

# OUR HOPE

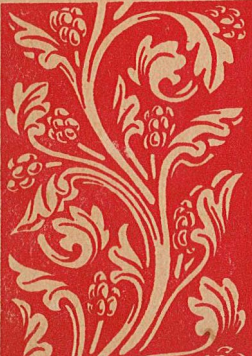
*A testimony for our Lord  
Jesus Christ*



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**DECEMBER**  
1948



**Arno C. Gaebelien**

Editor and Publisher, 1894-1945

**Frank E. Gaebelien**

Publisher

**E. Schuyler English**

Editor

# AUTUMN BOOK OFFERS

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Following our custom of many years, once again we offer special autumn book bargains to our reader-family.

The following discounts, on purchases made directly through us by subscribers to *OUR HOPE*, will be in effect for the next three months: 5% discount on purchases amounting to \$5.00 or more; and 10% discount on purchases of \$20.00 and upward. These discounts apply to titles mentioned on this page, and on the back cover, only.

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FRANK E. GAEBELEIN  
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EDITOR

## Editorials and Notes

### MEMORIAL

### EDITORIAL:

### Why Sleep Ye?

On the Mount of Transfiguration, the three disciples slept while our Lord was praying. It was not until their eyes were opened that "they saw His glory" (Luke 9:32). And when the Lord Jesus Christ took them later into the Garden of Gethsemane, they slept also. And He said to them: "Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Luke 22:46). Sorrow filled their hearts; yet while the Lord passed through deepest sorrow and agony, they fell asleep. He had urged them to pray. He Himself prayed so earnestly, with such passion, that His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood. And still they slept! The Lord Jesus had no sympathy, it appears, even from His dearest disciples.

Well may we look upon that scene now. To know what the holy soul of our blessed Lord passed through in the garden is impossible. The saintly Richard Baxter said: "This agony was not from the fear of death, but from the deep sense of God's wrath against sin; which He as our sacrifice was to bear; in greater pain than mere dying, which His servants often bear with peace."

We bow in worship and adore Him who took our load upon Himself, who suffered thus in our stead when, on the Cross, He bore our sins in His own body. Such love, passing knowledge, ought daily to be before our hearts. How tragic it is to know that He, who passed through such suffering and agony for us, should be dishonored and rejected by men! Yet thus it was, and thus it is today. The dishonor done to

of the things that the world calls dear! Yet the demand of the Cross of Christ is that we shall be separate from this present evil age, with all its empty pleasures, enticing sins, selfish ambitions, and flattering honors. "Love not the world," said the Apostle John, "neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him" (1 John 2:15). This is strong and unmistakable language. But it is truth, founded upon revelation and the instruction of the Son of God, who declared concerning His own: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16).

"Know ye not," asks James, "that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Yet thousands upon thousands of those who profess to believe in Christ as their personal Saviour live as if these words were never written, this truth never revealed. Whatever else may be said about such as walk in such a way, it is undeniably evident that their Christian experience lacks reality. They must know very little of real communion with God. They must be devoid of power to serve Him. Out of them, surely, no streams of living water flow. At best their walk is a stumbling process, bound, as they are, by unholy alliances and in unequal yoke with unbelief. The Christian who lives in such a way is no better, and perhaps far worse, than the Israelite who bowed down to the golden calf. Yet alas! thousands of those who name the Name of Christ are running after the things that are doomed to perdition, made brilliantly attractive, for the time being, by the god of this age, Satan.

The waters of broken cisterns must surely fail and mock us. Only in Christ is satisfaction, fulness, and joy. In the world there is nothing to glory in, but in the Cross of Christ is glory forever more. So may we know by experience how dead the world is to us, and may we be dead to the world also. God forbid that we should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.



**Television  
Is Here**

In thousands of homes today people are looking into television screens, watching news telecasts or entertainment of one kind or another. For television is no

longer a dream or an experiment; it is reality. Its manufacture, promotion, and operation constitute big business, and while it is still somewhat of a novelty, it will not be long before television is as common and as much a part of every day living as electric appliances, the automobile, the airplane, and radio have become.

It is quite obvious that television, or a discovery of a somewhat similar nature, may have a part to play in fulfilling Bible prophecy. Not many years ago the scoffer or incredulous would ask: "How is it possible that the dead bodies of the two witnesses of Revelation 11 will be seen, lying in the streets of Jerusalem, by people all over the world?" (vss. 8-10). Television has rendered the problem elementary.

One cannot help but wonder what effect television will have upon the mentality and morals of growing children, and of adults also. The radio has, to a great extent, deprived the last two generations of quiet meditation and self-containment. Many million homes know no surcease from the sound of music, real and so-called, plays and playets, slapstick comedians, quiz and knowledge (?) contests, athletic events, and so forth. We have visited in not a few Christian homes where the radio is turned on at dawn and is not turned off till the lights are dimmed at midnight. Television will, in all likelihood, be an even greater time-waster. It will certainly discourage conversation and quiet reflection.

This is not a blanket condemnation of either the radio or television. Great good, profitable relaxation, and intellectual nourishment can be had from both. The television can be a means of forceful presentation of the Gospel of Christ. It can bring, as does the radio, sublime music and needful relaxation. It can be an instrument of educational value. But it can also be the agent of worldly and unholy pastime.

Yes, television is here. We must recognize that fact. With it there is available to those at the fireside the exact unspiritual things that are now offered in night-clubs and theaters. The same actors and entertainments that are shunned by spiritually minded people, in public gathering places, may now visit you in your living room. What is the Christian to do about this? How are we to handle the problem with our children?

The matter is one for every Christian household to consider seriously and prayerfully. There is no doubt that television can be used wisely and well. This can only be, however, as we guard the programs that come before us so that nothing that dishonors God or feeds the old man, but only that which is spiritually profitable and for the benefit and strengthening of the new man, will be shown on our television sets. May the Lord keep us true to Himself above all else.



**They  
Themselves Are  
Living Proof** Destructive criticism, which has its hands tight upon the throat of a large portion of Christendom, strikes out from the Bible all that is supernatural. Treating the inspired writings as it would treat Herodotus or the ancient Sibylline oracles, this so-called "scientific criticism" boldly proclaims, by its attitude: "Wisdom lies with us. Whatever is unreasonable to the scientific mind is untrue. We shall decide what can be believed, and what cannot be believed in the Scriptures." Thus, although Destructive Criticism professes to be Christian, it links itself with the enemies of the Cross of Christ and assaults the Word of God in fellowship with Voltaire, Tom Paine, and Ingersoll, outspoken atheists and agnostics.

Among the subjects that receive Destructive Criticism's bitterest attacks is that of Bible prophecy. Says this school of thought: "Elaborate calculations, purporting to be based on the prophecies of the Bible, are based on the supposition that the Book of Daniel was written by Daniel, to the quiet ignoring of the fact that the almost unanimous verdict of modern criticism places the date 150 years later, that is, in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes." That statement, however, is absolutely untruthful. Infidel higher critics, Destructive Criticism, place the date of Daniel a century and a half after its writing. But all scholarship does not reside in the minds of infidels, and conservative Higher Criticism attributes the Book of Daniel to Daniel. After all, and of primary importance, did not our Lord, the Son of God, know as much as the destructive critics? Was He unaware of who wrote the books of the Old Testament? And He said: "When ye

therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, stand in the Holy Place (whoso readeth, let him understand)" (Matt. 24:15).

Notwithstanding Destructive Criticism's opposition to prophecy, it shows very little scholarship indeed, and only ignorance, unless it will admit that there are many Bible prophecies that have been fulfilled. For example, to mention only one of these, can these scientific critics deny that our Lord's prediction, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24), is not now, after the utterance of the prophecy, historic fact?

The destructive critics are themselves living proof of the accuracy of Bible prophecy and the certainty of its fulfilment. In the First Century of the Christian era, in about A.D. 66, the Apostle Peter wrote: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers . . ." (2 Peter 3:3); and at about the same time, perhaps a year later, the Apostle Paul predicted, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). Long before Destructive Criticism became so prominent in Christendom, the Word of God prophesied its attitude and its increase.

As for us, we abide in the counsel of the Apostle Paul, who declared: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them"—the Spirit of God (2 Tim. 4:14).



**Think on  
These Things**

In a hotel lobby recently we overheard a gentleman saying to a friend: "I'm going to my room to get a crying towel, and then I'll buy the morning newspaper."

Many a truth is uttered in jest, and this man was not so far wrong in the general sentiment expressed by his facetious remark. It is an unusual day when the news is not extremely disheartening. Headlines announce in bold letters threats to peace, rumors of war, robbery, murder, adultery, incest, riots, strikes, accidents and disorder. He who is occupied with world affairs, social activities, law, business, or government must be in a state of constant depression. There is

very little that goes on in the world today that can be said to be pure, or lovely, or just, or of good report. Yet it is of these things that the Christian is to think. Writing to the church at Philippi, the Apostle Paul says: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

There is only one way to contemplate matters honest, just, pure, etc. It is to occupy oneself, not with the world or what goes on in the world, but to consider spiritual things, things that pertain to Him who is the epitome of honor, justice, purity, and loveliness—the Lord Jesus Christ. A sure cure for the "blues" is to look to Him, "the Author and Perfecter of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). He has redeemed us by His precious blood from sin and shame, from the world and its god, unto everlasting blessedness with God. He is on the throne, and while "now we see not yet all things put under Him," the eyes of faith "see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2:8, 9). In Him all the fulness of the Godhead is pleased to dwell (Col. 1:19), "and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col. 1:17). All power is His, and in the Father's own time the Son will come again and set right that which is so awry on this earth, and will reign in righteousness and peace. In that day honor, and justice, and purity, and loveliness, and things of good report will be normal, customary, and according to rule. Until then, let us think on these things as we contemplate the Author of them. Let us abide in Him.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
 Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
 Change and decay in all around I see:  
 O Thou who changest not, abide with me.



**Enthusiasm** We have visitors in our home as we write these editorials, and this afternoon, while we have been typing, in another corner of the house they have been listening to the broadcast of foot-



ball games. From time to time we catch the sound of wild cheering as some young man eludes eleven other young men and moves a pigskin ball two or three yards forward, or as another warrior of the gridiron prevents an opponent from advancing. At Ithaca, 35,000 or more are shouting with all their might as Army plays Cornell. At Philadelphia, a throng of 75,000 screaming men and women watch the Penn-Navy game. In Minneapolis, 65,000 people cheer and groan according to what the twenty-two young men do with the ball, as Michigan meets Minnesota. Thus it is all over America. Millions of people are letting their feelings possess them and expressing their emotions for all to see, without restraint or shame.

And yet they call us fanatics when we, who love the Lord, give expression to an "Amen," or a "Praise the Lord," when we are moved to our very souls by the apprehension of some blessed spiritual truth or the joyful realization of the limitless goodness of God to us!



**Toward  
Year's End**

The tide of 1948 has nearly run out, and still that for which the Church waits expectantly has not come to pass—the coming of the Lord for His own. But the blessed hope continues to burn with bright flame in our hearts, for it might be any day, any hour, any instant. So keep looking up! It may be today, tonight! Yes, it still may be during this year that the glad rapture shout will be heard. But if not this year, the hope will still be ours at year's end, and into 1949.

Christian, look up! When dawns that glorious morrow,  
Thy every burden thou wilt soon forget;  
Now with Christ's Gospel comfort those in sorrow;  
So many eyes today with tears are wet!  
The way is dark, but Christ, the Light Supernal  
Will bide with thee till thy last pilgrim mile:  
Soon thou wilt sup with Him, the King Eternal!  
Oh, blessed hope! Christian, look up and smile!

—Anna Hoppe



*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding."*

**December  
Thirty-First**

Following our usual custom, we plan to spend the final day of the year in an intercessory ministry. It will be our privilege to receive your prayer requests and to bear you up before the Throne of Grace, not only on December 31st, but from time to time throughout the year, unless and until our Lord comes. Send your requests to the Editor, please, addressing him c/o *Our Hope*, P. O. Box No. 146, Waretown, N. J.



**A Reminder**

At this season of the year, when we like to remember our friends with greetings and gifts, may we remind you that through us you can order gifts of permanent spiritual value? A subscription to *Our Hope* will be a twelve-time token of your interest in the recipient. An attractive card, *when requested*, will carry the information that you are the bestower of it.

On our cover pages you will find listed titles of books that will be of lasting value to some of your friends.

And what better gift could you make to young people, or to others not fully instructed in the Word of God, than *The Pilgrim Bible* that is advertised on the third cover?

Please send your orders promptly so as to insure their early delivery. Thank you.



**Missionary Funds**

Thank you very much for your donations to the *Our Hope Missionary Funds* during the past month. The many letters from fields abroad that tell us of the help that the magazine has been, or of the benefit that has been received from some expository volume sent through your generosity, would warm your hearts, if you could read them. Renewals will be coming due soon. Continue to share in this helpful ministry, please, and to pray for the Lord's ambassadors to foreign lands.

Donations received in September are gratefully acknowledged below.

*Our Hope Missionary Subscription Fund*, September, 1948: Nos. 48-133M, \$3; 48-134M, \$10; 48-135M, \$2.50; 48-136M, \$8; 48-137M, \$2.50; 48-138M, \$50; 48-139M, \$2.50; 48-140M, \$2.50; 48-141M, \$10; 48-142M, \$7.50; 48-143M, \$2; 48-144M, \$2.50; 48-145M, \$5; 48-146M, \$2.50; 48-147M, \$1; 48-148M, \$1; 48-149M, \$15.50. Total, \$128.00.

*Our Hope Missionary Book Fund*, September, 1948: 48-37B, \$1; 48-32B, \$2; 48-39B, \$12; 48-40B, \$10; 48-41B, \$9. Total, \$34.00.

**SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**  
(For Your Information and Prayers)

**Dr. Herbert Lockyer:**

Dec. 1-5—**Vancouver, B. C.:** Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Dec. 6-12—**Seattle, Wash.:** Christian Business Men's Committee.

## The Virgin Birth\*

BY HOWARD A. KELLY†

The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ is one of the fundamental facts of our Christian faith.

If Christ, the Son of Mary, was not the Son of God also, then He was only a great man, one of the world's great prophets (see Matt. 16:14). This clear recognition that He was the Son of God was the great turning point in His relations with His disciples, the rock on which His Church is built (Matt. 16:16-18). Had they not recognized this, no further progress could have been made in teaching them.

