and maintain the Gospel of eternal salvation. These are obligations assumed and must be kept.

They must be held firmly without wavering. Waves of the sea are not stable, they are vain for support. To waver is the opposite to hold fast. Wavering is a half-hold. Such a hold is weak. How easy in such a state to let loose and drift with the current!

Paul gives us a **reason** for holding fast: "Faithful is He that promised." This is the best reason for firming up our grip. Paul said to Timothy, "I know whom I have believed." This was at the end of Paul's service when he was facing death. He said we serve "the Lord Christ." Are we serving the Lord diligently and faithfully? We have a faithful employer.

"Hold fast without wavering." This message has sounded through all ages, to Noah, to Abraham. They were fully persuaded that what God had promised He would faithfully perform. Noah became thereby an heir of the promise, as did Abraham. Daniel held fast to faith in God when his life hung in the balance. Moses chose rather to suffer with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of Egypt. He had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

These admonitions were never more needful than at the present time. There are many ways to "hold fast." The Truth must get "hold" of us. "O Timothy," said Paul, "Keep that good thing which is committed to thy trust . . . in purity." Do not let it be perverted by false doctrine. Even at that early time a generation of individuals professed to love the Truth, but were perverting it all the time. The Truth was soon reduced to a flicker. Philosophy and "science" were eating at the very foundations of the Faith.

Let us band together in our endeavour to hold fast to the Truth. We must strenuously WORK at our "profession"—

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Heb. 2:1).

This applies to us in this final day of Gentile times.

Hebrews is the book of "Better Things"—a better revelation, a better priesthood, a better covenant, etc. Therefore give earnest heed, lest we let these better things slip, especially because they were delivered to us by the Son of God. "Therefore"—as a conclusion—if we cease to hold on, "How shall we escape if we neglect." Note he says "**Neglect,**" not forsake. We can "neglect" while appearing to hold fast. The lessons of prophets in the past tell us of the punishment upon Israel for neglecting to hold fast. It is a fearful lesson.

God will perform His part. He expects us to do ours. We may think we are holding fast, but let us take heed **HOW** we hold—

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

We can just stand—and do nothing. Remember the parable of the talents. Two servants made use of their talents. One buried his in the earth. He held his talent fast, but it was never used. How have we learned the lesson? Have we buried the Truth in the earth?

A hammer held fast in the hand must be swung to be of service. The Truth is not a robe, put on, in which to lie down. It is armour to cover us in the active warfare. The Truth is as a net to be flung out. The precious gem is not to be hidden, but as money, to be circulated.

Like Love, the Truth cannot stand idle. It is not merely theoretic. It must be **PRACTISED**. Our lives must not be a silent holding fast. They must be a practising and developing, an increasing of the tension of our grip on things eternal.

Our salvation depends on holding fast. The end of the probation is what counts. "Be thou faithful **UNTO DEATH**, and I will give thee a crown of life. Let us therefore, "Hold fast without wavering."

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**THE REWARD** for holding fast is association with Christ in the execution of the "**GREATEST DRAMA OF ALL TIME**." This theme formed the basis of our studies for the afternoon.

The dramatic events of the Bible are terrible happenings. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt was an event of world renown. The prophets have shown that Israel's deliverance in the future will be a far greater world shaking drama.

The Jews are God's witnesses that He has spoken. There will be a future dramatic proclamation, "Let My people go!" which all will understand. Bible prophecies speak in **REALITIES**. They speak of Israel's dispersion, which has been fulfilled in minute detail. They also speak of their regathering—

"He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock"

(Jer. 31 10).

The cities which have been waste and desolate are being built and inhabited now. As Israel has been a curse so shall they become a blessing amongst all nations. This was the message of prophets and apostles alike. Isaiah speaks of the glorious Kingdom Age. Ezekiel dwells in glowing terms on Israel's glorious future of temple worship

This was shown by Ezekiel as a gradual process. The shaking of the dry bones first, then the growth of sinews, flesh and skin. Finally the breath of life from God brings animation and they live as a nation in His sight. The last 40 years bear witness of much of this coming to pass.

While these events have been transpiring, Ezekiel shows the gathering of a storm cloud to the north of God's land—a great confederacy of nations assembling to overwhelm the nation of Israel. Jeremiah says, it is the "time of Jacob's trouble." In the extreme hours of their distress, God will interfere and deliver.

The prophets Joel and Zechariah show us that the armies of the world are assembled by God upon Israel's mountains and it is there that He will judge them with pestilence and blood, fire and sword. This is the preparation for the most Dramatic Event of All Generations.

