

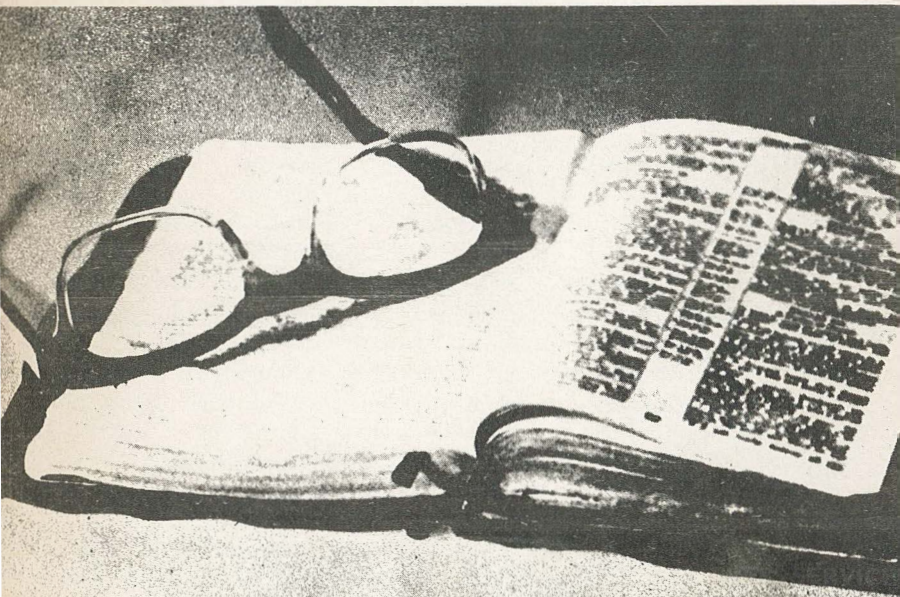
His Name is Wonderful!