All of the Old Testament, its individual histories, its national history, the Psalms and prophets, from Eve down to Malachi, is instinct with the expectation of the coming of a wondrous mysterious person, a prophet like unto Moses, but yet a greater, a king like David, and yet greater, for He was to be David's Lord. Him the nation was to hear and to obey (Deut. 18:18). So exalted was to be His person that His name would be Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). The Psalms and Isaiah especially are so vibrant in every part, with the expectation of Him, that the citation of individual texts almost weakens the evidence.

There He stands on the threshold of History in the Old Testament, revealed and yet concealed. How the eyes of the sin-smitten, weary, expectant nation strain to discern and to greet Him! (1 Peter 1:10, 11). Jesus Christ perfectly fulfills in the New Testament all these prophecies, just as a master key fits the locks and opens the doors, and yet He is wonderfully different from our expectations as He stands revealed to us in the Gospels, by the Spirit of God.

There was a danger in the Infinite Holy God thus revealing Himself in a world of sin, and continuing to live day by day in intimate contact with sinners. There was a danger,

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\*A reprint article, from our issue of December, 1915.

†Howard H. Kelly, M.D., was one of the four founders of John Hopkins Medical School, Baltimore, Md., and among the greatest surgeons of this century.

lest in the coarse contacts with the world, and perchance in the lack of a perfect success of His mission among a rebellious people, something might forever be lost in the profound respect and honor due His Person.

Our Lord Christ challenges this danger as He reveals Himself undefiled by Satan or by Satan's followers. And even now as the centuries flow on there is no making common of His Sacred Person, for only true Christians have ever known Him. The very creed of the Christian faith is not understood by the unbelieving world, and to those who reject Him, He is unreal, and His teachings are but dogmas, containing, like other religions, only a philosophy of life.

All four Gospels unite in asserting that Jesus was the Son of God in a way of which this could never have been said of any mere man. Mark tells us, in the very first verse, that He is the Son of God, and goes on to reveal Him in the second chapter as God forgiving sins. John tells us, in the first chapter, that He is both Son of God and Son of Man, that He was ever with God, and was revealed in time to us by becoming incarnate (compare chapter 1:vss. 1, 14, 18).

His title, the Son of God, is a statement of His divine birth, which could not be made more definite. In this very matter lay the issue between Him and the Jews in the fifth chapter of John, often called the divinity chapter (5:18). Again in the sixth, it is brought up: "And they said, Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith, I came down from Heaven?" (6:42).

Matthew is most explicit in his first chapter, and quotes Isaiah, and tells us that the word *Almah* in the Hebrew of Isaiah (7:14) in his day meant a virgin, and that Jesus was conceived by the virgin Mary of the Holy Spirit.

I read Luke's account with particular pleasure, perhaps because he was a physician, as well as because of the fact that his trained scientific mind shines out all through his writings, both in the Gospels and in the Acts. Luke was a greater scientist, I opine, than many of our own day, for he was broad-minded enough to examine into all the alleged circumstances, and then if he found them true, to admit the fact however much it might upset his preconceived notions.

Except in the first verse of the First Epistle of John, I do not suppose our languages contain a more positive assertion of established facts, than we find in the first four verses of Luke's Gospel. Then at once, true scientist that he is, Luke does not hesitate to declare the circumstances of the angel visits to Zachariah and to Mary, and the miraculous events which followed. Refer to this introduction and mark every word which shows Luke to be a competent witness.

The Virgin Birth upsets, as the coming of God to live on this earth ought to upset, all our preconceived notions. In this age of discovery it is folly to cry "impossible," because the thing proclaimed is new and outside of our own limited experience. Only a few years ago radium was "utterly impossible," so declared by distinguished scientists, and yet the explanation—that the phenomena of radium are due to the breaking up and setting loose of forces locked up in the "indivisible" atoms, "those foundation stones of the universe, unbroken and unworn" (Clerk Maxwell), is now universally accepted, and "the indivisible atom" is not only divided, but found to be made up of many component parts.

The Virgin Birth is not, as some would have it, a mere question as to whether I, as a scientific man, may accept such a doctrine, because no similar phenomenon has come within the experience of the human race in any authenticated instance. Indeed, if in rare occasional instances a virgin birth could be shown to have occurred, then the Scripture claim as to Christ's divine descent would at once lose all value. Back of this much discussed subject, inseparably connected with it, lies the fundamental question whether God having made man, and seeing another way of saving him, could become his Redeemer by taking man's nature upon Himself, in order as the Champion and new Head of our race to meet and overcome man's great adversary. It is in brief, after all, the question whether God is in the matter at all or not. Indifference to this great truth explains the present deadness of the Christian world and the lack of eagerness to propagate the Gospel on all sides.

He who denies the Virgin Birth of our Lord offhand

commits the gross logical error of begging the question, for he assumes at the outset as impossible that which is to be proved.

The apostles apparently found their overwhelming proof, that Christ was God, before they knew the circumstances of His birth in detail. Such proof comes to us from the consistency of the narrative of Christ's life and works, and death and resurrection, and the results which constantly flow from these great historic facts.

It is impossible for Christ to be the Son of God in any real sense, such as He claimed for Himself, unless He was born of the virgin Mary.

If Jesus Christ was God Incarnate, then we cannot doubt that He broke the power of the grave, and rose from the dead for our justification. He met the arch enemy of our race and utterly routed him; and now to all the lost sons of Adam's race who believe on Him and will commit their lives to Him, He offers free pardon and grace, victory over sin and death, and a union with Himself through all the ages to come.

If I believe that Christ was the son of Joseph, then He cannot be to me the Lord Christ; and though He may be the most wonderful teacher the world has ever seen, I am yet in my sins, and I am yet struggling with the burning question: "How is it possible for me, a sinner, ever to appear before an infinitely Holy God and not be utterly consumed?"

There is an infinite difference between having Christ bear my sins and bear them away into the unknown, and having them ever hang as a burden about my own neck.

Every time I call Him Lord, I mean by that God, the Son of God, and I proclaim His Virgin Birth.

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#### ALL NEED THE SPRINKLED BLOOD

Among the multitude of our thoughts within us . . . our work, past and future, is, most likely, very prominent. Perhaps the very first thing all the true workers will be telling the patient Master about their work is what one of the most Christ-like workers I ever heard of said to me the other day: "It all wants forgiving"; for conscience responds to the truth of His declaration: "Neither shall they cover themselves with their own works." One flash of the Spirit's light is enough to show us how true that is, and how really and truly we have been unprofitable servants. Yes, forgiveness for all our sins comes first, failures and successes alike all needing the sprinkled blood.

—F. R. H.

# Studies in the Epistle to the Hebrews

BY E. SCHUYLER ENGLISH

## Chapter XI, Verses 1-3

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

This great chapter, sometimes referred to as "the honor roll of the Old Testament saints," or "the Westminster Abbey of the Bible," is known also as "the faith chapter." It properly opens with a definition of the word "faith," its only definition in the Bible, by the way. Elsewhere are written illustrations and applications of faith, and in still other places we are told, for example, how faith comes, that is, by hearing the Word, and what faith does. Here we are told what faith is.

To understand the chapter aright, however, our thoughts must go back to chapter 10. You will recall that a new division of the epistle begins in verse 19. Having been instructed up to that point in the perfections of the Son of God, and the efficacy, completeness, and eternal value of His sacrifice of Himself for sin, the reader is urged to draw near to God, by virtue of his right, through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, to enter boldly into the Holiest. This he is to do with full assurance of faith and without wavering. This introduces what we may term the practical portion of the epistle.

The particular allusion to the faith that is treated in chapter 11 is initiated in 10:38, where Habakkuk's report of the Word of the Lord is quoted: "The just shall live by faith." It is important, therefore, that the readers of the Hebrews epistle shall apprehend the meaning of faith. Chapter 11 defines the word, and describes it by means of a roster of men of faith, together with exhibitions of this characteristic on their part.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (vs. 1). This definition of faith

is a perfect explanation of this quality or attribute, since it is the Holy Spirit's definition of the word. Mental application and prayerful deliberation, as well as personal experience, are required, however, if the meaning is to be understood.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for." "Now" is a connective word which takes us back, as has already been suggested, to the introduction of this treatise on faith, as found in 10:38. And this faith is defined, first of all, as "the substance of things hoped for." The Revised Version renders it as "the assurance," and in the margin, as "the giving substance to." "Assurance" is a good word, but we see no objection to "substance." If we were to make any change, we should render the Greek, *hypostasis*, as "foundation," for it means *to place underneath*. Faith, then, is the foundation of things hoped for.

What are "the things hoped for"? They are things which we do not yet have, certainly. One does not hope for what he already possesses. "But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" (Rom. 8:24). The things that we hope for are such as these, are they not: the vindication of Christ and the display of His power; the meeting that we shall have with Him, and the redemption of our bodies; the establishment, on this wicked and sin-cursed earth, of righteousness and peace; and the eternal fellowship with God? These are among the things that are hoped for and that faith assures us will be established. Faith is the foundation, the substantiation, the assurance, the substance of these things. Faith makes them a reality; it reaches forth its hand and grasps them. For faith is trust in God, whose Word has promised, and who cannot fail.

"Now faith is . . . the evidence of things not seen." The definition of faith is expanded by this second clause. Evidence is proof, and the word *elengchos* is translated thus in some versions. Perhaps the most expressive translation would be "conviction," and in this way the verb-form of the same Greek root should be rendered in John 8:46: "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" and in John 16:8: "And when He [the Holy Spirit] is come, He will convict the world of



sin . . . .” Evidence, or proof, that is willing to be put to the test is conviction. Noah gave proof of his faith in building and entering the ark. He had the conviction that what God said was true, although he did not see either storm clouds or rain until the flood came. Faith is the conviction that the things which are not seen are visible. Elisha saw things that were invisible to others; he saw them by faith. Thus he knew that “they that be with us are more than they that be with them” (the Syrians), when Israel and Syria were at war, and he besought the Lord in behalf of his fearful servant, saying: “Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes, that he may see” (2 Kings 6:17). “And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots round about Elisha.”

It is not unreasonable to inquire: “What are these unseen things about which faith has such conviction?” They are present things, surely. That which is hoped for is future; that which is not seen *may* be seen by faith. They are therefore present. For example, it is written of our risen and ascended Lord that He is exalted and that all things are in subjection to Him. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:9). “Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him” (Heb. 2:8). Christ’s exaltation and sovereignty are stated as absolute. Yet the next sentence in Hebrews 2 tells us: “But now we *see not yet* all things put under Him.” No, we do not see it by sight; but we do see it by faith. It is one of the invisible things that is proved through faith.

Neither do we see our spiritual benefits as Christians, although God “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Ephes. 1:3). Nevertheless we see them by faith and appropriate them, if we are wise. The angelic beings are invisible. But they exist and inhabit the heavens above us, “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be the heirs of salvation,” that is, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:14). Faith takes into account the Word of God and is assured “of things not seen.”

Hoped for things, and things that are invisible, are made genuine by faith. Faith is the foundation of these things, and the conviction that they are reality. It is not, however, faith in the abstract that assures God's people that future and unseen things are real, and that brings them before us vividly. It is faith in the Lord, faith in divine testimony, as we shall see ere we complete this chapter. This kind of faith "cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Such faith, substantial and absolute, grasps to its breast the things hoped for and beholds with trusting eyes the things that are as yet unseen. "Faith is the foundation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." By faith, and not by sight, the Christian already enjoys the house that stands eternally in the heavens awaiting the entrance of the bride.

"For by it the elders obtained a good report" (vs. 2). Faulty translation in the Authorized Version gives an erroneous impression. It would appear that, on account of their faith, the elders are well reported of, as a schoolboy brings home a good report when his deportment and scholarship are satisfactory. Now the *faith* of these elders is certainly well reported of in the verses that follow. But they themselves are sometimes recorded as having done evil, as, for example, Abram's misdemeanor in Egypt (Gen. 12:1-20) and David's murder of Uriah and sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11).

It will be profitable to analyze the verse word by word. The word "it" is the Greek *tautee*. *En tautee* means, literally, "in this." But the word *en* signifies also *through* or *by means of*. "Through this," then, is a proper translation, "this" having a more definite connotation than "it." It alludes to the kind of faith that is spoken of in verse 1. "The elders," from the Greek, *hoi presbyteroi*, denotes, we suggest, not old men, or rulers of the Sanhedrin, or officers in a local assembly of believers, but the ancients, or forefathers, men such as "the fathers" of 1:1. It is thus employed in Matthew 15:2: "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" These elders are enumerated in the balance of the chapter before us. They are synonymous with the cloud of witnesses of 12:1. "Obtained a good report" is the trans-

lation of one Greek verb, *emartyreetheesan*. It sometimes denotes *to be approved* or *praised*, but not always, and throughout this epistle it is used in the sense of *bearing witness to*, the thought of *good* not being implied of necessity. Here it has one of two meanings, both of which have been proposed by different expositors, some favoring one, and some the other. It may suggest that through faith men of old were *the recipients* of God's witness to their own hearts, an inner conviction that His Word and promises were true; or it may signify that by faith the ancients *themselves bore witness* to God before their fellow-men. While Hebrews 12:1 seems to corroborate the latter interpretation, we are inclined toward the former because of usage. In chapter 7:8 we read, concerning Melchisedec the type, and of the anti-type, Christ: "of whom it is witnessed to that he liveth"; and in 10:15: "Whereof the Holy Ghost is witness to us." It is the divine Person who is said to bear witness *to* others (not *about* them, observe) thus far in the epistle, and it appears to us that this is the sense here. But either view is acceptable, surely, and we shall treat the verse both ways in the few sentences that follow.

"For by such faith as this the forefathers received witness." It was not by their own merits that they believed the witness that God gave to them, or testified of Him to others. It was through faith, faith that was the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. Thus Rahab, a harlot, was assured of the promises and demonstrated her conviction—not by her character or reputation, but through faith. It is by such faith that we today may grasp the spiritual blessings that are ours in Christ, for God has testified of them in His Word, and that we may also give living and powerful testimony to the glory of His Name. Faith, then, is the key to blessing and fruitfulness. Without it, it is impossible to please God.

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (vs. 3). The wisest men of earth have not been able to discover of themselves what faith understands. Take the creation of the world, for instance; he who leaves God out of the creation

simply cannot understand, whatever scientific appliances he has employed, how the world came to be. For God created it by His Word. He was there, and man was not there. And through faith we can understand.