The Jews have gone back to their land in unbelief of their Messiah and Creator. The State of Israel has been born, but the Spirit of God does not animate them nationally. Over 2,000,000 have returned to the land. The land of Israel is developing rapidly and invites in consequence the covetous eyes of hostile nations.

Meanwhile the situation of world unrest, of wars, crime, wickedness and fear, indicate that the time is ripe for the storm. It is ready for Armageddon. In prophetic vision we see the final events unfold—

The storm breaks and the cloud descends upon the land; the fields of Israel are clear before the oncoming hordes, and all defence fails. The standard of aggression is planted on God's glorious holy mountains Israel is now in dire straits. There is now no Moses to deliver them. Many Jews are forced ahead in flight to the land of Egypt. Others take refuge in the city of Jerusalem.

While Russia sweeps on into Egypt in pursuit, tidings of a disturbing nature check the onrush and the force recoils upon the city of Jerusalem. The city must be subdued. Half of the city is taken, and its inhabitants led into captivity. Calamity and distress press in upon the defenders. The cry for unconditional surrender is issued. The Jews know that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

When all is black for Israel, a message is received by the Northern Invader that they must surrender to a new force marching in from the south, by way of Edom and Bozrah. This is the picture painted by God's prophets many ages ago.

Investigation proves that an unarmed band clad in white is advancing toward the invaders. All is ready for the day of decision. The armies of the north are uneasy. The sky has clouds of great density forming. A dark shadow falls over the land. There is no time to study the weather. All is silent anticipation and anxiety. The new white force comes directly toward the city. The full force of the Northern armament is unleashed. Nothing mortal can stand in the face of the terrific volley.

But there is no change in the ranks of the oncoming host. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision" (Joel 2:7-10).

"The Lord utters His voice before His army. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee" (Psa. 91:7).

"Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks" (Joel 2)

Ezekiel indicates that God's fury shall come up in His face. The faces of His immortalized servants are made to glow. Nothing can overcome them.

Mad panic seizes the Northern Army. Conflict rages on all sides as soldier turns on soldier in frightened dismay. The clouds of heaven turn from black to white. Great hailstones descend to add consternation to confusion.

The Jews now find that God is fighting for them as in the days of old. Zechariah 14:3, Isaiah 63:1 and Zechariah ch. 12 all tell the same story. Then shall the Jews realize that their Messiah has

come. Then shall they mourn for him as for an only son, and look on him whom they pierced and confess their sin.

The reward for holding fast now is to be in the Immortal Army, clad in white, victorious over all the enemy, who shall deliver God's people Israel in the near future.

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THE RESURRECTION and deliverance of National Israel is associated with the resurrection of the Real Israel of God, the faithful of all ages. This subject formed a fitting climax to the day's studies, as we contemplated, "RESURRECTION AS THE ONLY HOPE OF LIFE AFTER DEATH."

People live and die for what they believe. Christendom is divided on many beliefs, but most agree in their belief of the doctrine of the Immortal Soul. We state that man HAS NOT an "Immortal Soul," nor IS he an "Immortal Soul."

All who hold various doctrines claim to base their beliefs on the Bible. Paul said there is only ONE Gospel, one Faith and one Hope, but that there were some who were perverting the Gospel (Eph. 4:4-5; Gal. 1:9). Because of this perversion God sent them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie (2 Thes. 2:11).

Edward Gibbon, the famous historian, stated: "The doctrine of the Immortal Soul was a speculation of Greek and Roman philosophers." But there is no countenance of this false doctrine in the Bible.

In Genesis we find that man was made of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). God breathed into the dust-formed object and man became a living soul, not an immortal soul. He became a living being, an animated being. He was placed under a law to test his obedience to his Maker. He ate of the forbidden tree, and received the penalty of disobedience. "Thou shalt surely die," was the penalty, which was inflicted as we read in Gen. 3:15-17—

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

So man was brought to dust again (Rom. 5:12)—

"As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned."

As man did not live before creation, nor does he live after death—

"For the living know that they must die, but the dead know not anything . . . also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished . . .

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl. 9:5-6-10).

These scriptures apply to the WHOLE MAN. As the beasts die, so dies man (Eccl. 3:19)—

"That which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts . . . as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea they have all one breath; so that man hath no pre-eminence above a beast."

The Bible clearly teaches that the righteous do not go to heaven, but return to the dust. Righteous king David did not go to heaven (Acts 2:34), and Christ said—

"NO MAN HATH ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN."

