

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLV, April, 1951)

Calm Me, My God

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
While these hot breezes blow;
Be like the night-dew's cooling balm
Upon earth's fevered brow!

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Soft resting on Thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm,
And bid my spirit rest.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Let Thine outstretched wing
Be like the shade of Elim's palm
Beside her desert-spring.

Yes, keep me calm, though loud and rude
The sounds my ear that greet,—
Calm in the closet's solitude,
Calm in the bustling street;

Calm as the ray of sun or star
Which storms assail in vain,—
Moving unruffled through the earth's war,
The eternal calm to gain.

—Horatius Bonar.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

(A Message from 1 Peter)

THE ECHO OF GOD'S BLESSINGS

"O thank me not for songs I sing thee,
They only came from thee to me.
For they were thine and I but bring thee
What is and was and shall be thine."

So run the lines of a well-known love song. And in a higher and truer sense it is that all the gladness and praise of our lips is but the reflection and response to God's good grace which has been freely shed forth upon our hearts. "*Blessed* be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ *who hath blessed us* with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3.) For every good thing first came from Him. We cannot give Him anything whatever until He has first given us His immeasurable gift; and all we give Him

afterwards is "of his own." (1 Chron. 29:11-16.) Nobody has ever "first given to him and it shall be recompensed to him again"; but "of him and through him and unto him are all things; to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Rom. 11:35, 36.)

So the faith and joy of the apostle's heart reflects the blessing of God who has so wondrously blessed us. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

In the few words here quoted Peter sums up much—great things and high, that pass all our comprehension. But let us not forget that he is speaking to common Christians like ourselves—in fact that he speaks *to us*; lest we read with the impression that these things have reference to a people long ago and far away, and much different from ourselves, and probably superior to us in nature and character, like the freaks of saintliness of whom we read in Roman Catholic legends. No, Peter writes to men of like passions with us, common every-day people who had received the gospel of Jesus Christ just as we; people who had to struggle against the same temptations and difficulties as those which beset us, and who were as much troubled with trials and the warfare without and within, but who by the grace of God were God's children in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

"BEGOTTEN AGAIN"

And what was it that God had done for them, for which the apostle's heart breaks forth into such blessings and praise?

First of all that God "begat us again." When we were dead in trespasses and in sins; alienated from the life of God; by nature children of wrath even as the rest—God begat us to a new life and a new nature and a new heredity. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The best and noblest fleshly stock is utterly insufficient unto the kingdom of God. It can not be well-pleasing to God; nor can it inherit the promises. However strange this may seem to us, there is no question about the fact itself, for God declares it so. God's first question about a man is not, "Was he a noble character, a good father, husband, neighbor, citizen"—but, "Has he been born again?" "Except one be born anew he can not see the kingdom of God." No man's natural heredity and state can entitle him to entrance into the kingdom of God, into the ranks of the redeemed ones, and heirs of his promise. There, too, runs the line between God's people and the world; all that are not born again are of the world; but those who are "begotten of God," "born of water and of the Spirit," are thereby God's children; "and if children then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ."

HOW BEGOTTEN

This tremendous change is accomplished, (as Peter himself

tells us in the latter part of this chapter) by the word of God, namely that portion of God's word which is called "the gospel." "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth . . . and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Now the gospel's one chief Theme is Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:1-4). To hear the gospel is to hear Christ preached; and when that message is received in humble, submissive faith, the new life begins, and the new nature (2 Pet. 1:4) is generated within. "As many as received him to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12, 13.) "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God (1 John 5:1). That in order to the new birth this faith must be of the sort that expresses itself in "the obedience of faith" is shown again by Peter in this same chapter: "seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth . . . having been begotten again, etc." (1 Peter 1:22, 23.) And the same fact appears plainly in many other passages (Gal. 3:26, 27; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:17, 18). But although we have an essential part in this matter, as humble and willing recipients of the gift of God—it is purely by an act of "great mercy," on God's part, that we are begotten again; and it is a privilege and gift wholly undeserved by us. After having described our former pitiful condition in strongest terms ("dead in trespasses and in sins"), the inspired apostle says: "But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ: *by grace have ye been saved . . . for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory.* For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:1-10.)