Spiritual Food

Vol. 6

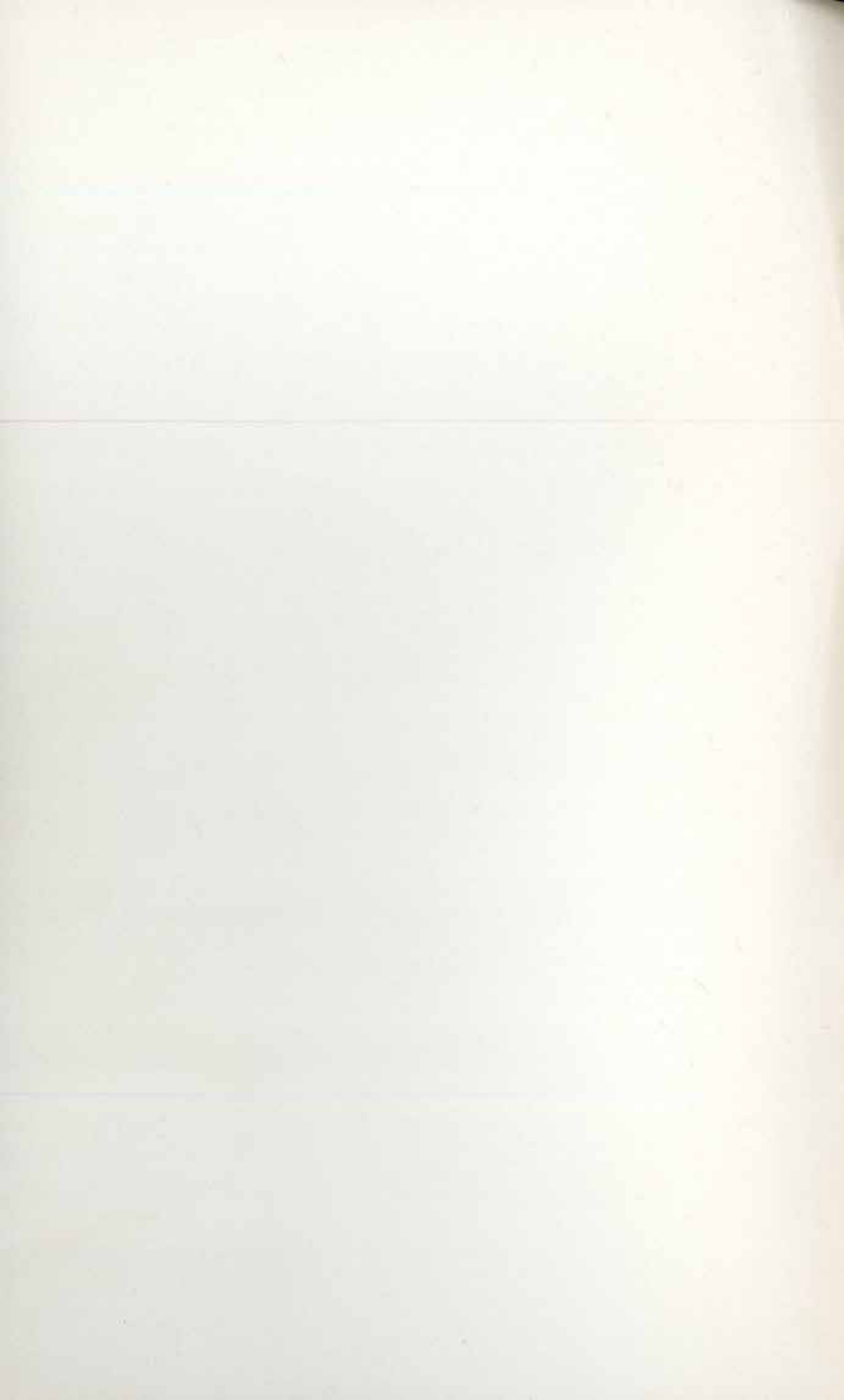
No. 1

January-February 1976



THE JUDGMENTS OF SCRIPTURE	1
THE FEATURES OF SMALLNESS, OR LITTLENES	4
THE HOMECALL OF TWO BRETHREN	7
OUR HERITAGE	10

That I may know Him



THE JUDGMENTS OF SCRIPTURE—7

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Robert M. Rae

In this paper we move on to judgments relating to the future. At the start of these meditations, we indicated three future judgments for consideration, not by any means covering every aspect of judgment, but sufficient to form a framework to which most judgments could be related. The three future judgments are summarised as follows:

<u>Judgment</u>	<u>Those judged</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Nature</u>	<u>Time</u>
1. Judgment Seat of Christ	believers	heaven	adjustive	following Rapture
2. of living nations	Gentile nations	earth	division	just before manifestation
3. of wicked dead	dead small and great	space	punitive	1000 years later

The present article will take us to one of the most momentous periods in human history, in fact to Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 9:25-27). The great event that will terminate the present period of grace is the Rapture of the Church at the coming again of our Lord Jesus. Just after this event, and prior to the Lord coming with His saints to inaugurate His glorious kingdom on earth, the Judgment Seat of Christ will be set up. Before proceeding with our subject, it may be helpful to comment on the two stages of our Lord's coming.

1. The Rapture.

This is imminent. I am convinced that the moral declension that is sweeping over this planet as a vast tidal wave, the increasing pollution of land, sea and air so that many areas are no longer able to sustain life, and finally, the shameful waste of earth's resources by men, when at the same time, millions go hungry, demands an early intervention from the skies. Let me add here, contrary to prevalent teaching today, every blood-bought child of God will respond to the sound of the trumpet.

2. The Manifestation.

Having been conducted by our Lord from that meeting point

in the air, into the Father's House (Jn. 14:1-3), and by way of the Judgment Seat into the Marriage Supper (Rev. 19:7-9) we shall return with Him to take part in His universal administration. We respond gladly with another: "O the joy to see Him reigning, worshipped, glorified, adored."