"Hell" is the place of ALL the dead, good and bad alike; it is the grave, the unconscious resting-place of all mankind. From cover to cover of the Bible we read this truth—that all men terminate their days in the dust—

"There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressors" (Job. 3:17-18).

The doctrine of resurrection is proof against the pagan theory of immortal-soulism. Everlasting life is a PROMISE from God to the obedient. It is NOT a present possession. Said Christ—

"I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

Resurrection is a literal bodily emergence from the dust of the ground to a new life. As Christ could say (Luke 24:39)—

"Handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have."

So we are told by Paul (Phil. 3 21)—

"Our vile (mortal) bodies shall be changed like unto his glorious (immortal) body."

"We shall all (Paul is speaking of the righteous) be changed . . . This corruptible must put on incorruption, this mortal must put on immortality." When this becomes an accomplished fact—

"Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:51-5).

Such is the doctrine of life after death, taught in the Bible. It is predicated only on a course of life in obedience to God, while we wait for that glorious event.

FIRST we have to know God's plan of salvation. He is the one that does the calling and revealing of His purpose to us. THEN we must believe and be baptised. Total immersion is essential as a type of death and burial with Christ (Rom. 6).

As Christ rose from death to a new life, so we must have buried the old man of obedience unto sin, and have risen to a new birth of obedience unto righteousness. This first resurrection must take place in each of us if the resurrection to everlasting life is to take place for us. We must, after baptism, present our bodies, our lives, as living sacrifices unto God.

To those who have become acquainted with God's plan of salvation, whether they obey it or not, resurrection is in store. Some will rise to unending life. Some will rise to shame, rejection and the second death (Dan. 12:2). Paul said he had—

"Hope toward God . . . that there would be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15).

Those in ignorance shall perish forever, as the beasts of the earth, never to rise again. But the responsible are amenable to resurrection. They shall be called from the dead, divided into two groups, the righteous to the right hand of the Judge, the wicked to the left hand of rejection.

Where do we stand, on the right hand, or the left? Now is the time to decide.

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## A Peculiar People

"Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"—Titus 2:14.

One of the most outstanding marks of identification in determining who is or who is not a true disciple of Christ, is that they are to be *distinctly different from the world around them* in a particular way. They are to shun the activities of the world which are contrary to the principles of divine teaching. They are to *interest themselves in all divine things*, not the things which command the interest and attention of the world.

They are to love and highly esteem those who walk in accordance with the divine teaching. They are to give heed to the Word of God as the "man of their counsel," to love God's law and meditate upon it day and night.

In contrast, they will abominate the foolish, frivolous and unspiritual things which are so often highly esteemed by the world. They not only engage in "good works which God has ordained that we should walk in them," but they energetically and zealously persevere in performing these works regardless of the scorn and opposition from those without.

They are not only *different* from the world; they were chosen by Christ to be *like him*, and very much unlike the perishing worldlings around them who are all "dead in trespasses and sins."

If we remain like the world in our ways, we have not come out from the world, and so we do not belong with those for whom Christ died that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people.

—O.B.

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**"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you"**  
—Col. 1:3.

This suggests the question whether the giving of thanks for such a reason belongs to Paul only. Does it not belong to Paul's brethren? —of the nineteenth as well as the first century? If we could have any doubt, it must give way before Paul's command to be followers of him (1 Cor. 11:1)—and to "pray for one another" and "for all saints."

Therefore let us not forget, in the luxury of our private petitions— and public, too, for the matter of that—that it is an acceptable thing with God that we THANK GOD FOR ONE ANOTHER, and pray for one another—yea, even for our enemies, as Jesus commands.

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## Signs of the Times

IF WE SHOULD search for a single word which would adequately describe the present world situation, no better one could be chosen than the word used by the Saviour in Luke 21:25 to describe the state of the world at his coming. For, while outwardly there might appear to be reasons for the greatest feeling of optimism over world relations ever to prevail for many years, actually **utter perplexity exists in every national capital as to how the grandiose schemes and proposals now being advanced are to be accomplished and made operative.**

The situation as it now exists may be described as a condition in which little men are grappling with a problem clear beyond their capacity to deal with, in which all are agreed on the proposition that the establishment of peaceful relations is the only hope of escape from world disaster, and that such a thing should be attainable, yet at the same time they are hopelessly divided as to how these desirable conditions are to be attained.

**Their counsel will fail and all their schemes to establish world peace will come to naught, for all their plans are being laid in total disregard of God's will and purpose.**

Therefore, He Who alone can give "wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding" will turn their wisdom into foolishness and confound all their schemes to do what God alone can do—"MAKE PEACE."