THE HOPE AND INHERITANCE OF GOD'S CHILDREN

Our new birth is the door to great things ahead. God's goodness did not at all stop with that—it only began there. He begat us again for a purpose; which in our present passage is set forth as two-fold.

1. Unto a living hope.
2. Unto an inheritance.

The hope looks forward to the inheritance, and sustains our feet in the way (Rom. 8:24). It is a hope that putteth not to shame (Rom. 5:5) and it rests upon "the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3). Because he lives we shall live also. He now lives to make intercession for us, and to save us to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 5:10). He is Master also over Death and Hades and holds the keys thereof (Rev. 1:18); and His glorious resurrection is the guarantee of ours (1 Cor. 15:20, 23). Therein lies our prospect of the great inheritance.

The inheritance itself, on the other hand, which God bestows upon his own children, is worthy of such a Father. For those whom

He beget are His children; and if children then heirs to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away." Here everything is in the bondage of corruption; everything is defiled; nor is there any hope or prospect in the things of the earth but sooner or later every earthly good fades away. So even the worldly heart perceives:

"The worldly hope men set their hearts upon
Turns ashes—or it prospers, and, anon,
Like snow upon the desert's dusty face
Lighting a little hour or two is gone."

Have we not all chased rainbows? And have we ever yet settled, so far as earthly matters are concerned, whether there is not after all more pleasure in pursuit than in possession? But that inheritance does not disappoint or fade away; and its happy possession never clogs nor becomes common. This patrimony is not here and now. It is an inheritance "reserved in heaven for you." It is of heaven, not of the earth; and it is at the present reserved in heaven for us; kept safe where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

Nor is it said that we enter in upon the possession of it *at the* hour of death. The word of God never represents it that way. True, when the Lord's people depart they are "with Christ," which is "very far better." (Phil. 1:23.) But their promise and their crown and their inheritance abide another day—namely the day of the "salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time."

"KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD"

In the meanwhile, as God keeps our inheritance safe for us, he keeps us also. The inheritance is kept in heaven for those "who by the power of God are guarded through faith, unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." It must be plain to us all that we are not here dealing in a chance-game. The man who is "guarded by the power of God" has absolute assurance. For what power of evil can break through that protection? It is to be noted, however, that the power of God does not guard us *mechanically*—as for example a mother by mere physical strength should hold fast her child. God keeps us "through faith." We must hold fast our faith. For as we became children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, so do we walk in Him. (Col. 2:6, 7). By faith we live, by faith we stand, by faith we walk. We fight the good fight of faith; and our faith is our victory that overcomes the world. (Jno. 5:4.) Christian, see thy faith! It came by the word (Rom. 10:17)—the word must sustain it. Never lose faith in what God testifies; let the contrary testimony of our senses and reasonings be what it may. Never lose faith *in God*—in His power to see us through, in his goodness, in His mercy and love, in His faithfulness to fulfil his word. Never lose faith in the blood of Christ, nor in the power of His intercession (Heb. 7:25) nor in His perfect ability to save you to the uttermost, whatever comes or goes. By faith shall you be kept, and by faith you shall win out and receive the inheritance. (Heb. 10:37-39.)

NEWS AND NOTES

Dallas, Tex.: "Henry Harding and I are planning to exchange pulpits for about two months this summer, and then I plan to spend about a month in Louisville, so that will keep me away from the work here for about three months or more. If our plans materialize Henry will begin preaching here at East Grand church about the second Sunday in July, and remain here over the first Sunday in September, going from here to the Louisville Preacher's Meeting, and back to Greenville, S. C."—J. E. Blansett.

Hazel Park, Mich.: "Brother Greer has been sick with the flu for the past week and a half; he almost had pneumonia. Bro. George Dunn preached for us at West Point church Sunday.—Mrs. Sam Askew.

Knoxville, Tenn.: "We had Paul Clark with us from Johnson City not long ago and wonderful fellowship. Wish we could have such fellowship more often. At times we feel a little isolated and hungry for that fellowship."—Victor N. Broadus.