The Judgment Seat

Let us first consider its great object. I believe it to be two-fold:

1. To ensure that every believer moves into the Marriage Supper (Rev. 19), and beyond that, into the Millennial Kingdom, without a flaw, or inconsistency, having all misunderstandings removed. We should realize that what we fail to put right now God will rectify then. Let us look on the Judgment Seat as a requisite to rule.

In all this one sees how all is adjustive in character. I think we fail to appreciate the moral significance of reigning with Christ in His kingdom, and therefore the solemnity of the judgment we are considering is lost to us.

Were we to understand things as we ought to, we should allow the principles of that coming kingdom to affect us now—with this, adjustment at the Judgment Seat would be minimal.

2. To determine the place we shall occupy in the Kingdom.

Let me say something we do not normally realize: the place we have then is being merited now. I don't talk of the Father's House—grace and grace alone will find a place for me there. We recall the parable of the pounds in Luke 19. I judge that the servants trading in the parable would speak of believers today, trading for gain with the deposit left to them. The cities referred to would speak of the thought of administration. The outcome was the extent of rule (the ten cities) was determined by the success of trading in the absence of their master. Thus the measure of present gain is the measure of future government.

We shall look next at three passages referring to our theme: Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-13; 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Romans 14:10-12.

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? for we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ . . . so then, every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." The main truth that emerges here is accountability.

Have we faced up to this? Paul says we shall give an account to God then; should this cause us to see a new dimension in life? Let us observe too another emphasis in this passage. God will hold me accountable how I treat my brother (v. 15)—"thy brother

for whom Christ died," and again (v. 20) in the same connection—"destroy not the work of God." Do we appreciate that our brother is the work of God?

1 Corinthians 3:11-13.

"If any man build . . . gold, silver, precious stones . . . then every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire." Never was there a fairer assessment—never one more accurate. The balances of the Sanctuary will prove then, how wrong was our estimate of things—the searching gaze of our Lord will detect and destroy much that we gave place to, and fondly cherished. Truly the day shall declare it. Here it is the work that is judged rather than the person, and let us not fail to see in what context we find these verses. In fact Paul is dealing with our contribution to the local assembly. Again I have to ask, If we really believed our every act of service amongst the saints, and the motive that prompted them, would eventually be subjected to such scrutiny, would not things be different?

2 Corinthians 5:10.

"For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad." First accountability, then assessment, now—awards. This is probably the widest scope of all—things done in the body. Should we not all say with Paul in verse 9 of this passage, "Wherefore we labour, that . . . we may be accepted of Him" Thus, in Romans 14:10-12 the Judgment Seat in relation to my brother; in 1 Corinthians 3:11-12 in relation to the local assembly. Finally, 2 Corinthians 5:10, in relation to deeds done throughout my whole Christian life.

Late one afternoon last October, I sat with a few friends on the edge of Lake Louise in the Canadian Rockies. As I rested there in the stillness and breathed in the pure mountain air, I was conscious of impressions being formed in one's soul that won't be easily reased. I gazed ahead to the massive glacier high on the far side of the lake and the mountain sloping down to the lake, then to my delight I saw, as I lowered my eye to the surface of the lake, the whole scene mirrored beautifully on the water. Two things made the reflection possible, first, a surface without a ripple; second, the water itself, pure as the snows that flowed into it.

What is the connection with our little article? Just this,

When I stand before the Throne
Dressed in beauty not my own,

I will see then a perfect reflection of my life down here, in the

purity and undisturbed calm of that heavenly scene, and as I gaze into the face of my Lord and Redeemer before me truly "I will wish I had given Him more." ●



THE FEATURES OF SMALLNESS, OR LITTLENESS

John L. Burns

Matt. 18:1-4; Luke 12:22-32; Rev. 3:7,8; 1 Kings 20:26,27

In these Scriptures the feature of smallness, or littleness is prominent. Firstly, in relation to the Kingdom of Heaven, secondly in relation to discipleship, thirdly, in relation to the state of the Assembly in a day of recovery, and lastly, as the people of God appear before their enemies in the world.