By virtue of God's handiwork, the eternal power of the Godhead can be seen, but faith must be exercised, or the seeing will not be believing. Thus the Apostle Paul writes: "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:20, 21). In such a way science, apart from the revelation of God, is vain in its imagination. Yet through faith we who are Christians, even should our mentality be below average and our educational advantages none, can know more about the creation than the wisest of men who lacks faith. By it we *understand*, and God's creation account suffices us. We know it is truth.

Now the worlds were framed by the Word of God. He spoke, and it was done. It was God the Son, the living Word, who made all things, and without Him nothing was made that was made, in Heaven and on earth, visible or invisible, "all things were created by Him, and for Him" (John 1:1, 3; Col. 1:16). And He made the heavens and the earth out of nothing. He *created* them. The verb is *bara* (Heb. word used in Gen. 1:1) does not mean, literally, *to create out of nothing*; yet in the Bible it is *always* used in connection with a creative act of the Almighty, by whom "all things" were made. If He made "all things," then whatever materials may have been employed to create the worlds must also have been made by Him. Therefore, He made the worlds *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. Thus "the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

We do not use this statement, however, as the proof-text that the creation of the heavens and the earth was out of nothing, for we believe that we do not fully ascertain the purport of this verse through its translation in the Authorized Version. The word rendered "worlds" is not *kosmos*, or

*oikoumenee*, or *gee*, referring respectively to *the created world*, *the inhabited earth*, and *the earth itself*, that is, *the ground*; but it is *aionas*, a form of *aioon*, and means *the ages*. The verb, "framed," is the Greek, *kateertisthai*, which in varied forms has been translated elsewhere "fitted" (Rom. 9:22), "perfectly joined together" (1 Cor. 1:10), and "prepared" (Heb. 10:5). Neither is "the Word" the usual *ho Logos*, denoting the Second Person of the Godhead, the Son, as in John 1:1, but it is *to hreema*, signifying the spoken word. Finally, there is the verb, *gegonenai*, a form of *ginomai*. Here it is rendered "were made" in the Authorized Version, but a more suitable translation would be the usual one, namely, "happened," or "came to pass."

The verse declares that "through faith we understand that the ages, or dispensations, were fitted together by the expressed Word of God, so that the things which are seen did not come to pass of things which do appear." Of course this is so. Out of the Bible, from this very chapter, we have illustrations of this. Noah believed it. Through faith he was warned of God about things that he had not yet seen, and he prepared the ark and became the heir of righteousness. Moses believed this. He had never seen Messiah, and yet he esteemed the reproach of Him whom he had not seen of greater wealth than all Egypt's treasures.

Circumstances do not fall upon the world by chance. The dictators of the ages, a Nebuchadnezzar, or an Alexander, or a Nero, or a Napoleon, or a Hitler, do not come into being and power without God's foreknowledge and effective sovereignty. The world empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome were fashioned by the Almighty hand. The tremendous power of a modern Russia was made possible by the Word of God. All is fulfilling His purposes. To the natural man events of history and cataclysms of nature are seen merely as circumstances of the times, many of them man-made. But to the eye of faith it is understood that invisible forces are at work, directed by the *fiat* of God, and that the patterns of the ages are in accord with His design. "Then why would not all be peaceful and good?" human reason will ask. It is because God knows the end from the beginning; because He gave to man free will to

obey Him or not to obey Him, and He ordained that whatsoever a man soweth he will reap; and because God is sovereign, that things are as they are. The things which are seen today did not come to pass of things which appear, but on the contrary, all is in God's plan, invisible to the human eye, yet known to God. "Through faith we understand" it, and by faith "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28), and have conviction and are assured that the things not seen and the things hoped for are as real and certain as is God Himself.

God framed the worlds. God fitted the ages together. He foresaw Adam's fall. He planned, before the foundation of the world, the testings that man must undergo. The trial of our first parents, in Innocence; the test of them and their children, under Conscience; and the dispensations of Human Government, Promise, Law, and Grace, following one after another, were designed that way. Each age had, or will have, its divinely appointed beginning, duration and end, and each had or has its purpose. The age of Grace will terminate in God's way and at the exact moment that He has determined. Another age will follow, the age of the Kingdom, when at last the Son of God and Sun of Righteousness will govern on earth in justice, power, and peace. It will not be brought about by the things which are seen. There is nothing visible, it appears today, that *could* terminate in a righteous way, for deterioration is seen on every hand. But it will come to pass out of that which is invisible. Faith believes it and understands it. It is one of the glorious things "hoped for," whose foundation is Christ and His Word.

(To be continued, D. V.)

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*"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end"* (Matt. 28:20).

The Lord is with us in health and strength, with us when we are feeble and weak. He has not left us. He will not forsake us. He passes with us through the valley. Oh, the blessedness of such a position!

—George Mueller.

## The Power of a Sermon

BY LEHMAN STRAUSS\*

### A Study of Acts 2:37-47

Preaching is a great vocation! It is the proclamation of the good news of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. In the mind of Christ it was doubtless the greatest vocation, for He intended that its influence should be felt world-wide. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," He told His disciples (Mark 16:15). All preaching involves at least two necessary elements—a man and a message. And when both the man and the message are God's, there are certain results which follow the sermon.

There is no finer example of the right kind of preaching than the first Pentecostal message. Of course, a pre-requisite to the delivery of any sermon is the right kind of preacher. Though it is His Word, rather than the man who gives it, that God has promised to honor, yet there must be the preacher. The printed page is greatly used of God, but the Gospel proclaimed in writing is not preaching. The author is not always a preacher.

Peter was the privileged servant to deliver the first sermon at Pentecost. The personality of the preacher has very much to do with the power and effectiveness of a sermon, and Peter possessed the kind of personality that God could use in the preaching of His Word. The sermon becomes a very part of the preacher. He lives it. If he is not a man of deep piety and purity who can forcefully express truth through his character and personality, he is not likely to succeed for God. He can be no mere machine expressing truth mechanically. Peter was a real man, a saved man, filled with the Holy Spirit, and the effect of his life and preaching is worthy of note.

When Peter preached his sermon, he displayed a practical working knowledge of the Word of God; the message was biblical (Acts 2:16-21). Next in order, the sermon was

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\*Mr. Strauss, the Pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, Bristol, Pa., is one of the Contributing Editors of *The Pilgrim Bible*. He is in constant demand as an evangelist and Bible teacher.

Christo-centric, setting forth the whole truth concerning Jesus Christ, in orderly sequence (vss. 22-32). This is the kind of preaching that counts. What results might one expect from a sermon such as this, a sermon that is scriptural and Christ-centered, and that is preached with courage and conviction? The first Pentecostal sermon itself should be studied carefully. It is a masterpiece. It might well serve as a pattern for all preaching. But it takes more than the man and the message to produce lasting results. The secret of the results of Peter's sermon was in the unseen Power who took charge. No human personality nor any amount of eloquence can achieve such glorious results apart from the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. What Peter and the disciples saw after he had preached was a demonstration of divine power which actually was the Spirit of God working through them.

#### Conviction

Of the hearers it is written: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts" (vs. 37). Such was the power of the sermon. Every preacher should be aware of the fact that not all of his hearers realize that they are lost. The congregation may possess intellect and intelligence above normal, and yet be indifferent to their sins and their wrong relationship to God. Preaching with conviction is the need of the hour. Not only are men to see the vileness of their sins, but they should be made to feel the force of the exposé. They must be made to recognize the heinousness of sin, "that it might appear sin," and that it "might become exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:13). Wherever real conviction results, it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

When our Lord promised the Holy Spirit, He said: "When He is come, He will reprove [*convict*] the world of sin" (John 16:8). There may be a thousand voices crying out loudly against sin, but no agent apart from the Holy Spirit can produce genuine conviction. This is the Spirit's own work. The unregenerate man, in Satanic blindness, feels that there is some other ground of approach to God, but not until the Holy Spirit brings conviction is the veil lifted and the sinful heart of unbelief exposed. The Gospel demands divine revelation in order to be understood, and the Holy Spirit



is the Agent to unfold the awful curse of sin which separates the sinner from God. When the Spirit enlightens the darkened mind, showing the wrath of God which is poured out upon sin, then does the heart of the sinner long for deliverance. All men have some standard of what ought to be, but the Holy Spirit alone is able to destroy these false conceptions and show the sinner how radically defective his views of right and wrong are. Man, apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit, argues that he is not bad at heart, but when the Spirit is free to work, He brings to bear upon man's conscience how vile a sinner man is. When self-righteousness bows its head in shame and the heart cries out to God for salvation, the Spirit has brought it about, and the work of conviction is done.

But, alas, too often the work of conviction is not the work of the Spirit. It is superficial. The fallow ground of the soul has not been plowed up. We tread too lightly when dealing with the sin question. Because it is not popular, men do not think it proper to speak out about sin and hell. Right here the Spirit of God is limited and the conscience never awakened, for the Spirit can never belittle, hide, or deny sin. This note of conviction is missing from our modern church life. Think me fanatical if you will, but as long as we ignore the secret of our Lord for producing eternal results in the hearts of men, our church life will remain impotent.

Perhaps you ask if the Holy Spirit has not been remiss in His work, since there is such a widespread lack of genuine conviction. I fear that we have overlooked a most important phase of the Spirit's work. Conviction was not to be brought directly to sinners by the Holy Spirit, but rather through those in whom the Spirit had come to abide. When the Lord Jesus gave the promise of the Holy Spirit's coming, the Spirit was not to come directly to sinners, but to the disciples: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, *that He may abide with you forever*" (John 14:16). The Spirit came directly to the disciples; therefore His work of convicting must be accomplished as He is free to work through His own. The preacher cannot convict of sin apart from the Holy Spirit, nor, generally speaking, will the Holy Spirit do it without us. It is futile

to ask God to convict sinners when He already has promised to do this on condition that we, who are the temples of the Holy Spirit, do not hinder Him. You see, then, how that the Spirit convicts sinners through Spirit-filled and Spirit-used lives. We pray God to convict the sinner, but the sinner does not feel that he is a sinner because he sees us, who profess to be Christians, living no differently from himself. How sad, when sinners come to our churches and hear the Gospel, and then turn away in unbelief and rejection because they see us doing the same things they do! Think it not strange when sinners are not convicted in our churches. The Holy Spirit has not failed. We have. Actually our Lord was suggesting that "when He is come [through you], He will reprove the world of sin."

The power of the Pentecostal sermon was not merely in the fact that the sermon was preached, but that it was "preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven" (1 Peter 1:12). The Apostle Paul gave witness to the same glorious truth when he said: "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. 2:4). The preaching that produces conviction is always the result of Spirit-filled lives, both in the pew and the pulpit. It is useless to speak sentimentally about a sin-cursed and perishing world as long as we ourselves attempt to hide our own sins and refuse to turn from the world. When we live lives of defeat instead of victory, we cannot expect that the Holy Spirit will do His work of conviction. The Pentecostal sermon brought conviction because "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4). When will we learn that God is waiting to demonstrate, through the lives of His children, how awful sin is, and how wonderful is His Son our Saviour? Let us cease wasting our effort in the attempt to produce conviction by preaching Christ in our own strength. The Spirit is dependent upon the pure lives of God's children.

#### Conversion

The conviction wrought by the Spirit through the disciples brought from the crowd the question: "Men and brethren, what shall we do" (Acts 2:37)? These Jews had been waiting

for the Messiah to come, and now Peter, by the Holy Spirit, tells them that Messiah has already come. Moreover, Peter informs them that it was He whom the nation had rejected and hanged upon the Cross at Calvary. Now what would they do? Would they be given another chance? Would God send Him again so that the people might have another opportunity to receive Him? In desperation they asked of Peter and the rest: "What shall we do?" This burning question emanated from Spirit-pierced and Spirit-convicted hearts, for men do not ask questions about eternal issues when there is no conviction on the matter.

Peter answered: "Repent!" *Repentance* means, literally, *a change of mind*. These Jews had the wrong conception regarding Jesus Christ. By wicked hands they had taken and crucified and slain Him. He had come to them, but they would not receive Him. They showed their attitude toward Jesus when they rejected Him. Now Peter says: "Change your attitude. Change your mind about Jesus Christ."

True repentance effects not only a change of mind and attitude, but a complete moral reformation which is seen in sorrow for sin and a deep regret that the person repenting has violated the holy laws of God. Real repentance manifests itself in self-aborrence and self-humiliation. This, in turn, causes the sinner to turn away from all his sin and transgression against God. Repentance was the keynote of the preaching of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and the disciples. When this needed note is missing from the sermon, we need not look for men to be saved. The truth that the world must change its attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ must ever be held before the eyes of men. This involves a radical change in the innermost recesses of man's being, and such a work can be accomplished only by the Holy Spirit, for "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). A man, apart from the Holy Spirit, might stir the emotions of another, but only the Spirit of God can reach the human spirit. The sermon of power is the biblical, Christ-centered sermon which exposes sin and calls upon the sinner to repent. It is preached by the man who is filled with and guided by the Spirit. The Thessalonian believers

experienced true repentance, a turning *to* and a turning *from*, for they had "turned *to* God *from* idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9). But their repentance was not the result of the mere preaching of the Word; "for," says Paul, "our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power *and in the Holy Ghost*" (vs. 5). We see here that the results were achieved by the combination of a yielded life preaching the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul's sermons were sermons of power.

The first results of the Pentecostal sermon were outstanding. Luke says that there were added "about three thousand souls" (vs. 41). Conviction was immediately followed by conversion. These results were not produced by the eloquence of Peter, "not by his logical argument, but by his declaration of truth concerning Jesus in the power of the Spirit; and by the Spirit's demonstration of the truth declared, in the mind and heart of those who listened." So men were saved and the Church grew.

We say that it is hard to get men to repent and be converted. But right here is where the Holy Spirit comes to our aid, and the decisions we cannot get men to make, He will produce. We figure on the amount of converts by the number that we have led to acknowledge, with their lips, the Lordship of Christ, but we have forgotten "that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12:3). And when the Holy Spirit gets a man to decide for Christ, that man is soundly converted.