### **Difficulties in the Way of Disarmament**

ON THE ONE thing, above all others, essential to successful disarmament, there is a complete stalemate—the matter of adequate inspection and controls. Every effort which has been made in the past to bring about reduction in armaments has failed, if for no other reason, because of lack of controls and honest compliance with the terms of the disarmament proposals.

Lest history repeat itself on this point, Western diplomats want to make sure, before they enter into any agreement on disarmament, that airtight controls are established. President Eisenhower defines the Western position thus:

"No disarmament proposal can be considered as a practical one unless there is a regulatory kind of action that makes sure everybody knows the agreement is being observed."

It is certain that Russia will never agree to any such controls. On the other hand, it is transparently clear that the Soviets will insist on the dismantling of all military bases (especially those pointed directly at Russia) and general disarmament first; then consider the matter of controls.

Well do the Western diplomats know that, no matter how unacceptable the Soviet proposals are, they dare not turn down the whole matter of disarmament for fear that the rest of the world will interpret it, as Mr. Khrushchev will most certainly claim, as evidence that the Western nations are opposed to disarmament on any terms.

Mr. Khrushchev reveals the suspicion and distrust that exists in the minds of both Eastern and Western leaders when he says:

"We have been against the organs of control becoming in effect organs for collecting **intelligence information.**"

The wide difference in the Western and Eastern proposals on the matter of controls is that the West insists on agreement on an adequate system of inspection and controls first, then disarmament, while the Soviets want disarmament first, then consider the matter of controls.

Either plan might be acceptable to both parties except for the greatest obstacle of all in the way of arms control—the complete lack of confidence by either group in the other's sincere and honest compliance with any agreement to disarm.

It is obvious that any disarmament plan which does not have indelibly written into it an airtight provision for world-wide and constant inspection and control of all manufacture and supply of military equipment of every kind, would be worthless. It follows as a matter of course that adequate machinery would have to be set up with authority and power to rigidly and impartially enforce the disarmament agreement.

For one to believe that any such plan could be agreed upon and successfully manipulated, he would not only have to be a confirmed optimist and illusionist; he would have to utterly disregard all history relating to such things and assume that human nature had undergone a sudden and complete change for the better.

The supreme folly of any attempt to bring about world disarmament is revealed by one of the best-known facts of history. It is, that in every age would-be dictators and international outlaws have upset all the utopian schemes to bring about disarmament and peace.

We only need to go back less than half a century to see this unmistakable factor exhibited in Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese war lords, who made null and void all the plans for international peace which had been so carefully laid down by "peace-loving" peoples.

Seeing that this is so, and human nature being what it is—evil and unpredictable—for peaceful nations to disarm is like the law-abiding citizens of a community making an agreement with the criminal elements of the community to disarm their police force provided the criminals will agree to cease their unlawful activities.

### **All Eyes on Summit Meeting**

WHILE IT IS generally agreed that nothing can be accomplished in the haphazard exchange of notes, visits and opinions which so far have been the only contributions to the disarmament movement, considerable confidence has been expressed in a meeting of heads of state, though in some quarters a summit meeting is looked upon as a last resort, rather than a certain method of attaining disarmament and ending the cold war.

The attitude of the different nations involved toward a summit meeting may be summed up as follows:

WASHINGTON, while sceptical of accomplishing any large results, has hopes that it may serve as a first step toward useful negotiations on disarmament and other East-West issues.

LONDON, a little more optimistic than the U. S., hopes for a settlement of the Berlin issue and that one summit meeting may lead to a continuance of peaceful negotiations, which may eventually accomplish the desired end.

In PARIS, the French are opposed to any immediate summit meeting. They fear Russian duplicity, and that any hasty action might result in dangerous concessions.

On the other hand, the SOVIETS are enthusiastic over a summit meeting, which in itself arouses fear that they feel confident that they will be able to accomplish many things favourable to Russia, and lay the groundwork for further strengthening of the Communist position in the world.

Everything considered, it appears most unlikely that any agreement on disarmament or related issues can be accomplished at a single summit meeting, if ever. The matter of arms reduction has been a continuous topic of debate between the East and West and within the United Nations Organization for some 14 years, with each and every worthwhile proposal being turned down by Russia on the grounds that every proposal was unfavourable to Russia.

It is almost certain that Russia will never agree to any disarmament proposal unless it weighs heavily in favor of the Soviets, and we may say that, to a certain extent, it will prove to be the same with all nations.