There is little or no room at all for the feature of smallness or littleness in man's world as away from God, there is no room for the features of "the little child" in that world. John in his epistle sums it up under three headings (1 Jn. 2:16): "For all that is in the world, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.*" That world, as headed up and energized by Satan, the god of this world is passing, but "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 Jn. 2:17).

In Matthew 18 the disciples raise the question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" and the Lord Jesus brings a little child "and set him in the midst of them saying, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." These same disciples at the close of the supper in the upper room, at such a time, were striving among themselves which of them should be accounted the greatest (Lk. 22:24). The Lord Jesus addressing them said, "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth" (Lk. 22:26,27). Only true conversion can bring about this change, forming in us the features of the little child. How different from the imposing features that marked us after the flesh! What a

change was wrought in the life of Naaman the Syrian, when turning from the pride of the flesh, and submitting himself to the word of the prophet. 1 Kings 5:14 says, "Then went he down, and dipped (plunged) himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh became like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." The cleansing no doubt was physical, but at the same time, he could exclaim, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." Many years later, that proud young Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, was brought into subjection to the risen and ascended Lord, who said of himself in 1 Timothy 1:13, "Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy." Such a one could exhort the saints at Corinth with these words: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:1), and to the Philippians: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). He could speak of himself as "the least of the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:9), again, in Ephesians 3:8 as "less than the least of all saints." These features as they become evident in the lives of the saints are the features of the Kingdom, and indeed, as has often been mentioned, underlie the truth of the Assembly in the dispensation now, and as thus apprehended, and finding expression amongst the saints would provide suited dwelling conditions for the Divine pleasure, and the unity and joy of the people of God.

In Luke chapter 12 the Lord Jesus addresses His disciples as a "*Little Flock*," i.e., as following Him in the pathway of discipleship here, surrounded as they were with the aspirations of the world, and the pretentiousness of pharisaism, He would set their minds at ease regards the former, when He said, "And seek not ye what ye shall eat, nor what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." Then as to the latter He says, "Fear not **LITTLE FLOCK**, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Publicly, or outwardly in the worldly setting, the pathway of discipleship, or the Church or Assembly position was never divinely intended to be something outwardly great, as representing Him in the day of His rejection. The thought of greatness presently is rather connected with the mustard tree in Matthew 13, as representing that false profession in christendom, which eventually comes under the righteous judgment of God, and in its latter end becomes "the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul

spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. 18:2).

It is of the utmost moment to note the Lord's assessment of each of the seven assemblies in the Book of the Revelation chapters 2 and 3 as He is described in His judicial character as in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, or lampstands. Apart from Smyrna and Philadelphia, the Lord finds much that is negative and dishonouring to the testimony; yea, the last state as represented in the assembly at Laodicea depicts the Lord Jesus on the outside altogether, the feature of insensibility marking them. He could say of them, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, blind, and naked;" yet they were marked by the feature of self-sufficiency, the Lord having to say of them, "Thou sayest, I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing," yet despite such a state the blessed Lord would appeal to the individual saying, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me."

The assembly at Philadelphia (Brotherly Love) on the other hand, is marked by precious features pleasing to the Lord. He could say of them (3:8): "I know they works; behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast *'a little strength,'* and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name." Surely what we have here would correspond with the recovery of the last century and a half, when the Lord's people universally have answered to the voice of the Lord, and the blest Spirit, and come out from all that is displeasing to Him, and although in conditions of smallness, and confessedly much weakness, seeking to keep "the word of His patience," and proving the sweetness of His presence as assembling to His Name and His Name alone. How we should covet in a day of much departure to be marked by the spirit of the overcomer, and to hear His blessed voice afresh saying, "Behold I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Lastly, in 1 Kings chapter 20 the people of God are viewed as surrounded by their enemies, the Syrians, of whom this passage states, filled the land. It is in such a setting the Holy Spirit is pleased to comment that "The children of Israel encamped before them like *'two little flocks of goats'*" (1 Kings 20:27—Darby). What a beautiful picture indeed: the Syrians had said, "The Lord is God of the mountains, but He is not God of the valleys." The worldling can never estimate the power of God! and as the poet has said: "Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan His work in vain; God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain." In the face of the enemy the people of God appeared "like two little flocks