The power of a sermon that is prepared and preached under the leadership of the Spirit cannot be expressed in words. The results are not accurately recorded on the church roll, but they are eternally inscribed in the Lamb's book of life. When Peter preached, the converts were not his, but God's. They were not received by the preacher into the Cathedral of St. Peter, but we are told that the Lord added to the Church such as were being saved (vs. 47). If we are to witness a soul-saving ministry in our churches, both preacher and people will have to get right with God and allow the Holy Spirit to have His way. We fear that much preaching today is without power. The sermon is delivered but the results are meager. But God has not changed. In the early

Church "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). Notice, it does not say that it pleased God to save men by foolish preaching, but by the foolishness of preaching. When the Apostles preached Christ, it appeared to the outside world as foolishness, but it still was God's prescribed method for saving the lost. Modernism is educating the masses to believe that sermons which search the heart and affect the emotions are "foolish." Such preaching is frowned upon. And yet if we expect to see men delivered from the wrath to come, the Spirit of God must be free to convict and convert through the preacher, through the sermon, and through the saints in the pew.

#### Continuance

The record has it that "they *continued stedfastly*" (Acts 2:42). The three thousand, more or less, did not constitute the tabulated results after the sermon was preached. These are they who *continued stedfastly*. When men are soundly saved through the power of the Spirit, the results are continuous. As I write this message, I sit in a small mountain home high on the plateau of the Blue Ridge mountains in Virginia. A series of preaching services is now in progress. Last night, after the meeting, a mountain preacher told me of the usual results at "revival meetin'" time. Said he: "If the evangelist can get the people worked up enough, they'll come forward and confess their sins. But the trouble is, it just don't last. They soon forget God, Christ, the Bible, and the church. We don't expect to see many of these until 'revival' time again next year."

We insist that such results are not the work of the Holy Spirit. Surely! Too often there are those who come into the inquiry room, confess sin, profess to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, receive a Scripture portion, but are seldom seen in the house of God or with the people of God. Are they God's converts or man's? We are not judging the "converts," but we invite our readers to share with us further in the continuous results of the first Pentecostal sermon.

The new converts "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine." The word *doctrine* means *teaching*. Now they were very much limited in their access to the written Word

of God. As yet there was no New Testament in writing. The printing press was not yet thought of, so that they were wholly dependent upon a few hand-inscribed copies of the Old Testament. But having been born of the Spirit, they were drawn to the Word of God for instruction. The new nature hungered for the soul-food which alone is able to sustain and satisfy the child of God. Where are the "converts" of today? While it is true, praise God, that some are continuing in the study of God's Word and are found where the truth of the Bible is being opened up, far too many have not continued, and show no desire whatever to learn the Word of God. Is the Holy Spirit at fault? Indeed not! We who are the temples of the Holy Spirit are at fault. We have grieved Him by our sins and our selfishness. We have failed to acknowledge the absolute necessity of His operation in the sinner's heart. We have not recognized that His sovereign and gracious work of convicting and converting the lost must be carried out through us. Let us use all the skill and wisdom and natural ability that we possess, remembering that the abiding results are manifest where the Spirit is honored.

The power of the Pentecostal message drew the new converts into "fellowship." This was exactly what they needed. It is important for us today, for we need one another also. God knew how much we should need each other, hence "by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13). When any person is born of the Spirit, he is organically united to the Body of Christ, "buildd together for an habitation of God *through the Spirit*" (Ephes. 2:22). Do our hearers have the desire to fellowship with God's people? Are they one with us? They should be! And if the Spirit is having His way, it will be so.

Next in order, we are told that the new converts continued stedfastly "in breaking of bread." They were drawn by the Spirit to the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper. How misguided are the masses today! Multitudes outside of Jesus Christ come to church only on Communion Sunday, as though there were saving merit in the ordinance. On the other hand, there are those who have confessed the Lord Jesus as Saviour, who show no desire to be present at the

Lord's Supper. Our Lord commanded His disciples: "This do in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19), and certainly it seems that one who has been truly saved would have some conviction about this. We hasten to inquire whether or not some of our "converts" were ever born of the Spirit.

We are told that they continued stedfastly in prayer. Yes, they prayed. The new converts did not consider "the pastoral prayer" enough for them. It must have been a great blessing to the new believers when Peter and the rest prayed, but they too learned to exercise the glorious privilege of communion with God.

Here, then, are four aspects of the New Life in Christ to which the Pentecostal converts gave consistent attention—teaching, fellowship, communion, and prayer. Let us give the Holy Spirit His way so that He may achieve the same glorious results in us also.

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### THE MERCIES OF OUR LORD

BY EVA GRAY

How great is Thy compassion, Lord,  
 Thy mercies ever wide;  
 How tender is Thy love for those  
 Who 'neath Thy wings abide!

Renewed as every morning dawns,  
 And fresh as glistening dew,  
 Thy mercies at the close of day  
 Are sweet and ever new.

O Lord, Thy mercies keep us safe  
 As Thou, as from on high,  
 Doth guard Thine own, and ne'er forsake  
 The apple of Thine eye.

Compassionate Thou art, O Lord,  
 Thy mercy never fails;  
 Though Heaven and earth shall pass away,  
 Thy constancy prevails.

## Current Events

### In the Light of the Bible

BY THE EDITOR

**Tragedy in China.** The fall of Mukden to the Chinese Communists is a symbol of the fall of all Manchuria, the great industrial center which was to have been the base of China's economic recovery. It is a tragedy from which China may never recuperate, and is the worst blow that Chiang Kai-shek has suffered since the darkest days of the war. It is, in fact, grim proof of the betrayal of China by her allies of World War II. For Manchuria, the vast, rich region that was wrested from Japan, was supposed to have been returned to China. Instead, it is being taken over by a Russian Fifth Column.

Yalta and Potsdam—what transpired in these two places! Under the Yalta agreement, which was later embodied in the Russo-Chinese treaty, Russia obligated herself, in appreciation of and in return for certain concessions in Manchuria, to support the Chinese National Government both morally and with arms. Instead, Russia has aided the Chinese Communists morally and militarily, and in every other way available.

The United Nations has done nothing of value. The United States has bungled. General Stilwell went to China and tried to order and regulate Chiang Kai-shek to do his, Stilwell's, will. Then General Marshall went to China and endeavored to force the Generalissimo to become a partner of the Chinese Communists. This means that Chiang Kai-shek was supposed to ally himself with Soviet Russia! Chiang would have none of it, and as a result the solemn promises made to him at Yalta have been revoked in fact, if not in writing. No aid of any effect has been given China—and now, when it appears to be too late, the United States Government has decided to send "within a few weeks" the first real shipment of arms.

After opposing Russia's conquest of Manchuria for nearly half a century, what the United States has done since the end of the war is tantamount to handing China to Russia as a gift. A Communist Asia is coming closer all the time. There



are nearly one billion people in the areas that are falling into Red hands. Will the great Northeastern Confederacy of Ezekiel's prophecy be formed in this way?

**Speed.** In the very closing days of this age, when the judgments of the tribulation fall, events are going to occur with great rapidity. Thus the book of The Revelation, which foretells the end-things, opens with the words: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass . . ." The word translated "shortly" comes from two Greek words, *en tachei*. It does not mean "soon," but "rapidly." It is from the Greek root from which we get our English word, *tachometer*, an instrument for measuring velocity. When the Tribulation comes, events are going to take place with tremendous rapidity.

The world is getting ready for such speedy occurrences. The emphasis of this age is speed. A few years ago people were astonished that ships could cross the Atlantic in five and one half days, mail from the West Coast could be delivered in New York in three or four days, automobiles could go at the rate of a mile a minute, and news from Europe could be printed a day or two after events occurred there. Now, as everyone knows, people cross the Atlantic in a comparatively few hours, letters posted in San Francisco today are delivered in New York tomorrow, automobiles travel at hundreds of miles an hour and planes with the speed of sound, and news from abroad can not only be printed, but illustrated, within virtually minutes after events occur. Speed, and more speed, is the design of living.

The latest invention that will promote speed is Ultrafax, an electronic-photographic device whereby a book of more than 1,000 pages can be flashed page by page across space by television and reproduced, by high-speed photography, in two minutes. The Bible, or any other literature, could be made available in any part of the globe in less than an hour's time.

Another device just introduced is Xerograph. By the process of Xerography photographs can be produced without chemicals, and printing without ink. The God-given men-

tality of man is developing processes that astound the imaginations of ordinary mortals and stimulate the genius of the more talented people.

**To Leave God Out.** Members of the U. N. Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee, meeting in Paris in October to draft a Declaration on Human Rights, decided it would be better to leave God out. Brazil had made a proposal that the Name of God should be included in a statement that would declare that "all human beings were created in the image and likeness of God." Russia objected, saying that the proposition is "much disputed in the Soviet Union." And so also did Britain and China object.

Adam was created in the image of God; all men were not. However, in view of the fact that all are God's creatures and that mankind's destiny is, after all, in His hands, it is reasonable to suppose that there would be no objection that His Name be mentioned. But so goes the world.

**Aspostasy in the Professing Church.** As the age moves forward in time, apostasy in the professing church advances also. This is in line with Biblical prophecy. We quote several recent news items that indicate the spread of denial and apostasy:

Justice William H. Coon, of the N. Y. State Supreme Court, upon complaint of the trustees of the Sherburne (N. Y.) Baptist Church, upheld the dismissal of the church's pastor, J. Frank Ryder, because, according to the account, Mr. Ryder preached "the old-fashioned Gospel."

A group of Y. M. C. A. secretaries met recently in Villingen, Germany, and pleaded with religious leaders to "reshape the Gospel into a new form in accord with today's generation."

At the dedication services of the new hall of The Community Church, in New York City, of which Dr. John Haynes Holmes is the pastor, the invited speakers were Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, Dr. Ralph W. Sockman, Swami Nikhilananda, George V. Denny, etc. This is quite a conglomeration of "faiths" for one platform—Unitarian, Christian (so-called), Jewish, Hindu, and what not.

Dr. Allen E. Claxton, pastor of the Broadway Temple-

Washington Heights Methodist Church, New York, stated in a sermon preached on October 11th, that "Jesus Christ, who declared He came to teach men the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" was the "greatest adventurer. Two thousand years have passed since Jesus started this great adventure and millions of people have caught at least part of His vision and have tried to adventure with Him."

And of Mahatma Gandhi, the late leader of India, Dr. E. Stanley Jones, Methodist missionary, preacher, and author, said: "The Hindu, Gandhi, has taught me more of the Spirit of Christ than perhaps any other man."

**Horrible.** In England, the weird and horrible "black mass" has reappeared. One night each month the cultists, who go by the name "Satanists," enter a small church in Somerset, where they practice the medieval ritual described in sorcerer's books. The pastor finds, on the following day, his church's "sacred emblems dishonored"—crucifixes and images of Christ turned upside down, the chalice turned over, etc.

God will not forget these intended indignities to His Son. There are degrees of punishment, and such men will surely pay for their deeds of desecration.

**"God, I Thank Thee That I Am Not As Other Men."**

So prayed the Pharisee in the parable of Luke 18:9-14. According to a survey published by the *Ladies' Home Journal*, the average U. S. citizen is a kindred spirit to this Pharisee. The usual questions were answered in the usual way—95% said they believe in God, 76% claimed some church membership, though not attending as they should. To this question: "If you yourself followed Christ's rule of love *all the way*, what would you do differently, that is, how would it change your life?" more than half said that they would not change their lives at all!

**20,000,000 Years.** On November 1st the wife of Dr. L. F. B. Leakey, British scientist heading an expedition in Kenya Colony, Africa, arrived in London with the yellowed skull of an ape, said to be 20,000,000 years old. It was found

on Rusinga Island in Lake Victoria. This skull, says Dr. Leakey, will prove to be of greatest value in explaining the "early evolution of the stock to which man and the present day apes belong."

In late October announcement was made from Washington that a new find, called *australopithecus prometheus*, has been discovered by Prof. Raymond A. Dart of the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Bones of several fossil baboons had been uncovered in an abandoned limeworks at Makananagat, and further search revealed the bones of the australopithecus. It is claimed that this is "the most significant anthropological discovery in half a century."

The bones found and assembled are said to be 1,000,000 years old, and they represent the remains of a "long extinct race of pygmies," whose "weight was around one hundred pounds, and who walked erect, hunted game with clubs, and had discovered the use of fire." These pygmies are reported to have been pre-human: "their bodies were delicately proportioned and almost indistinguishable from human form. . . . On their small bodies they carried relatively enormous apelike heads," with "brains approximately the size of those of large gorillas, which approach nearest to man of all non-human animals." It is said also that "these pygmies [possibly] belonged to the direct evolutionary line from which came the human race. If this is found to be the case, it will force fundamental revisions in the present theories of human descent from lower animals."

Readers of *Our Hope* need not be reminded that any theory of evolution is in direct contradiction to the Word of God. "And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, and after Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). He who believes that man descended from the apes or a lower form of animal life is calling God a liar. As a matter of fact, the best science regards these so-called "ape-men" as highly conjectural; nor do even evolutionists agree as to how the few fossil bones are to be interpreted.

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*"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."*

## The Divinely Appointed Leader

BY H. A. IRONSIDE\*

### A Practical Exposition of Joshua 1:1-9

The book of Joshua is distinctly the book of inheritance and links very intimately with the Epistle to the Ephesians in the New Testament. We have the manifestation of divine life in the book of Genesis; redemption in the book of Exodus; the entrance into the holiest and the believer's sanctification typically set forth in Leviticus; the people of God under trial and testing in Numbers; and the government of God in Deuteronomy. Then we naturally move right on to the book of Joshua, in which we have the people of the Lord entering upon their inheritance.

In 1 Corinthians 10:11 we read that these things happened unto them for our types. So we are warranted to think of the land of Canaan as a type of the present blessings that are ours in Christ and to see in the wars of Israel a picture of the Christian's conflict. Israel's inheritance was of an earthly character. We might say they were blessed with all temporal blessings in earthly places in the land of Canaan. We, according to the Epistle to the Ephesians, are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

As we open this book we are introduced to the divinely appointed leader who is to guide the people into their inheritance. It is very significant that the name "Joshua" is the same as the name that our blessed Lord bore here on earth. *Jesus* is the anglicized Greek form of *Joshua*. *Joshua* means "Jehovah the Saviour," and we may see in this Joshua of the Old Testament a type of the Jesus of the New Testament. Moses, the law-giver, led the people to the very border of the land, but was not permitted to lead them into it. Joshua took up where Moses left off. The Apostle Paul tells us that the Law was Israel's child leader till Christ, but when Christ came they were no longer under the child leader. So we have in type the dispensation of the Law passing

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\*Dr. Ironside has just retired from the pastorate of the Moody Memorial Church and will devote himself to writing and itinerant Bible teaching ministry.

away and the new dispensation of Grace beginning. Of course, the people were actually under the Law during all the days of Joshua and the Old Testament, and during the time of our Lord's earthly ministry also. It was not until the Lord's resurrection that believers were delivered from the Law. Joshua typifies the risen One leading us on into the privileges of the new creation.