Glenmore, Ky. "This is my thirtieth consecutive year as a subscriber to the Word and Work. My membership is still at Portland as I still own my own home up there. I attend church at 12th Street in Bowling Green while living here."—Mrs. Zula Houchin.

Tell City, Ind.: "I have been hearing and enjoying the Saturday morning WGRC broadcasts. I get a lot of good from the Word and Work too."—Frank E. Sandage.

Brother Boll asks us to commend Brother J. Edward Boyd's contributions to the Word and Work. He especially mentions his series on Acts, which are very fine. It seems that Brother Boyd always says the right thing in the right way.

Linton, Ind.: "The radio program is coming in here very fine."—Waldo S. Hoar.

Gallatin, Tenn.: "We closed a meeting here Sunday with very good results. It was just a week's meeting—from Sunday to Sunday—and there were 20 responses; 12 were baptized into Christ. Brother

Olmstead had a question and answer period for about 15 minutes at each evening service and I did the preaching. Interest was very good and we had a great many visitors from the community. The auditorium was filled last Sunday and we had to use chairs besides the pews to take care of the crowd. We had to move the Wednesday night meeting out of the small chapel and into the main auditorium to take care of the crowd. There were 47 Junior and Senior Young People present last Sunday night for Youth meetings."—Hall C. Crowder.

"UNITY AND DEBATES" ARTICLE IN TRACT FORM

It seems that the article on "Unity and Debates" appearing in March Word and Work was the sentiments of many, judging from the many expressions from friends and the requests for copies. We have put it out in a little four-page tract and have already had requests for several hundred. If any of our readers would like some to distribute you may have them at \$1 per hundred. Send postage for a sample.

Extra Word and Work quarterlies are available to churches that run short.

Replace that Worn Bible

Is your Bible getting old and worn? It is your most precious possession. We would be glad to replace it with a new one at regular retail price, post paid. Please remember the Word and Work when buying Bibles, church supplies, and religious books.

GOSPEL TRACT SERVICE

"I have recently started a non-profit tract service through which ministers and Christians may purchase tracts at cost of printing. I have my own print shop and print two new tracts each month. No preacher can afford not to be a member of the tract club. Send only \$1 and receive choice tracts and booklets each month for a year. You will receive far more than a dollar's worth. From the samples you may select the ones you wish to buy. Some sell for as little as \$2 per thousand. Help me

to get the samples in your hands each month."—Jule Miller, Manager, Gospel Tract Service, Searcy, Arkansas.

Brother Jule puts out good, attractive tracts. Send him a dollar. You'll get more than a dollar's worth of tracts is my guess.—J. R. C.

Jacksonville, Fla.: "Work is going along nicely in this area. We have increased our number of congregations by one more, bringing to a total of four in the N. E. Fla. area. Woodstock agreed to divide, leaving the members on the north side of the river to continue at Woodstock and all on the south side to begin a new work. Johnnie Adams is beginning the new work with a nucleus of about six families. We found a concrete block building with an acre of land in a fairly thickly settled area. It is centrally located to all of southside. Everything is out of sight in price now but they want only \$3000 for land and building. It was built for a church but apparently fell through. We are running revival meeting in the building and praying about the matter before deciding for or against it. We want to see how the neighborhood responds to us. Last night was the first night and we had very good results. Please pray over this matter.

I told where Johnnie was going and I forgot to tell you who is taking Woodstock. They were hard up so they took me on. It is a big job much bigger than I am but by God's grace I believe I can do a work there. Please pray for me, for I realize more and more my inability to meet the great opportunities that come before me. I don't think anyone is really prepared when opportunity arises. Brady Green wrote me last week that Greenville hopes to get into their new building right soon. I am glad for them.

"We can never thank all of you good people enough for the wonderful hospitality that we enjoyed in Louisville this past year. I have really profited greatly by playing back the recordings of those fine sermons. You don't realize how full a man's sermon is until you listen to it over and over again.

"Well I must close and try to

get a little work done. We really appreciate your good hymnal, it makes our services rich in worship."—Dan Richardson.