of goats," in themselves weak, in the enemies estimation weak, and an easy prey, but God was for them. Although ever so weak outwardly in the testimonial sphere, yet there is there that which is attractive to the spiritual, in the thought of the two little flocks of goats. Two in Scripture suggestive of testimony, and goats suggestive of separation.

May we be preserved in these closing days of the testimony as understanding, and maintaining the features proper to the kingdom in the spirit of "a little child," in discipleship as the "little flock," in a day of recovery as having "a little strength," and lastly as appearing before the world in the sphere of testimony "like two little flocks of goats." ●

*O lowliness, how feebly known,
That meets the grace that gave the Son!
that waits to serve Him as His own,
Till grace, what grace begun, shall crown.*

—J.N.D.

★ ★ ★

THE HOMECALL OF TWO BRETHREN

S.A. Rae

"Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on these things."

Reflections on two of my brethren—who lived to serve.

When the Holy Spirit places and equips a brother or sister in the assembly for service, how much they are missed when they are gone. They have received of His fulness, and have abounded unto every good work—they were created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. We are drawn to them by lives which are by their very attractiveness, filled from the inexhaustible stream which finds its source in God's Throne.

James Shaw Phillips.

A brother beloved, who knew no other pursuit, only complete devotion toward his Lord and His assembly. There was a time when he moved very quietly among God's people, with no thought of any special gift the Lord might have for him, but when the occasion and need arose, He who moves in the midst of the churches found at His disposal a heart that was willing to be instructed and obedient

to His call.

As a young man he served his apprenticeship as a machinist in Glasgow, and there is now doubt that the precision required and the attention to proven principles in his field helped shape a character which, when faced with spiritual matters, found no other textbook than the Holy Scriptures and, what was of prime importance, possessed a heart that was in close association with the Lord he sought to serve. Not for him the prominence of a platform ministry; he never aspired or claimed he had ever been given this gift; he served in more noble ways. Pastoral and shepherd care were areas in which he delighted and his fine sympathy and warm heart helped encourage and strengthen many a troubled breast.

In a day when much of the reverence which is due our beloved Lord is gone with some, until he was 91 years old he arrived at the Hall in good time to open the door, sweep the dust in summer and snow in winter, have all arranged in good time to welcome the saints and then sit down at the proper time, in the full consciousness that there was One of glory and majesty there, who claimed his utmost adoration and worship.

James Cochrane.

We had barely reconciled to the loss of our brother, when word came telling us of the passing of James Cochrane on the west coast. I say "west coast" because Vancouver would be too localized, for one who had in his thoughts and heart the interests of the whole area for so many years.

The following week I stood by Harrison Lake, a steady breeze whitened the crests of small waves which slipped quietly ashore. It was evening, the mountains, like vast columns pierced the deep blue of the heavens, giving the impression of supporting the vault of some gigantic cathedral, all studded with myriads of stars which gleamed as they had done from the beginning of time. The week had been an eventful one, a quick decision to snatch a few days away from work had not been long enough to unwind, and too many miles had been covered. Here in this awesome mountain grandeur, all things unnecessary seemed to slip away and I was alone with God. In Victoria on this past Sunday at Ross Bay, I had sat down with the saints to remember my Lord, and an old brother who indeed led the praise informed me he had heard George Mueller give out the hymn "We sing of the land of the blest, but what must it be to be there" and the glory of that Day had filled my soul.