First we read of the death of Moses: "Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister" (Josh. 1:1). This was when Israel was encamped east of the Jordan in the land of Moab. The Jordan was the eastern border of that part of the land separating Palestine from Moab. At God's command, Moses went up to the top of Mt. Nebo, viewed the land, and there died. The Lord Himself, we are told, buried him and no one knows where his sepulchre is to this day. Moses was so anxious to go into the land. He pleaded with the Lord to permit it, but he had failed at the water of Meribah, and God told him he could not enter Canaan. Moses prayed to be permitted to go in. Finally, God said: "Speak to Me no more about this matter." But He told him he could view the land from the top of Mt. Nebo. Moses went into the land eventually when on the Mount of Transfiguration he and Elijah appeared with the Lord Jesus, and they were speaking of those things which should shortly be accomplished at Jerusalem—the work of the Cross which our Saviour was about to consummate.

When Moses died God put Joshua in his place. He was to lead the people into their inheritance. The Lord had promised the land to them long before; He gave it to them by title. Now He says very definitely: "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses" (vss. 2, 3). It is one thing to have title to an inheritance, but it is quite another thing to make it one's own practically. We who are saved are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, but how

much of our inheritance have we actually appropriated? How much do you really enjoy of that which is yours in Christ? Many of us live in doubt, trouble, and perplexity most of the time. We fail to enter into and enjoy that which God has given us in His Son.

I have often likened this to a library. People sometimes come into my little study and look about. I have a few books which I accumulated in the course of fifty years, perhaps some 5000 or more, and some people who are not used to doing much reading think that I have quite a collection. There are not nearly as many as there would be if a lot of my friends would return borrowed books! Sir Walter Scott once called those people, "Good bookkeepers."

But some folks look around and ask: "Do all these books belong to you?"

I say: "Yes; they are all mine." And I wish some other people could say the same thing about all the books they have!

The next question they ask is: "Have you read them all?"

I reply that I have read all that are worth reading. Sometimes I just get started and find that the book is worthless, so I do not finish it.

Well, the next question will be: "Do you know all that is in them?"

And I have to say: "No; I certainly do not. This little head of mine is much too small to contain all that is in these books."

Now our possessions in Christ are like that. The entire library is mine, but I do not really possess it. God has given us an inheritance, but we do not appropriate all that is ours.

Notice the extent of Israel's inheritance. "From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast" (vs. 4). That took in the land from Euphrates down to the border of the land of Egypt, and the Mediterranean Sea, and then from the desert of Arabia on the south to Damascus on the north. God gave all this to Israel; and for a very brief time during Solomon's reign they possessed most of it, but they have never actually possessed for themselves all the land to which they were entitled. Some day

they will. We are told in one of the Minor Prophets (Obad. 17) that the house of Israel shall possess their possessions. Oh, I wish that we as Christians might possess our possessions, and so enjoy the riches of our inheritance. "Just what do you mean by that?" you ask. I mean that God has given us His Word. In this Word He has put before us our inheritance. He would have us study His Word, make it our own, and enter into everything that it reveals. If we did this we would be able always to live a victorious life in Christ; we would really enjoy our inheritance in Him. Instead of dillydallying with the things of this poor world we would find something so much better in Him. Like the young man who, after his conversion, was asked by some former friends of his to go to a movie. "No," he replied, "thanks, but I have no time; all my time is filled with the things of Christ." That is what it means to be delivered from the things of the world.

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (vs. 5). God said: "You will not have to turn back; I shall drive back your foe before you." Alas, alas, they did not believe God's Word, and again and again the enemy gained over them because of their own disobedience. We wrestle not with flesh and blood; we are not engaged in a conflict with other nations. But our foes are spiritual, and the same God who fought for the people of Israel is the One who will give victory while we obey Him.

In the next verse we have a word of encouragement. "Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them" (vs. 6). We may pass these words on to the Christians today who are fearful of their spiritual enemies.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest" (vs. 7). Victory depended on their adherence to the Word of God, and it is just as true today. We have



so much more of God's Word than they had. They had only the five books of Moses and possibly the book of Job, which may have been written at that time. This is all the Bible they had, and God said: "Take this Word and walk in obedience to it, and you will not need to fear any foe; I shall ever be with you."

Now, we have the whole Bible, and God calls upon us to search this Word. Let it be the man of our counsel, the food of our souls, and the sword with which we face the enemy. God promises that if you will be strong and of a good courage and walk in obedience to His Word you will never need to dread the conflict; you will never need to fear; you will be able, at all times, to say with the apostle Paul: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:47).

If you do not have victory through Christ Jesus, I can tell you why. It is because you are neglecting reading and obeying your Bible. Read your Bible as you ought to and obey it, and you will be able to live a life of victory. John Bunyan wrote in the front of his Bible, on the flyleaf: "This Book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this Book." We have the Scriptures to read, and we are to walk in obedience to the Word as it is opened to us by the Holy Spirit.

Dear friends, if you want to know what will make your life prosperous, get God's own recipe for good success. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (vs. 8). There you have it. Do you want your life to be prosperous? Do you want a successful career? Then take God's Word, read it, and obey it, and God promises those two things.

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest" (vs. 9). There seemed good reason why they should be afraid—unused to warfare as they were, facing seven nations with walled cities and armies, nations that had been constantly

quarreling with each other down through the centuries. And here the people of Israel were to go against these nations and take possession of their land. They might well tremble if they looked only at their own power and their own ability. But as they walked in obedience to the Word of the Lord, He promised to deal with the enemies and to empower Israel to overcome them.

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Although we belong to a different dispensation we may take these words as an exhortation delivered to us personally, and as we read them and walk in obedience, we can count on God for victory.

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## Question Box

### No. 1137. Who are the sons of God of Genesis 6:2?

Difference of opinion has prevailed throughout the years as to who "the sons of God" of Genesis 6 were. Many are convinced that they were fallen angels, whereas others seem to be equally sure that they were the descendants of Seth. In support of the former interpretation, it is pointed out that (1) "the sons of God" of Job 1:6 are manifestly angels; (2) the Hebrews word translated "giants" in Genesis 6:4 means "fallen ones"; and (3) the term "the sons of God" in the Scriptures signifies, generally speaking, beings created directly by God, as Adam, angels, and Christians, the last being "new creations" (John 1:13; 2 Cor. 5:17). The latter position, that "the sons of God" were descendants of Seth, is based upon the fact that (1) the term is used to distinguish the godly line of Seth from the descendants of the ungodly Cain; and (2) it is clearly implied in Matthew 22:30 that angels are sexless beings. The sin of the marriage between the sons of God and the daughters of men in this instance would be that the line of separation and demarcation between God's people and the people of the world was thus broken.

The Editor is of the second opinion. But in a problem of this kind, it is better that we should not be dogmatic in our own conclusion, inasmuch as hosts of godly men before us and contemporary with us are of the opposite conviction, whichever position we hold.

### No. 1138. What should be the Christian's attitude toward the Jew and toward anti-Semitism?

The Christian should not be anti-anyone racially. He should not be anti-Semitic; neither should he be anti-Arabic, or anti-Mongolian, or anti-Negro, etc. The Christian is opposed to them who are themselves anti-God, but in such cases his opposition should be that of seeking to win them, and not to destroy them.

If for no other reason, the Christian should love the Jewish people

as a race because out of Israel came our Scriptures, our Saviour, our faith, our early Church, etc. But there is yet another prime motive for the believer in Christ to be pro-Semitic and not anti-Semitic. The promise that God made to Abram has never been abrogated: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2, 3).

We Gentiles do not fully understand the Jews. We recognize that they are, as a nation, blood-guilty of the death of Christ (as are the Gentiles, too), and that as a nation Israel must repent and acknowledge their sin and disobedience. This is solemn truth, Bible truth, but it does not cause us to hate the Jews. We might equally as justly hate the Gentiles. Rather, it ought to send us to our knees, filled with the love of Christ, and to prayer, such as the Apostle Paul exhorted, in supplication for *all* men, since God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of truth" (1 Tim. 2:1-4).

**No. 1139.** I think that 1 Samuel 16:23 must be an incorrect translation, as I do not see how an evil spirit can come from God. Am I right in this thought?

The translation of the verse in question is perfectly correct. In His sovereignty, God has every right and the power to commission an evil spirit to do His bidding. It is not always easy for the finite mind to understand God's workings, but all is in His hands, and we must leave it there.

**No. 1140.** Is there any place in the Bible where "the brotherhood of man" is spoken of?

No.

**No. 1141.** Was Adonijah Absalom's brother?

Adonijah and Absalom were half-brothers, David being the father of both. Absalom was David's third son, born of Maacah. Adonijah had Haggith as his mother, and was David's fourth son. See 2 Samuel 3:2-4.

**No. 1142.** Some teach that Christ could have sinned, that He was born exactly as we are born and therefore had a sinful nature. Is this God's truth, or is it Satan's lie?

While it is true that the Son of God took human form, He was not born in exactly the same way as the rest of us. He was born of a woman, but He had no human father; He was conceived of the Holy Ghost. Even while the Holy Child was in the womb of Mary, she was overshadowed by the Highest (Luke 1:35), so that no taint or part of sin might be within Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not possess a sinful nature. The perfect and immutable nature of God alone was His. He did not sin, and He knew no sin, but was without blemish and spotless (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:19). Further, He could not sin; for He is God, and God cannot sin. It is true that He was tempted in all points like as we are, but this temptation was *apart from sin* (Heb. 4:15). He was never tempted to sin, for there was nothing in His holy nature to which sin could attach itself to or which sin could attract. Sin was an impossibility with Him on account of the very nature of His Being. To teach that God the Son could have sinned is to do dishonor to His Person.

## A Brief Outline of the Book of Leviticus

BY RUSSELL ELLIOTT

### PART II

Before touching upon the second division of this wonderful book, we must notice, however briefly, the other offerings. Next to the burnt offering (Lev. 1) comes the meat offering (chap. 2). In this we see a divine order. Being occupied first with what God found in the offering of Christ, we subsequently learn that all this was discovered in One who was perfect Man. This is one of the most sublime and affecting truths in the whole of Scripture. Had Christ not been truly human, nothing would have been accomplished. It was man who had dishonored God, by listening to the enemy; it is Man who has glorified God, by perfect submission to His will. It was man who lay under the sentence of death, and if ever he is to be delivered, One who is truly Man must bear that sentence. "For since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead"; and again, "now is the *Son of Man* glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

What we need as much as anything today is to enter into the reality and significance of Christ's manhood. Thus a right understanding of the meat offering is of the utmost importance. The leading features can only be indicated. The fine flour suggests the perfect evenness of Christ's life. He was never disturbed, He had no sharp angles, no prominent features; all was perfect, and in due proportion. Whether it was in the storm on the lake, or when the Pharisees provoked Him to speak of many things, or when He was told that Herod would kill Him, He was equally unruffled. His reply to Herod indicated what was always true of Him, that nothing could either hinder or hasten Him. "I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." It would be easy to multiply such instances, but space forbids.

There were two ingredients in the flour—oil and frankincense (Lev. 2:1-3). It was mingled with oil and anointed with oil. One speaks of His birth, and the other of His

ministry, both being characterized by the Holy Ghost. The frankincense tells us of that peculiar fragrance in the life of Christ that was ever ascending to God. First, because in everything that He did He had God in view; and second, because others glorified God on account of what He did. Many instances of this occur in Luke's Gospel, from the angels praising God (chap. 2), to the disciples praising and blessing God at the end of chapter 24. In keeping with this it will be noticed that *all* the frankincense was burnt on the altar. Two other things were to be absent from the meat offering, viz: leaven and honey. Leaven, as we know, is a type of evil and could not be there, but neither could the mere sweetness and affability of nature find a place. This was discovered when Peter said, "Pity Thyself, Lord": and the Lord rebuked him, saying, "Get thee behind Me, Satan" (Matt. 16:23). On the other hand, salt was never to be lacking. It is spoken of as the "salt of the covenant of thy God." Salt preserves from corruption, and in connection with the meat offering reminds us of One, now in resurrection, who could not see corruption, and who abides before God ever the same. God's dealings with us now are on the ground of the unchanging character of all that Christ is, and thus it is the "salt of the covenant of thy God." How blessed to know that just as surely as Christ can never change, so God's attitude toward us can never change!

It is a further comfort to know that this One has been fully tested and has stood the test. This is indicated in the various ways in which the meat offering was to be baked (vss. 4-7). Christ did not take up any office for His people, until He had Himself been tried in every way first. But whether at home at Nazareth; in the forty days fast in the desert; occupied in His varied ministry in public; or, finally, in the sorrows of Gethsemane, and on the Cross; wherever, or in whatever way the test was applied, all was perfectly, completely, and divinely met. This is the One upon whom everything rests for God, and, we may add, for us too.

An additional thought is conveyed by a reference to the "first fruits" (vs. 12). This blessed One will not be alone, for we are linked up with Him. He was alone in His unapproachable perfection down here. He will not be alone up

there, and even now we know what it is to be in association with Him in the sanctuary. He is the "first fruits," but there will be after fruits, and that of the same kind. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." May we know how to feed upon our portion in the meat-offering.

Following this comes the peace-offering (Lev. 3), the principal thought in connection with which is communion. In keeping with this was the strict injunction not to eat either fat or blood. This was the Lord's portion. If we are to have communion with God, it can only be in that which affords Him something. This is found in that of which the fat and blood, the kidneys and caul, speak—the excellence of the life of Christ entirely devoted to God, even to death. The peace offering was of various kinds. It might be a thank offering, a vow, or voluntary offering. If a thank offering, it was to be eaten the same day; in the other cases it might be partaken of on the following day. The reason was that the vow and voluntary offering represent a greater measure of spiritual energy. One who presented something to God, in return for mercies received, did not rise so high as one who did so purely as the result of communion. In either case, it was not allowed to go beyond the second day; the law was that "on the third day it shall be burnt with fire." We must ever remember that the ground of our communion with God is not our own gifts, but the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, how sparing we are in presenting even an offering of thanksgiving to God! We receive innumerable mercies; how small the return we make!