In relation to the Signs of the Times, while we have not a doubt that the final result of any disarmament program will be complete failure, we watch with deep interest the effect the movement may have on the world at large. Will it bring about conditions which will precipitate the final conflict between the nations, or, is the "Peace and safety cry" yet to be raised on the basis of what might **appear** to be coming world peace?

## **Differences and Tensions Unabated**

THE EASING OF the propaganda battle between the Soviets and the U. S. has not otherwise changed the world picture. In the UN General Assembly the same sharp clashes between East and West delegates emphasize the fact that Khrushchev's peace proposals have brought no change in the Kremlin's attitude toward the many problems which must be resolved before even a beginning can be made in any plan to bring about disarmament and world peace.

If the Soviet Union and the U. S. representatives had any idea of avoiding the recriminations which usually mark the introduction of touchy questions, their hopes were shattered by the mere mention of the Tibet-Laos-India complaints against Communist China.

It became evident immediately that China has no intention of changing her aggressive policies, and that Russia is making no attempt to stop her. There is not the slightest evidence that Russia has any intention of making any change in her policy of supporting any and every aggressive act on the part of any nation which is in or might be brought into the Communist bloc of nations.

Neither is there any reason to believe that East-West policies relating to the Far East or Mideast areas will undergo any change as a result of the peace propaganda and summit negotiations.

It is significant that, although any agreement on disarmament would require immediate curtailment of war preparation, there is no evidence that either East or West is making any provision whatsoever for such reduction.

The Washington Administration is now busily engaged in preparing the U. S. arms budget for 1961, which provides for an expenditure of not less than \$41 billion, slightly more than in recent years.

At the same time Mr. Khrushchev, in a recent address, declared that their "present stockpile of nuclear missiles is sufficient to wipe all Russia's enemies from the face of the earth."

## **Mideast Tensions Remain**

PRESIDENT NASSER shows concern over conditions in Syria, having recently appointed the commander-in-chief of Egypt's armed forces to assume direct responsibility for all "political, economic and military activities" in Syria.

Internal affairs in Syria have not been running in accord with Nasser policies. There is strong evidence that anti-Nasser sentiment is growing among political, business and agricultural groups who oppose the Nasser policies.

However, external factors appear to also have much to do with the Egyptian dictator's concern about Syria. The weak Iraqi government, in danger of being overthrown by the Communist party, poses a threat to Syria's south and east borders, while a hostile Israel on the southwest is very much inclined to rouse the fears of the modern Pharaoh that his hold in Syria is none too secure.

And well does he know that his dubious "friend" Khrushchev would like nothing better than to see him expelled from Syria and a fully pro-Communist government installed in Damascus.

As the nations flounder in a sea of uncertainty and perplexity, let us be thankful that we can know the outcome of it all by a close adherence to the word of Him Who has "declared the end from the beginning."  
—O.B.

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## Mercy to Them That Fear Him

*For evil-doers fret thou not thyself unquietly,  
Nor do thou envy hear to those that work iniquity.*

OUR HYMN 6, of which the above is the first verse, is taken from Psalm 37, the first two verses of which read—

"Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the herb."

There is an *important principle involved in these words* that we must understand and apply to ourselves before we can adopt the right attitude toward God, and toward the things around us in this life.

We look at the people out there in the modern world. On the surface they **seem** to be getting everything out of life, while we get nothing. With them life seems to be one joyous round of pleasure and entertainment in which there is a care-free abandon to the desires, emotions and lusts of human nature, and the pride of life is exalted to the utmost.

While there is in certain portions of society an air of respectability, a show of piety and grace, that takes on the appearance of reality and stability of purpose; yet as we consider these things in the light of the 40 verses of this 37th Psalm, we see that it is *only a passing show*—a parade that will soon pass out of view to be seen no more.

We can only draw away from this picture with disgust and assume our proper place as the servants of God, with *no portion in this life*, and no desires and ambitions except that which God holds forth to us in His Word—we can only do this in proportion as we are able to evaluate our position against that of the world around us. David says—

"They shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb."

The world that we see out there today with all its glitter and apparent finery, the joy that seems to be theirs as they revel in pleasure and wantonness, is soon to be swept away like the chaff of the summer threshingfloor, and no place will be found for them.

We want something PERMANENT—something that we can lay hold on with confidence and make us feel that we are pursuing a course of life that has *meaning and purpose*.

"Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it."