Crowley, La.: "I am still working with the Pine Prairie and Upper Pine Prairie churches. The work at Pine Prairie is doing well. Brother Ivy Istre conducted a meeting there from March 18 through the 25th."—Harry Prather.

New Orleans, La.: "I have recently preached at Jennings, Boothville, Estherwood, and Big Creek, as well as at Seventh and Camp Streets, New Orleans. Also made short talks in services at Crowley, Amite, nad Hayden's Grove. The last three have new houses as have Big Creek, Pride, Abbeville, Cy-Pine Prairie is doing well. Brother Jaque. Boothville brethren are collecting funds to build—a lot has been donated. Alexandria built not long back. Glenmora and Oakdale plan enlargements."—Stanford Chambers.

Gallatin, Tenn.: "I was with the Ebenezer church near Harrodsburg, Kentucky, for thirteen days in a special effort to enlarge the spiritual vision of the good brethren there and help them to launch a much needed building program. We had good audiences and fine interest for the time of year. Bro. H. N. Rutherford was our song leader except on Saturdays and Sundays. Brethren Dale Jorgenson and Harold Preston were valuable helpers over the week ends. The chorus from the Kentucky Bible College was present one night. Delegations from Lexington, Bohon, Mackville and Fisherville were present on various occasions besides a goodly number of other visitors. We preached a few 'revival sermons' toward the close and two young men were baptized into Christ."—H. L. Olmstead.

Dallas, Texas: "The work here continues with the blessings of the Lord upon it. The most encouraging is the spiritual growth, although we have had numerical increase also. There were 109 in Bible school last Sunday morning as compared to 65 a year ago. The school has been running close to this percentage for some time. A most wonderful spirit of accord is

manifest in the leadership, and the vision and faith manifest is refreshing indeed. Please pray for us. We have a much enlarged program before us, a work of faith first by choice that God may be our sufficiency, and by necessity next, because it is larger than any possible visible means."—Frank M. Mullins.

KENTUCKY BIBLE COLLEGE CHORUS TRIP

Ten singers of the Kentucky Bible College chorus are being conducted on a singing tour by director Dale Jorgenson and President Winston Allen. They have singing appointments at New Orleans, Amite, DeRidder, Crowley, Jennings, and Turkey Creek, all points in Louisiana. They have six radio programs scheduled as well as engagements at some high schools. They left Louisville April 5 and are to arrive back in Louisville April 14. We hope this trip stirs up much interest in the College and its program of training young people. Young people who are entering college next year or who are in line for second year work should consider this institution. It presents both educational opportunities under good, qualified teachers and spiritual development. Ask those who attend how well they love the environment and training they receive at Kentucky Bible College.

Lexington, Ky.: "Meeting here

is showing much interest. Brother May is in great favor with the people. One baptism and one for membership thus far."—H. N. Rutherford.

Lockport, Ky.. Meeting

Brother F. S. Spaulding is in a meeting at Lockport, Ky., as this note is being written. The starting date was April 8 and the meeting is to run for two weeks. The Borden, Indiana, church is graciously releasing him for this mission effort, as the Lockport church is a new work. They hope to have some visitors from other points during the meeting.

Tell City, Ind.: "The Lord surely gave us a wonderful meeting here yesterday morning (March 18). It was truly a warm and spirited one, even though it was cold, rainy and dreary outside. We had 123 in attendance, five came for primary obedience, and two for membership. The five are to be baptized Wednesday night and we feel the Lord will move others to come both for baptism and membership.

"I am to be with Brother Rake and the brethren at Winchester, Ky., for twelve days in a meeting beginning April 11, the Lord willing."—Elmer C. Ringer.

"The Word and Work is a help in these trying times and I do enjoy it."—Naomi Anderson, Dugger, Ind.

Kentucky Bible College Needs

In a recent directors' meeting it was reported that the college had been able to pay all teachers' salaries thus far with around \$300 in the treasury. However, this amount is insufficient to finish the year. Practically all tuition money is in; now we must look to the Lord to stir up funds from His people otherwise. We certainly hope and pray that the school will be able to pay in full her consecrated and sacrificing teachers. It was pointed out that the college is a venture of faith and that we must look to the Lord for our help now as always.