It is interesting to notice that with the peace offering there were to be unleavened wafers and cakes and *leavened* bread. With everything we give must be the accompanying thought of God's supreme gift to us—His Son. This is the unleavened wafer. We see an illustration of this in the second epistle to the Corinthians, with reference to the offerings of that church: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15). At the same time, we must remember what we are in ourselves; and so the leaven. The recollection of this should both keep us humble and make us grateful. The more we are in communion with God, the

better shall we enjoy His gifts to us, and the more we shall connect them with Christ. Thus will there be greater readiness to give in return.

The sin and trespass offerings (Chaps. 5, 6) conclude the list of offerings and bring us to the consecration of the priests (Chap. 7 *ff*). If we have entered into the significance of the offerings, we are now prepared to enter upon priesthood. We know where God has at last found His portion. All His desire has been realized in the One who said: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God" (Psa. 40:7, 8; *cf.* Heb. 10:7), and we stand before Him accepted according to all the value of what Christ has done. He has done God's will; that is, God has got all He wanted.

Just one thing more is necessary; it is that we should know that we have a Great Priest over the house of God (Heb. 9:11-15). Until we see Christ as High Priest, we cannot enter upon our priestly office in association with Him. Thus we find that Aaron was robed and anointed first, before his sons. He wore a special dress that his sons did not wear, setting forth the special character of our High Priest. We are identified with Him in the closest way, and yet He has His own distinct place. He is the Minister of the Sanctuary and orders everything there for God. He takes what we give and presents it all according to the divine requirements; it is He who wears the mitre with "holiness to the Lord." Thus in Hebrews 8:3 we read: "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer." How blessed to think we can take up this service, that of presenting to Him what He offers to God! There in the Holiest, in the company of Christ, conscious of the value of His blood, and the glory of His Person, we find our place where the glory has found its rest, and in the sense of all that has brought us there, and all that we find there, we serve the living God.

One thing is of the deepest importance. It is this: the blood of the ram of consecration was put upon the ear, the hand, and the foot of Aaron and his sons. If we know what it means to be associated with the One who is inside, we must also know what it means to be set apart to the obedience of Christ outside. Nothing less than this is what we are called

to, and the reason we are often so little up to our priestly service is because of our feebleness in this respect. There must be this obedience in our work if we are to know what it is to minister to God, a thought further developed in chapter 11. Two things must mark us: outward separation, represented by the clovenfoot; and the senses exercised to discern between good and evil, which can only come from chewing the cud. The latter is more common than the former, as seen from the fact that three instances are given of animals that chew the cud but do not divide the hoof, and only one of the other kind. Many know what is wrong a long time before they give it up, if ever they do give it up. It is by chewing the cud that we receive divine sensibility, and then we need courage not to repress it. On the other hand, it is a disastrous thing to take a position of outward separation, when there is no inward work corresponding to it. Many there are whose outward associations, both social and religious, are far below what they themselves are inwardly. This is bad enough, but infinitely worse is it, when the inward state is a contradiction of what we profess before men. Too many are "clovenfooted" (separated outwardly), but fail to "chew the cud" (meditate upon the Word).

*(To be continued, D. V.)*

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### REALMS DIVINE

BY CONSTANCE CALENBERG

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may . . . find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

My finite mind, though limited  
By death, and time, and space,  
In Christ has found the realm divine  
Of everlasting grace.

In God there is no measured sphere  
Of inch, or yard, or mile;  
His love is boundless in its scope,  
Undying is Christ's smile.

I soar, beyond the stars of night,  
To Him on wings of prayer;  
And by the Spirit there commune,  
With Him, and daily share—

The cares of life; the griefs of heart;  
The burdens of the day.  
My finite mind leaves earth behind!  
When I go forth to pray!



## If I Had a Million Dollars

BY HOWARD L. SMITH\*

We have heard the expression, and perhaps we have thought or said it ourselves: "If I had a million dollars I should be able to accomplish much that I long to do for God's glory and His service." No doubt all who give expression to such a view are sincerely convinced in their own minds that they would, if given the opportunity, fulfil their promise, for such it amounts to. But the underlying motive, not even apparent to themselves perhaps, is in truth not wholly benevolent, but tinged with selfishness. I believe that in so stating, I am backed by the authority of God's Holy Word. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3).

We do not ask sincerely in many cases. Often we may pray for benefits that will enable us to enjoy more of the comforts and pleasures of life, at the same time soothing our consciences and seeking to hide from the eyes of God the motive, by promising to give a liberal amount for His cause and kingdom. But we cannot deceive God. He understands, even if we do not, the underlying motive which prompts each petition. And because He knows what we need better than do we, our petitions oftentimes are not granted.

There is a question which our Lord might ask of those who request certain bounty for use in godly purposes, namely: "What are you doing with what you now possess?" "What is that in thine hand?" God inquired of Moses, you will recall. Moses thought he ought to be a more fluent speaker and possess other talents in order to fulfil his God-given commission. But the wooden staff he had in his hand, backed by the power of Almighty God, was the sign by which the most powerful potentate in the world was to be humbled and Israel delivered from bondage.

In 1 Kings 17:8-16 is recorded the story of a widow who had only one meal left between herself and starvation.

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\*Mr. Smith, of Sanborn, Ia., was a Presbyterian minister until his health failed. Now he speaks of himself as "a Christian of the ranks."

When the prophet Elijah asked for that one meal, promising that she would receive ample supply for her needs, she took him at his word. The only thing that she possessed she willingly gave. She did not wait for larger store. From her act it is evident that no matter how small our possessions, we may have a part in the cause of the kingdom. We do not need more than what we now possess to carry out God's plan for us.

As stated in the Mosaic law, one-tenth of the increase of the ancient Israelite was the minimum requirement which God commanded should be given Him. While we are not under Law, but under Grace, and so have not been commanded to give the tithe, yet ought we not, out of love for our crucified and risen Lord, give at least as much as was required of the Israelites under the Law? We must not forget that we do have these instructions today: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2). Our love gifts should be at least one-tenth of our income, for our gifts are a test of our love. If every born again follower of our Lord would give one-tenth of his increase as a prayer-backed offering to the cause of the spread of the Gospel of Christ, there would be ample in the treasury of our God, sufficient to cause a great forward movement in matters that pertain to His program, so needed now especially in the little time that remains.

Yet the proportion of his material wealth that the Christian gives back to the Lord is not all of giving. The matter of *consecrated* giving is also most important. Is all that we are or have, including ourselves, laid on God's altar? A certain follower of the Lord Jesus, when he saw the two disciples loosing his colt, readily consented to their act when he learned his Master needed it. Doubtless all he possessed was at the disposal of his Lord. Every Christian belongs to Christ. We were bought with a price. His claim to us and all that we possess is absolute. Consequently the conclusion inevitably follows: if we are not faithful in that which is least, we will certainly do no better if entrusted with a larger store.

A former pastor of mine once told of a member of his

church who prayed for a certain amount of money, promising that he would devote a large share of it for Christian benevolences. One day he received notice that the very amount that he had asked would soon be sent him. That night he and his wife planned the disposal of the money they expected to receive. Later they found that a mistake had been made, and the money that they expected went to another. When the situation was disclosed, it suddenly dawned upon them that in planning the disposal of the money they thought to receive, they had left God altogether out of account. This experience might well have been mine, or even yours, dear reader. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

But suppose the prayer for a larger amount of this world's goods should be granted. Suppose, having received the money, we should pay the vow, or promise, we had made to God. Even then our temporal gain might well become our spiritual loss. To be the gainer both spiritually and temporally is a very difficult matter. I do not say it is impossible. With God all things are possible.

There are, of course, many instances of those who have dedicated their all to God, and who, as a result, have seen much increase in their temporal possessions. As their wealth enlarged, their gifts have increased also. They have considered themselves to be stewards of their Lord and their wealth as loaned to them so that they might bring back to their Master the increase He has a right to expect of them. But I wonder if even these men will receive as great a reward, as if from a more meager store they had given a like generous proportion. God's standards of reward are not ours. "His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts."

Our Father in Heaven does not take into account so much the amount of the gift as the spirit in which it is given, or the love which prompted the gift. "'Tis the spirit in which the gift is rich." God also takes into account the sacrifice which made the gift possible. Many princely gifts from wealthy Jews were poured into the treasury of the temple at Jerusalem. But one poor widow gave, in the estimation of our Lord, more than the others. The amount of her gift was so small as to be well nigh insignificant, but her sacrifice, the expression of her love, was the greatest of all.

The rich man from abundant store  
Large measure gave, but she gave more;  
The widow gave her all.

Such was the judgment of One who sees what man does not see. Such is the judgment of the righteous Judge before whom we must all appear.

It may readily be seen that, according to the righteous standard of this our Judge, it is indeed exceedingly difficult for a rich man to be a large giver. For example, a multi-millionaire could give to his Lord ninety-five percent of all he possessed and still have sufficient left to supply every necessity and also every luxury he could possibly desire. In contrast, the humblest and most poverty-stricken disciple of our Lord, who by his love offerings denies himself all the luxuries and many of the necessities of life, is much the larger giver. No wonder Christ told the rich young ruler that he must sell all that he had and give it to the poor, before he could receive the blessings of life for which his soul craved. He could not *serve* two masters; the Lord Jesus *and* riches.

Why then should we miss the blessings that are already ours by withholding our love offerings to the Lord until "our ship comes in," until we receive a longed-for and larger store? Our very desire for more than our Lord has seen fit to bestow upon us is desire of a very dangerous type, to say the least. In God's Holy Book, His message to man, we read: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9). Notice carefully these words. They are not directed only against the possessors of large wealth, but against all who *will have*, or greatly desire, great riches. A poor man whose greatest ambition in life is to be rich in this world's goods, whether he ever succeeds in his ambition or not, is a would-be rich man. And because he does not "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," he is flirting with the very desires that drown men in perdition. Oh, may we who serve the most high God, beware of giving way to any ambition that would draw us away from the blessed fellowship of Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Weeds in the Driveway

A Page for Young People

BY MYRA MARSH HOPP

This morning I worked for over an hour trying to get the crabgrass out of the driveway, which is made of hard, black cinders with apparently no nourishment for anything. But, oh, my! How the weeds do grow and how healthy and green they are!

I thought, as I tugged and pulled to get them loose, how hard we have to struggle to get anything beautiful to grow in the garden. We give it rich soil and work plant food around it and water it—with but meager success. Insects and blight and bad weather have their way, and if we manage to get a few choice blooms we are fortunate.

But the weeds! In spite of black cinders, weed killers, cars being driven over them, and every kind of discouragement, they send their roots down deep and make an unsightly place of what should be tidy and beautiful.

The weeds are very much like the sins that so easily beset us. Those "sin plants" need such a little soil in which to flourish. We dig away at them and try to pry them loose, but the roots are strong. If we take out only a part of them, what is left grows up again. About the tiny plant, the one we can hardly see, we say: "Oh, that is such a little thing! I won't bother with pulling *that* one out." But before many days it is as big and as deeply rooted as the others.

Among those cinders in the driveway I found some plants that were not like the rest: some violets, a petunia, clover, and other things that were too nice to be mingled in with coarse weeds—just as we find Christians in places where they have no business to be.

How did those plants come there? It is easily explained. On the other side of the driveway is the garden where flowers and plants are flourishing and are *supposed to be*. But some had jumped the boundary, and were trying to find the nourishment that they needed for life and beauty from a place that never could give it to them. And because they have left the place they belong, they never will fulfil their

destiny now. Stunted, blossomless things they are, and not healthy and fruitful as they were intended by God to be, not able to give joy to anyone, not having any joy themselves, fit for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

As I dug them up and threw them on the trash pile, I prayed: "Even so may I be able to treat my own sin. May I be rooted and grounded in the Word. May I feed among the lilies and drink of the Living Water. Thank you, Lord, for the lesson of the weeds in the driveway."

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## Daily Bible Treasury\*

BY HERBERT LOCKYER

### Nuggets from Mark

**December 1.** MARK 1:1-20. The opening phrase of this portion is suggestive: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." And the glorious good news of redeeming grace certainly began with, and in Christ. Further, such a *beginning* is now *continuing*. From the time of Christ, each succeeding generation has witnessed a marvelous expansion of the triumphs of the Gospel. This *beginning* will have no *ending*, for through the eternal ages the saints will extol the virtues of Him, who is the Gospel. Mark introduces us almost immediately to the ministry of Christ, seeing He came as the Servant of Jehovah. This is why this Gospel contains no birth record. Who concerns himself with the pedigree of a servant or slave? In Mark, Christ is seen as the Love-Slave of Heaven. The key word, "immediately" is one peculiar to this Gospel, being used some 26 times of our Lord, who, as the Servant, moves forward incessantly, yet unhurriedly, to accomplish His Father's business. For His task, He needed helpers, and so chose the twelve. God honors those who will leave all to follow Him.

**December 2.** MARK 1:21-45. Although He came as a Servant, Christ never lacked authority. Religious leaders were astonished at His authoritative doctrine and miraculous ministry. Demons recognized this divinely sent Servant as the Holy One of God who was able to expel unclean spirits, heal the fever-stricken, cleanse the lepers, and pray and preach effectively. Rising early to commence with God, Christ has left us an example. Alas, we are too fond of sleep to follow Him here! Yet, the solitary place is where power is generated. Thinking of the leper, we can detect three simple stages in his cleansing: The Urgent Cry: "Make me clean"; The Immediate Response: "Be thou clean"; The Sure Result: "He was cleansed." Is it not blessed to know that His blood can make the vilest clean?

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\*As a stimulus to the knowledge of the Word of God and consequent spiritual growth, the reader is urged to turn to the assigned portion in the Bible and to read it before making use of Dr. Lockyer's comments.

**December 3. MARK 2:1-12.** Christian workers can glean many forceful lessons from the miracle of the healing of this palsied man. First of all, is it known that the Lord Jesus is in our house? Because He cannot be hid, He will soon make His presence felt, if there is obedience to His will. Then there is united concern. The four friends were burdened over their sick companion and felt that he and the Master should meet. And it took all four to bring him to Christ. In the conversion of one soul there are varied factors responsible for a changed life. Nothing daunted these four carriers in their daring resourcefulness, energy, and faith. A desperate need required desperate measures. Unconventional! Yes, but most effective; for the man who came in with his back on a bed went out with his bed on his back.