Three days at the Swift-Shure Inn had found me impatient to

meet Bob McArthur whom I had learned had gone to hold fort at Imm-adeen. Bob had been acquainted with the Cochrane family for many years from Nanaimo onwards. As we sat and conversed over lunch, in wonderfully rich thought, we went from open-air meeting to cottage, to little companies up and down the Island and across to mainland Provinces, early days in Vancouver testimony, Central Park and elsewhere. A faithful brother and elder brought out of the Divine Treasury things new and old. How strong he was in body, spirit and maturity, and yet how gentle to those who might need the personal care of the true shepherd. So gifted in ministry, yet quick to recognize and appreciate ability in others.

Sailing from Nanaimo to Horseshoe Bay, we were entertained so royally by Matthew and Rachel Pollock, a brief visit with John and Mary Caulfield at the General Hospital where one felt perplexed at the difficulty of the pathway.

Now the week was nearly over. Inside the Harrison there were sounds of revelry, for tonight especially it had no appeal, as I stood by the Harrison looking upward, I recalled the Song of Songs 3:6: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant?" What a sublime picture of our beloved Lord, His life fragrant and rising as incense like pillars of smoke in its fullness. It was said of a Scottish covenanter burned at the stake, the smell of the smoke will be felt in the valley for many a day. As I stood by the shore, I could distinctly catch the fragrance of the life of James Cochrane, rising still as incense as it did as he walked among the saints. James Cochrane knew the past and could profit therefrom, but he also knew how to apply God's Word to the difficulties of the present. His counsel will be greatly missed. They both are now with the Lord they served, so supremely blessed, and perhaps so very soon it shall be our portion too.

Make no mistake, our Lord will raise other servants as He wills to do so. May we learn to pray for them and gladly recognize them for their work's sake in these most difficult days.

O God who callest me to share this union all divine,
 May all my life and ways declare how truly I am Thine. ●



OUR HERITAGE—5

James Anderson

THE LORD'S SUPPER

We are not claiming for a moment that the Lord's Supper is exclusively ours, but in no respect does an assembly meeting differ from its counterpart in Christendom more than our celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Our form of gathering was doubtless devised by those early brethren who met in Dublin nearly 150 years ago. They were not interested in preaching but in remembering their Lord and this accounts for the form this particular gathering took.

No gathering is more entitled to the name of worship meeting than our celebration of the Lord's Supper. The word "worship" is obviously derived from the word "worth." Any gathering which is concerned, as the Lord's Supper is, with the emblems of the Lord's body and blood must be preoccupied with remembrance and it is this very remembrance which is the fuel for worship.

Worship is the highest spiritual exercise in which a Christian can engage. It is more than prayer, which is basically concerned with our requests. It is more than thanksgiving, for that is for blessings received. It is preoccupation with the Lord Jesus for His own sake, because of His own worth. It is being "lost in holy wonder."

This implies that certain other practices should be controlled if worship is to be done properly. The first is ministry. Would it not often be far better if brethren would keep that to its proper place? It seems as if in many places brethren simply take the chance of an open meeting to get little meditations off their chests whether they are suited to a worship meeting or not. Life's experience suggests that most ministry on such occasions, especially before the bread is broken, is an interruption of worship rather than an aid to it. Worship is directed to God so that ministry to the saints simply stops that upward flow.

Neither is the "Morning Meeting" an occasion for giving out favourite hymns. This was the impression gained by a young visitor from another company of Christians to an assembly in a holiday resort and he promptly announced his favourite. Well-chosen hymns can be an asset in such a gathering but others can be a distraction.

Such gatherings require the participation of all the brethren to reach their maximum profitability. They are not occasions for the display of spiritual gift but for appreciation of the Lord Jesus. Surely God expects appreciation from the young as well as from the old. This has been illustrated from the instructions given about the burnt offering in Leviticus chapter 1. (The burnt offering is more associated with worship than any of the other offerings in the Old Testament. There was no compelling reason for it being offered other than the simple desire to express one's appreciation of God.)