Six students who are completing their second year have expressed a desire for third year work. The directors favor seminary courses for the third year rather than the regular third year college curriculum. Two things needed before the College can meet the requirements of a National Bible College Accrediting Agency are: 1. At least forty students and 2. a more adequate college library.

Let us pray that these two needs may be forthcoming and that funds for the remainder of the year may come in.

—J. R. Clark, chairman, Promotion Committee.

SHALL WE DETOUR ROMANS 14?

Stanford Chambers

The great body of truth contained in the Roman letter is one. It is addressed to all at Rome called to be saints, called from among both Jews and Greeks. They all had been convicted of sin, having transgressed the written law on the one hand or the law of their own consciences on the other. They had all found justification through the one and only Savior, had exercised faith in His Saviorhood, had obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, had been made free from sin and become servants of righteousness, had received the gift of the Holy Spirit to help their infirmities and to make intercession for them, had been incorporated into the one body, made members "severally one of another," and enjoyed the essentials of the kingdom of God—"righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." They were builded together for "a habitation of God in the Spirit."

"MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER"

This is fellowship, fellowship divinely appointed and provided for. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." One cannot say to another "I have no need of thee." One cannot assume the role of a non-member because, perchance, another has said to him, "I have no need of thee." The Head of the body has something to say about that, and He is concerned about the fellowship of His saints. As pointed out in J. R. Clark's article on Unity (March Word and Work) our Lord wills that all be endeavoring to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," the while we are attaining to "the unity of the faith." The "unity of the Spirit" is now; the "unity of the faith" comes as we grow in spiritual knowledge. Unity and disfellowship or nonfellowship are not synonymous terms.

At Corinth fellowship was being interfered with over preachers. They who were saying, "I am of Cephas," would soon, if not already, be saying to others, "I have no need of thee." They of Apollos could be saying to those of Paul, "I have no need of thee." That, Paul shows, is the course of carnality, not spirituality. Paul writes in order that the thing might be "nipped in the bud." It must have proved effective, for in his second epistle he speaks of their obedience and of their clearing themselves. Fellowship of the saints was restored at Corinth.

But in the Roman letter Paul has occasion to treat of other matters by which fellowship was being interfered with. There were vegetarians and non-vegetarians; there were sabbatarians and non-sabbatarians. Here were doctrinal differences which affected practice. Those on either side of either issue considered the others wrong in doctrine and in practice. Now "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" And more important still (in thinking in terms of today), "How can I fellowship error and not be endorsing it?" The one occupying the opposite position is by the other considered

the weak brother. The divine instruction is (Rom. 14:1), "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not for decision of scruples" (A. V. "to doubtful disputations"). And again, "why dost thou set at nought thy brother?" (14:10). This inspired instruction ignores those if's and but's the carnally-minded set up as barriers of God's designed fellowship.

The mistake of some today is in detouring such divine teaching in their haste to get to Rom. 16:17 and thus manifest their loyalty to "sound doctrine" and promote a party made up of their own kind in a "true church" and a fellowship narrower than that divinely purposed and provided for. Such a fellowship thus restricted is factional and sectarian in spirit, and, being contrary to the inspired teaching, is unscriptural.

Paul had some experience with this kind of thing at Antioch. He tells us about it in the second chapter of Galatians. Those who brought the pressure to bear were at least semi-vegetarians (of course, sabbatarians) who sought to bring the Gentile converts to conformity within their restrictions. Peter felt the pressure and "fearing the circumcision," "drew back," he even "separated himself." "The rest of the Jews did likewise." This was "dissimulation," and "even Barnabas was carried away" with it. Paul stood for the unity of the Spirit and withstood the dissimulation. But think of the pressure which was brought to bear, affecting as it did even Peter and Barnabas. How plausible the contention was made to appear, and on how many counts you easily imagine they charged the uncircumcised and those who did not take a stand with the dissimulation! They could be classed with all the uncircumcised of all paganism, charged with profaning the Sabbath, eating swine's flesh, drinking swine's broth, eating meats sacrificed to idols as Gentiles were accustomed to do, even all the heathen. What a case they must have made out! but it did not stand up before the truth which Paul declared, and it is to the credit of Peter as well as Barnabas that in the council in Acts 15 they stood with the apostle Paul. We need Paul to stand up against the present day dissimulations.