**December 4. MARK 2:13-28.** If the method of the four men in claiming Christ's attention was unconventional, so were His methods in attacking all conventionality. For the select circle of the Pharisees, Christ had nothing but contempt. He went to places where sinners could be found. Too many, who name His name, are sinfully exclusive. Jesus went to the home of Levi, whom we know as Matthew and who became the writer of the First Gospel, and won him to Himself. In the Parable of the Cloth and the Bottle, as well as in the Sabbath Day episode, Christ is scathingly dealing with a religious life made up of outward disciplines and denials but destitute of inward vigor. Those Pharisees worshiped their ritual and tradition. Jesus came as the Lord of the Sabbath, yet His Lordship passed unrecognized. How tragic it is when any given day or any ritual takes the place of Him who creates all days!

**December 5. MARK 3.** God-conscious and Spirit-filled, our Lord went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed (Acts 10:38). Think of His works and words in the chapter before us! Any ordinary man would have collapsed under such pressure. Hate and honor came Christ's way. From the leaders of a formal religion there came contempt, enmity, rejection; from the enthusiastic crowds, fame and honor came to cheer Him. But our Lord ever lived for the approbation of Heaven. In the choosing of the Twelve, Christ revealed that although He was able to save souls, He was not going to save them alone. He needed others to help Him, and He needs YOU! Of the so-called "Unpardonable Sin," one writes: "From vs. 22 and 23 this is quite clearly calling the Holy Spirit a demon. It is the setting of one's heart continuously against God. One thing is certain, that those who are guilty of it are not at all disturbed by it."

**December 6. MARK 4.** Three parables and a miracle make up this chapter. There is a sense in which parables are miracles, and miracles, parables. From the Parable of the Sower we learn that the seed is invariable—not human words, but The Word of God alone. The enemy is persistent, for effective seed must be destroyed. The fruit is satisfying, bringing delight to God and man. Let us never forget that as sowers we are responsible only for scattering the seed, prayerfully and carefully over the human soil. The harvest is God's responsibility. From the Parable of the Candle we gather the lesson of open witness. Coming to the Miracle of Stilling the Storm we see Jesus as One having power, as well as authority. The wind and sea obey Him for He made them both. Nature ever obeys her Lord, which is more than man does. Underline these two phrases: "*There arose a great storm*"; "*And He arose.*" For every crisis, there is the Christ.

**December 7. MARK 5:1-20.** Having met the Devil and triumphed gloriously over him, Christ was well able to deal with the denizens of Hell. The wonder is that the demons recognized His authority and power. With a word our Lord was able to deliver the hopeless maniac and restore the damage and degradation the demons had caused. What an effective sermon could be preached on "The Unwanted Christ," with verse 17 as the basis! How tragic it is when men love their sin so much, that they do not want Christ to trouble their conscience! Are you among the number praying Him, not to depart from the coast of your life, but to enter and possess every part of that life? There are those Christ wants to stay at home and witness to the wonder of His salvation (vss. 18-20). Not *all* are called to go with Him to fields abroad.

**December 8. MARK 5:21-43.** Both of the miracles in this section testify to the power of faith. To the woman with an issue of blood, Christ said: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." His word to the ruler was: "Be not afraid, only believe." Is ours the faith that laughs at impossibility and cries, "It must be done"? May our faith venture out upon the declared promises of God. Faith compelled Christ to act for both the woman and the ruler, and act He did, in different ways. True faith will have its genuineness tested, but amid any delay the Lord may permit, we must keep on believing, until faith is rewarded. The raising of the ruler's daughter affords a study in soul-winning. As soon as Christ gave her life, He wanted her fed (vs. 43). All who are newly born, need to be spiritually nourished. Organizations responsible for the salvation of the young must give every attention to the feeding of those who decide for Christ, otherwise they will suffer a terrible backwash. No church should be a nursery with half starved babes crying for the food.

**December 9. MARK 6:1-29.** To His own family and townspeople, our Lord seemed too ordinary to function as a God-sent messenger. Amazed at His words and works, the Nazareth population yet spurned the Prophet, seeing He was one of themselves. Let us guard ourselves against the folly of thinking that God limits Himself to so-called "special preachers." How sad that sixth verse is! The sending out of the Twelve proves that Christ believed in multiplying His influence. By our prayers and gifts we ought to help to thrust forth more laborers into the harvest field. Of the ministry of John, the forerunner, much could be written. What a fearless, faithful witness he was! He was courageous before royalty, rebuking sin in the palace; consistent before the world, with a life clean and transparent; abiding in influence, for even after his death, his testimony challenged and convicted Herod.

**December 10. MARK 6:30-36.** In this portion we have a four-fold portrait of God's Servant. First of all, we see Him as the Rest-Giver. Ever considerate of His own, He called His tired disciples apart from the throngs for relaxation and quietude. In this age of rush and haste we must preserve our seasons of communion. Then, the Master passes before us as the Bountiful Provider. Having compassion for the multitudes, He sought to meet their physical needs. What a prodigality there ever is in His provision! Next, the Lord Jesus is presented as the Triumphant Lord. It must have been awe-inspiring to those one-time fishermen to watch Christ control the elements. No wonder they were amazed beyond measure. It is still true that at His command adverse winds must cease! The last glimpse



of the Lord the chapter gives us is that of the Sympathetic Healer. How deeply His loving heart was moved as He encountered the sick and diseased in His journeys! Hands stretched for help received His willing aid. Afflicted as we are with various ills, let us rejoice that His touch has still its ancient power.

**December 11. MARK 7:1-23.** For the Pharisees, with their outward religious show but lack of inner spirituality, the Lord Jesus had nothing but contempt. No language was too strong and stern for these hypocrites, whose talk was very pious, but who neglected the obvious requirements of human society and of God's Word. The Pharisees were very concerned about having clean hands, but our Lord made it clear that it is the inner desires and motives about which men must be most careful, seeing that it is these that determine outer actions. There are many today who worship God with their lips, but whose hearts are far from Him. Pious they may appear to be, but they miserably fail in the discharge of elementary, daily duties. There will never be any trouble about outer defilement if our inner life is pure in His sight.

**December 12. MARK 7:24-37.** The two miracles recorded in this section demonstrate the value of what we may call "vicarious faith," that is, faith employed on behalf of another. In the healing of the palsied man, we read that when Jesus saw their faith, the faith of the four friends who carried their sick companion to Him, He healed him. Would that we knew how to exercise this vicarious faith! The distressed woman believed for her afflicted daughter and Christ commended her for her audacious faith. Those who brought the deaf and dumb man to Him, came with the faith and conviction that He was able to restore his hearing and speech. There is a noticeable difference, however, in these two miracles. In the first, no means were used. In the second, Christ used His spittal. All healing, of course, is divine. We must be careful not to err in any one direction, God can heal with, or without, means. His will is sovereign, and it is for us to trust Him as the Healer to heal as He sees fit.

**December 13. MARK 8:1-21.** We have here another miracle—feeding. It is profitable to mark the difference between this occasion and the one in chapter 6. Here we have 4000, over against 5000 who were fed before. Here were seven baskets over, against twelve earlier. Here Christ fed Gentiles over against Jews in chapter 6. No wonder the disciples felt doubtful! They were exclusives, believing that the bounty of Heaven was for the Jews, and them alone. Peter suffered from the same narrowness, until the vision of the sheet let down from Heaven gave him a large heart. What God has is for all. Look at those nine searching questions Christ pressed upon His own, in which He wanted them to realize the necessity of using all their God-given faculties. To witness miracles and not believe them, to hear Christian teaching and not respond to it, is an inexcusable feature in anyone.

**December 14. MARK 8:22-38.** The miracles our Lord wrought established His claims to Deity. In the opening of the eyes of the blind man, it is shown that God's power is limited by human faith and response. Christ was able to restore full sight immediately, but the man responded slowly. Full sight came by degrees. In Peter's remarkable confession, we see how revelation transcends reason. Those gathered around saw in Christ one of the prophets; Peter saw in Him, the Son of the living God. As Christ Himself declared, this was a dis-

tinct revelation given to Peter from Heaven. All Truth is Revelation. All who believe Him to be Very God of Very God are called upon to meet His demands, namely, the uncompromising denial of self, and the taking up of one's cross. The life of self is death; the death of self is life.

**December 15. MARK 9:1-29.** The Transfiguration served many purposes. First of all, it manifested the inherent glory of Christ. The disciples beheld His glory, and, in the difficult days ahead, found themselves constantly sustained by the fact that they had been eye-witnesses of His majesty. Peter spoke for us all when he asked to stay on the hill-top with the Lord Jesus. It was natural and human to want to remain away from the world below with all its sorrow, hardship, and pressure. But he had to learn, as we do, that exalted spiritual experiences are designed to prepare us for the valley with all its need. So leaving the place of spiritual uplift, the three disciples came down to the demon-possessed boy. The other disciples had been so impotent to help: "They could not!" From Christ they learned that power could only come by that fasting that costs time and comfort, and effective prayer.

**December 16. MARK 9:30-50.** The disciples wanted a crown without a cross. Christ, however, taught His own that His choicest wreaths are wet with tears. There are no easy roads to the highest places in His Kingdom. What patience the Master had with those nearest Him! The dispute over position makes sad reading. With Christ, human values are reversed; the last is first. Then the lesson of Christian tolerance, so necessary today, is taught by Him in His rebuke of the disciples for their narrow sectarianism. We sadly err, if we feel that spiritual blessing cannot come through any church other than the one with which we are affiliated. God does not empty His fulness into one mold. The solemn warning of Hell should stir our hearts to bring the lost to Him, who alone can save. Eternal condemnation was so real to Him. But we cannot rescue the perishing unless we are willing to cut off from our lives, even the most vital and essential things, if they hinder and offend.

**December 17. MARK 10:1-31.** In these days of easy divorces, it is necessary to go back to the fundamental law God laid down when He created our first parents, namely, that it was contrary to nature to sever what God had joined. The abolition of such a plan results in sorrow and tragedy. In His rebuke of the disciples for their misunderstanding of the importance of child-life, we see how necessary it is to win the young. The disciples thought the children incapable of following Christ, and that He was too busy with needy adults to concern Himself about boys and girls. The Child Evangelism Movement of our time deserves the prayerful and practical support of all Christians. Christ's contact with the rich young ruler proves the sadness of selfishness. This otherwise fine young man was chiefly interested in "I"; he used it three times. His money kept him back from Christ's best. With us it may be something else.

**December 18. MARK 10:32-52.** Christ's announcement of His death perplexed the minds of His disciples. All their Messianic hopes would be crushed if He went out to die as a felon on a wooden gibbet. But the Master laid down an eternal pattern when He declared Himself a Ransom for all. To bless, He must bleed. To deliver, He must die. The Cross was the place of death, and our identification with the Crucified One means death to self, to one's own will, to one's

own comforts and desires. This Gospel of Mark is the one depicting Christ as the True Servant. Here we find Him proclaiming that "the glory of life is to serve, not to be served: to give, not to get: to love, not to be loved." Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, was notable for his determination and earnestness and faith. He obeyed the call of Christ, and found in Him, not only the Restorer of his sight, but the One he should follow and serve.

**December 19. MARK 11:1-14.** Because the humble colt had a share in Christ's so-called triumphal entry into Jerusalem, let us see what we can learn from this privileged creature. It surely teaches us that Christ knows where to find anything, or anyone, He desires to use. He knew where the colt was and said: "Loose him, and bring him." Then the colt was found where two ways met. It is often thus, when Christ calls us to serve Him. We have to choose either the road of self or the road of surrender. How fitting it was that this colt was one "whereon never man sat"! He had been kept for Jesus, and how honored the colt was to carry our Lord through the shouting crowds. As for the populace, how fickle it was!" "Hosanna," one day, and ere the week was out they were crying, "Crucify Him!" The Lord Jesus used the barren fig tree to good effect. God save us from the leaves of mere profession! May He grant us the fruit of the Spirit!

**December 20. MARK 11:15-33.** As you read about the purification of the Temple, do you wonder what Christ would do if He came back to earth and walked through some of our churches? Truly, many of them have become the dens of thieves. Modernism, worldliness, ritualism, and dead, barren orthodoxy have robbed them of spiritual power and influence. Some have difficulty about what our Lord said regarding moving mountains. In His day, "removing mountains," was a phrase used of a successful teacher who could remove difficulties, and, as used by Jesus, implies the power of believing prayer to remove obstacles. Maybe your obstacle is the unforgiving spirit. Well, ponder over verses 25 and 26! Because of His claims as the Son of God, Christ was constantly in conflict with religious leaders. With much cunning they tried to trap Him, but He was ever one ahead of His enemies. Knowing their hypocrisy, He forced them back to the evident signs of His authority. But stubbornly they refused the light, and remained blind leaders of the blind.

**December 21. MARK 12:1-17.** The Parable of the Vineyard was designed to teach the tragic results of light refused. What a striking figure of speech our Lord used to warn a nation of the inevitable results of the rejection of a God-given revelation! He was forecasting His own death in the heir killed by the husbandman's servant. Christ's enemies did their best to discredit Him. Their subtle planning is seen in the question they asked about paying tribute. They wanted to snare Him into an answer that would bring Him before the Roman authorities on a charge of treason, but Christ could read their crafty minds. With the coin, He showed that there are responsibilities to the State and to God that must be observed. It is only those who put God first, rendering unto Him what is due Him as Creator and Redeemer, that put the very best into the varied relationships of life. Christians should ever make the finest citizens.

**December 22. MARK 12:18-44.** The Sadducees, who rejected a resurrection, were the rationalists of Christ's day. No one can

be a Christian after the New Testament order who discredits the resurrection of Christ (Rom. 10:9, 10). The tricky question about the seven brothers and the one woman gave our Lord opportunity to declare the truth of immortality, and also the perfection of our life in Heaven. The discreet scribe, who wanted light upon the commandments, was not far from the Kingdom; but "so near and yet so far." *Almost* will not avail. Although not far, he was not in. We have friends who are near to Christ, as He said the scribe was to the Kingdom, but they are still lost, as lost as the sinner who is far removed from Christ. May the Holy Spirit bring them in!