A reading of that chapter in Leviticus will reveal that there were three grades of burnt offerings, each reflecting the material wealth of the offerer, yet each was accepted by God as "an offering for a sweet-smelling savour" (verses 9,13 and 17). The important thing was for each offerer to give what he could without reference to somebody else's ability to give. So it is with us. Naturally God doesn't expect a young Christian to give in worship what a more experienced Christian would give, but He does expect him to bring his offering of worship just the same.

The story is told of those early days when the early giants were still alive that a number of them were present at a week-end conference somewhere. On the Lord's Day morning one after another was rising to worship in eloquent terms, but then a young man rose and simply said, "Oh God, what a wonderful Christ." It was the general feeling that "he spake more than they all." The important thing is to give what we can and what an uplift to the saints it is to hear a young voice express such appreciation of the Lord Jesus. Don't be too slow in telling God what you think of His marvellous Son.

This worship is inspired by the remembrance of Christ which is provoked by those emblems, the bread and the cup. This is the first significance of the breaking of bread and it is in accordance with the Lord's own request: "Do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:24).

The second great meaning attached to the Lord's Supper is that it is the symbol of our fellowship or communion. If 1 Corinthians 11 speaks of the bread that is broken by each of us on a Lord's Day as the symbol of the Lord's literal body chapter 10 speaks of the same bread as the symbol of His spiritual body, the church. Hence the reason for some denominations calling this particular gathering their communion service. This means that the loaf has become symbolic of the fellowship into which we are fused by the Spirit of God through our connection with the Lord Jesus. Participation in that celebration is therefore only the privilege of those in

fellowship and of suitable visitors who would be if they resided locally. None of us has any right to invite folks there who would otherwise have no part in that fellowship, whether they are our domestic guests or not. The self-examination of 1 Corinthians 11:28 is for people who are already in fellowship in the local church.

Yet another symbol of this same fellowship is the Lord's Table, another of the word pictures used in 1 Corinthians 10. This must not be confused with the wooden table on which the emblems are usually placed at the breaking of bread meeting. This object has become the symbol of the whole fellowship of God's people and it is a pity that confusion has entered our minds between those tables. Of course reception is to the Lord's Table rather than to the Lord's Supper.

Those two symbols have acquired tremendous meaning but they are not magical. There is no special virtue imparted through eating them. It is quite foreign to the Lord's intention that they should be carried to a person who is in bed sick. They are symbolic of fellowship, not of isolation. This means too that the adoption of individual cups is a denial of that fellowship as the whole idea is that we should partake of the same cup. Nor should any special importance become attached to that on which the symbols are placed.

The burden of these chapters is that we should maintain simplicity. It is no accident that its companion is sincerity. And sincerity is poles apart from ritual and ceremony. Don't let's fall into these although at all times we must observe reverence. Ritual only appears to be reverent, but it is a great hindrance to that freedom of the Spirit that ought to characterise spiritual gatherings. It is so prone to creep into anything that we do regularly. The original breaking of bread gathering was of a group of men who had handed to them bread and wine by which they were to remember their Lord and by which their fellowship with one another was to become symbolised. Let's keep it that way.

These men began to do that on the first day of every week (Acts 20:7). After all that day had acquired tremendous significance for them. Had not their Lord been taken from them and was it not on the first day of the week that He had been restored to them? So wherever men accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour they would be found on that special day remembering Him to whom they owed so much. It seems strange that Christians should lightly miss such a remembrance for the sake of a long lie or an extra shift or anything else in the world. An old stone deaf brother used to quote the line, "I must remember Thee." ●

CHRISTIAN PRESS SERVICE

3111 Conrad Cres., N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2L 1B7

Send any correspondence to:

*Mr. J.L. Burns
648 Hunterplain Hill, N.W.
Calgary, Alberta*

*Mr. S.A. Rae
6531-4 St., N.W.
Calgary, Alberta*