Those who wait upon the Lord now, and delight themselves in His way, are moving firmly in a course of action that cannot be shaken; for they have been drawn into those immutable things, like the stars, that will go on forever through the cycles of eternity.

But there is not only hope in their end in the case of God's people; they are *even now* the objects of His care—

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him."

There is a feeling of comfort and assurance in knowing that the Great God of heaven is concerned about us and our welfare, and that we are included in that predetermined purpose, the out-working of which no nation or people on earth can change or hinder.

But we must bear this in mind as we read the comforting words of this Psalm and endeavour to appropriate them to ourselves: *are we the people to whom the words apply?*

It is the MEEK that will inherit the earth.  
It is the GOOD man whose steps are ordered of the Lord.  
It is a little that a RIGHTEOUS man has that is better than all the riches of the wicked.  
It is he that is MERCIFUL AND LENIENT whose seed is blessed.  
It is the PERFECT man and the UPRIGHT, whose end is peace.

There are many promises here, of divine help in all our needs, of strength and guidance in all our ways, but God dispenses His blessings *only to those whom He loves*. If at times we feel that what is written here does not have practical application in our own lives in the Truth, and that the words are not to be understood in their literal meaning, we accuse God falsely.

"Verily thou shalt be fed" are words that will never fail, if they are applied as the Psalmist uses them here—to those who trust in the Lord and do good. Jesus said—

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things SHALL be added unto you."

It is not God Who fails to keep His word; for He has exalted it above all His Name. The failure is on our part.

*Do we find anywhere in the Bible a promise of God to any who serve Him part-time, or with less than all of their heart and soul?*

Is our work in life devoted supremely to expanding and developing the light of God's Truth in ourselves and in others? If so, God will never fail us. —E.W.B.

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## **Ecclesial News**

### **CLAREMONT, California—141 Princeton**

Our numbers have been increased to 4 by the addition of bro. Ellis Higham from Detroit, who has obtained work in Los Angeles. Please note our new address (above).

We were visited last June by sisters Icle Osborne and Ruth Hoage of Denver, and only recently by sis. Kate Eastman of Texas. We would welcome any other visitors of like precious faith, and better still that others might locate here and join us permanently. —Bro. Oscar Beauchamp

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### **MONTREAL, P.Q. —Hobby Room, Central YMCA, 1441 Drummond— Memorial Service 11 a.m.**

Greetings of love to the Brotherhood.

Please note our change of address, as shown above. We are very few and we miss our late bro. Baines very much, but we continue to hold our meetings regularly. Visitors are always very, very welcome, and a source of comfort and encouragement. —bro. E. Kercher

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### **WORCESTER, Mass.—IOGT Hall, 1 Ekman St.—Sunday School 10 a.m.; Memorial 11; Lecture 7 p.m. on 2nd & 4th Sundays in month; Bible Class twice a month on Wednesday evening.**

We held our annual Ecclesial Outing at the home of bro. & sis. Davey in Northboro on June 14, and our annual Sunday School Outing on Aug. 9 at the farm of bro. & sis. Warren Rankin in

Charlton. We had the pleasure of having a good number of our brethren and sisters from Boston on both occasions.

At the latter Outing we were very happy to have with us bro. Gibson from Toronto, who had just returned from the Gathering at Hye, Texas. He gave us a very interesting talk on the procedure of the Texas Gathering, speaking especially of the Sunday School and of the interest taken in the Truth's activities by many of the young.

After the meeting we enjoyed the association of one another until the time to depart to our several homes, feeling that we had been very much benefited by our assembling together.

We have rented a new hall, as will be seen by the address at the head of our ecclesial news. It is a very nice hall, and we are well pleased.

Quite a number of our brethren and sisters attended the Fraternal Gathering at Toronto on Oct. 3 & 4. It was a grand affair, and a very happy time was enjoyed by all. The addresses, exhortation and lecture were most beneficial, giving us an abundant supply of that spiritual food from our heavenly Father's storehouse, the Bible, the Word of God, delivered by His humble servants—the food that we are so much in need of in these latter days of the Gentile times. The spirit of the Gathering was wonderful.

The Signs of the Times are indicative of the soon return of our Lord and Saviour to take unto himself his great power and reign, when he shall put down all authority, and rule the nations of the earth in righteousness. It is our prayer that all of like precious Faith—when the time comes to stand before our righteous Judge to give an account of our stewardship—that our walk and conduct will have been such that will meet with his approval, and we shall hear those welcome words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter into the joy of thy Lord."

We extend warm ecclesial greetings to the Household. —bro. R. A. Waid

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