**December 23. MARK 13:1-13.** The Olivet Discourse is worthy of prolonged study. Within it we have a description of the condition of things on the earth during the Tribulation. While characteristic features of the *course* of the Gentile age can be detected, the *consummation* of such an age appears to have been in the mind of the Master. As the present Church age is timeless and signless, we are not to look for signs, but watch for Christ. Amid the clatter of contradictory voices in the world, have we ears tuned to the coming of our Lord? Amid much to discourage us, how we need the Grace of Endurance!

**December 24. MARK 13:14-37.** With the Tribulation in mind, Christ warns against disaster, deception, and drowsiness. It is not our belief that the true Church will be on the earth during this period of unparalleled woe and remorse. Tribulation is a judgment period, but for the Church, condemnation is past (Rom. 8:1). Ere the Vials of Wrath are emptied out upon a guilty world, the Church is to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Still, coming events cast their shadows before them. As we think of the present world situation, so tense and dangerous, we can see the stage being set for the enactment of the drama of the ages, so graphically given in Revelation 4-22. God's prophetic clock seems about to strike. May grace be ours to live as children of the dawn, with our faces toward sunrise!

**December 25. MARK 14:1-16.** In Bethlehem, Mary, like Mary of Bethany, broke her alabaster box in a very real way, giving birth to One, whose spikenard is very precious. This woman had a true insight into the Cross, and knew that the One born in the manger, would break His alabaster box of ointment at Calvary. Judas took all he could; Mary gave all she could. And her costly offering must have cheered the heart of the Lord Jesus as He faced the Cross. What a worthy commendation she received! Will He say of us at the end of the road: "You have done what you could"? Are you not amazed at the serenity of Christ as He went out to His death? Quietly and carefully He made preparation for the Passover. All had been peacefully planned. Thus may we be restful in every trial or circumstance of life.

**December 26. MARK 14:17-46.** Doubtless you have a keepsake, some treasured article a dear one gave upon entering the valley of death. Well, the Lord's Supper is a precious keepsake, something by which to remember Him ever. The broken bread and outpoured wine are lasting memorials of His sacrifice on our behalf. Out into the darkness the Lord Jesus went, singing a hymn. What an example! Can we sing songs in the night? Peter's denial must have added to Christ's anguish. How empty Peter's boast turned out to be! Gethsemane stands out as the Sanctuary of Sorrow, the Place of Prayer,

the Valley of Victory. None of the ransomed will ever know the heart anguish of those Gethsemane hours. Judas betrayed our Lord by a kiss—the token of affection! How low Judas fell! May God keep us from betraying our Lord, or following afar.

**December 27. MARK 14:47-72.** How full of anguish the final pre-Calvary hours of our Lord were! Indignities and injustice were heaped upon Him by His foes, but the deepest stab came from His own. In the face of danger, they were craven friends. One wonders what would have happened if all of the disciples had stood by Him in a body, and pled His cause before the High Priest, and then Pilate! But they all forsook Him—the One, for whom they once forsook all. Think of boastful Peter, who declared his eagerness to go to prison or to death for Christ, but who, when the test came, frankly and fully denied his Lord. The dread of persecution changed the disciples into deserters, leaving the Lord Jesus to go to trial and to death alone. Yet amid His trials, caused by friend and foe alike, the Master stands supreme and undaunted. Alone, He is yet calm and victorious.

**December 28. MARK 15:1-23.** Pilate, and not Christ, was on trial that day when the two faced each other in the palace. Christ was on Pilate's hands, and he had to do something with Him. Against his better judgment, and his wife's intuition, Pilate delivered our Lord to the mob thirsting for His blood. Christ's Kingship was ridiculed, but had those Jews, described as wild bulls and mad dogs in the Calvary Psalm (Psa. 22), known that the One they were reviling was a King with power, who with a word could have destroyed them all, they would have acted differently. Willingly our Lord made Himself of no reputation, in order that He might save even His enemies. His refusal of an opiate, which would have deadened His pain, was also enacted, so that He might feel the full force of the death He was about to taste for every man. Hallelujah, what a Saviour! Do you know Him? Has He claimed your full allegiance? Are you like Simon the Cyrenian, a sharer of His Cross?

**December 29. MARK 15:24-47.** Here is a portion to be read upon our knees. The bitterest tragedy of the Cross was the feeling of desolation. In the depths of His agony, Jesus was alone. Forsaken, not only by His friends, but by His Father! "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Ah, we will never know what it meant for this Holy One to bear away our sin! He was forsaken in that lone hour that the joy might be His of saying to every blood-washed child of His: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Are you presently mystified over the providential dealings of Heaven? Are there those experiences you cannot understand? Well, take comfort from the Saviour's "Why?" Our Lord was indebted to two Josephs—one at the beginning of His life, and the other at the end. The one gave Him a shelter, the other, a sepulchre.

**December 30. MARK 16:1-8.** Death could not keep its prey. The king of terrors was no match for Him, who declared Himself "the Resurrection and the Life." The unbelieving disciples were assured by the heavenly guardian of the tomb that the One that they buried was alive forevermore, and had gone before them unto Galilee. "The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the best attested fact in all history." Alongside of the resurrection passages we should read 1 Corinthians 15. Christ was taken down from the Cross, but Romanism keeps Him on it and worships a Crucifix. Both the Cross and the

Tomb are empty, and, as Dr. E. Schuyler English expresses it in his book on Mark: "The fact of the *empty* tomb is the crown of our faith." Had Jesus remained dead, there would have been no salvation for a sinning race. But Christ arose, and the resurrection was God's receipt for Calvary. Our debt was paid by His death, and emerging the Victor o'er the grave, He now offers any sinner a blood-bought cancellation of all transgression.

**December 31. MARK 16:9-20.** It is somewhat fitting that we should have this concluding portion of Mark before us on this last day of another year. It has been a year of personal, national, and international changes. The Psalmist of old declared: "Because they have no changes, they fear not God." Alas, even changes seldom drive men *to* God! Our confidence amid all changes is the fact that Christ is alive forevermore and that He will be with His own until the end of the age. Girded by the presence and power of the Risen Lord, our responsibility is clear. We are to go into all the world, even into our part of it, witnessing unto Him, with accompanying signs. As another year dawns, may ours be the determination to carry out the divine commission to evangelize the world.

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## Book Reviews

BY ARTHUR FOREST WELLS

**Journey Through the Bible.** By Walter D. Ferguson. Published by Harper & Brothers, New York. Cloth binding, 364 pages. Price, \$3.50.

From the standpoint of what men call language, diction, and style, parts of this book are a delight. The author is in the Department of English in an American university, and the manner in which he uses his pen proves his right to such a chair. This is how he states his view of the Bible: "We may be clever psychologists or petty logicians or profound philosophers but our experience is puny in comparison with that of the authors of the Bible. Other books grovel like moles, rise up like toadstools, or even reach the height of mountains; but the Bible is snow-capped Mt. Everest, towering grandly above all secular literature. On its lower slopes are pleasant meadows, shady groves, and picturesque cottages of commonplace people—but as we climb we come soon to strange caves, wild ravines, dizzy crags, unknown plateaus, and tremendous peaks . . . Keats and Shelley are thin fountains that rise up to dizzy heights, Milton is a mighty torrent, Shakespeare is Niagara, but the Bible is the ocean." Such language is enjoyable.

But from the standpoint of evangelical interpretation, something seems repeatedly to be lacking in these pages. The author decries extremes of both left and right, and wishes it were possible to be a "modern fundamentalist," that is, take a "liberal conservative position." The cat leaps out of the bag in a statement like this: "The first eleven chapters of Genesis reveal the character of God and man—the first chapter with its highly advanced and austere intellectuality presenting God's grandeur from a late priestly point of view and the succeeding chapters giving us delightful earlier stories of primitive men." The give-away word here is the word "priestly," which seems to expose a higher critical attitude to the Pentateuch. Throughout, the interpretation bends readily to a sort of human side of the newshandling. Abram

"seems to have left his homeland for religious freedom." Contrary to Genesis 31:3, Jacob himself seems to originate the idea of leaving Laban's house. "Joseph rose to high favor because of good looks, his honesty, his intelligence, and his magnetic personality." The great supernatural story of Jonah and the whale is described in these easy words: "God snatched his unwilling servant from the jaws of death by means of a great fish, tossed the gasping prophet back to the shores of Palestine." Not a word about the use the Lord Jesus made of the miracle! "Blemishes" are found in the Psalms: "Yet in spite of minor irritations the reader will find in Psalms at least fifteen or twenty poems that time cannot wither, nor custom stale. Who wrote them? Nobody knows." "Solomon's authorship adds neither beauty nor dignity to the Song of Songs." On Isaiah 7:14 this: "The exact nature of this king to come is not clear to scholars, but it has been interpreted as the Messiah." Isaiah 9:6-7 is passed over. The whole of Isaiah 53 is covered in these words: "Chapter 53 is full of the tenderness and chastened spirit of those who come out of great tribulation into a marvelous light."

Comments on the New Testament are of similar grade. There is ridicule for the opinion of others; but one is not always certain where the author himself stands. Vagueness concerning great doctrinal facts prevails. The Virgin Birth is not mentioned. The Lord Jesus is Mary's "son," "the baby," "the boy who helped the carpenters," the man who "asked to be plunged into the muddy Jordan as a symbol that he had entered a new way of life." "John went through with the ceremony . . . blurting out that this was the 'Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world.' Such was Jesus' formal entrance into the arena of Palestine's troubled religious and political life . . . And one might guess that Jesus' heart leaped and pounded in his breast as he realized the potentialities of the situation. At the first opportunity he hurried off into the wilderness nearby to recover from the emotional shock of the experience and to be sure of his mental reaction." Then follows—though "a diabolical presence" is mentioned toward the end—a naturalistic interpretation of the Temptation. "Later he told a little of his emotional crisis to his intimate friends and a dim report of the experience appears in three of the Gospels." 1 Corinthians 15 is called Paul's "famous chapter on immortality." "Resurrection" should have been the word. Paul was partly responsible for the loafing of the Thessalonians! "He shared with the other apostles the view that Jesus would soon return . . . He saw now how harmful the idea of an immediate second coming could be if it were emphasized to the exclusion of everything else." The Book of Revelation is a puzzle to this author: "The very name of the book is mocking." "The end of the world" is depicted in Revelation 14. In effect the question is asked: Could John have written "these innocuous epistles" and then expanded "his theme to include a cryptic and apparently unintelligible attack on the emperor?" Let us hope that this book is not read by anyone who might through it be given a wrong idea of the Scriptures.

**Matthew.** By H. A. Ironside, Litt.D. Published by Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., Bible Truth Depot, New York. Cloth binding, 407 pages. Price, \$3.50.

Following the same pattern as some of his other books, Dr. Ironside here retells the story of Matthew's Gospel. The emphasis throughout the book is on kingdom truth. The material is broken up into convenient paragraphs, and the important verses of these are given special attention. The language is simple enough for all to understand, and the

practical comments offer profitable help to many. Here is a sample, taken from the interpretation of Matthew 7:23: "I never knew you." "To none will He say in that day, 'I used to know you, but I know you no more.' His word to the lost will be: 'I never knew you.' Of all His own, He says: 'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them' (John 10:27)." This is warning for the unsaved, comfort for the redeemed. Explanations are courageous; facts are faced squarely and answered with Scripture authority. Timely things are said. Gospel statements are shown in their relation to prophecy and Christian experience. For a devotional, practical commentary, this is good reading.

**J. Hudson Taylor—For God and China.** By Basil Miller. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. Cloth binding, 136 pages. Price, \$1.50.

Here are ten chapters which faithfully tell the story of J. Hudson Taylor and the work which the Lord enabled him to do. For those who know of the origin and development of the China Inland Mission, that is all that need be said. Those who do not know that story, but should know it, may get a good knowledge of this honored enterprise through these pages. And, incidentally, their hearts will be warmed by this amazing account of God's faithfulness in answer to this man's faith in Him, love for Christ, and absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit. No one can read this biography earnestly without getting a blessing. Men like J. Hudson Taylor are not born every day; but God is always the same. Therein lies the challenge of this story. It takes the reader into another world, a world of joyfully rewarded dependence upon God for everything. Never before have we needed to know the message of this book more than now—that God is always able. Let individuals read this account, and let missionary societies study it.

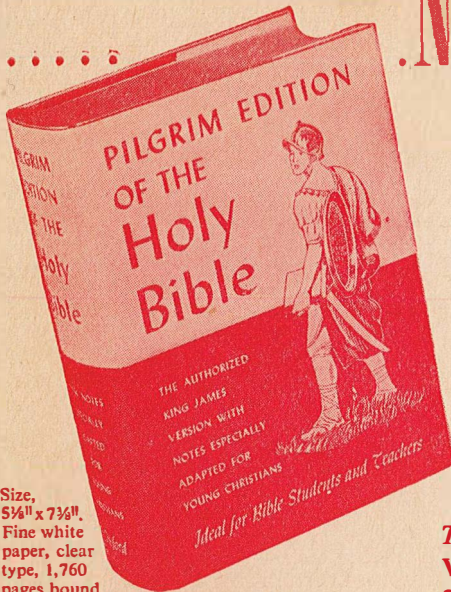
**Great Missionaries of the Orient.** By J. Theodore Mueller. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. Cloth binding, 133 pages. Price, \$1.50.

The contents of this book fall into several groups. First, there are separate chapters that tell of the country and people of Japan, Formosa, and Korea, with sketches about dynasties and early advances of Christian missionaries. Then follow short chapters about missionaries who went to these lands. To Japan went: Rimitsu, the Nestorian Physician (724-748), Francis Xavier (1506-1552), James Curtis Hepburn (1815-1911), James Robbins Brown (1810-1880), Channing Moore Williams (1829-1910), Guido Herman Fridolin Verbeck (1830-1898), Ivan Kasatkin (1835-1912), and John Hyde DeForest (1844-1911); to Korea went: Robert Samuel Maclay (1824-1907), and Horace Grant Underwood (1859-1916); and to Formosa went: George Leslie Mackay (1844-1902). Then follow a few biographical sketches of outstanding converts: of Japan—John Hardy Neesima, Asahiro Muramatsu, and Taichiro Meringaga; of Korea—Yun Tchi Ho, Helen K. Kim, etc.



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