Brethren who "speak where the Scriptures speak" should be easily entreated to follow the teaching of inspiration against dissimulation, against setting brethren at nought, and the instruction to "receive one another" in an earnest endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," "until we all attain unto the unity of the faith." Those instigating the dissimulation at Antioch in which "even Barnabas was carried away" were doctrinally in error, but they made a loud claim for loyalty and soundness. Temporarily *they won the debate*, but "truth crushed to earth will rise again." God grant that all of us may eschew error and come to the full knowledge of the truth.

It is quite an accomplishment to hate error without hating the ones who made it.

LOVING HIS APPEARING

R. H. B.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give to me at that day; and not to me only but also to all them that have loved his appearing." So wrote Paul in his final charge to his son Timothy. He was then in prison in Rome, in the death cell, but we can not miss the spirit of peace and the certainty of hope, that pervaded the last utterances of that great soul. He looked back upon his career with quiet satisfaction; he looked forward to the future with joyful confidence and anticipation. He knew quite well that the Lord, the righteous Judge, would award him the crown of righteousness in that day. Now if he had ended his sentence at that point, it would all have been right and good—but it would not have held out any great hope and prospect for the rest of us. For there are not many whose life and word could be compared with Paul's. If the Lord would give *him* a crown of righteousness, that would be fair and fitting; but hardly could He grant such honor to any of the rest of us. But the apostle says, "Yes—it is not to me only but also *to all them that have loved his appearing.*" Now we can take new hope and courage. The promise is for ordinary people, then such as we are, sore troubled with trials and temptations, and the burdens of life, indeed for all who love His appearing.

Now we will want to ask who they are that love His appearing. The answer is simple and obvious: it is *those who would be glad to see Him come*, to whom the coming of Christ is a hope, an event welcome and much to be desired. Those who love His appearing can from the heart join in the prayer of John in Patmos, and say, "Amen: even so come, Lord Jesus."

Not of all professing Christians could this be said. There are those "who mind earthly things," and have set their affection on things below. There are those who have their hearts set on plans and purposes which would be sadly voided if Jesus came now. There are those also to whom the coming of the Lord would be a dread and a calamity rather than a hope. Hardly could any such as these be said to love His appearing. But there are those who expectantly wait for Him, and to whom His return is a matter of deep interest and joyful anticipation.

If we inquire more narrowly into the question, "Who are they that love his appearing?" we would have to conclude first of all that it would be those who *love* the Lord Jesus. Now this is the real essence of the Christian faith. Peter sums it up in these words, "Whom not having seen, ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice greatly, with Joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Peter 1:8.) "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema. Marana-tha," says Paul; and "grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible." (1 Cor. 16:22; Eph. 6:24.) The one thing He wants to know of us,

first and above all things, is what He once asked of humbled, penitent Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?" Those who love you are glad to see you come back, after some long absence. But it is not only that. We could conceivably get to see Him and be with Him by going to Him. But the thing the New Testament holds out as the goal of hope is His return from heaven. It is not only that we want to see Him, but we want to see His triumph and glory. For

"Our Lord is now rejected and by the world disowned,
By the many still neglected, and by the few enthroned:
But soon He'll come in glory, the hour is drawing nigh,
For the crowning day is coming bye and bye."

And many great things are bound up with that—among them our own hope; for "when Christ who is our life shall be manifested, then shall we also be manifested with him in glory." (Col. 3:4.) Then will be "the revealing of the sons of God"—the event for which all creation waits in eager expectancy; the hour of the redemption of our body. (Rom. 8:18-23) "For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." That, and more shall transpire in the day when Christ shall appear a second time to them that wait for him, unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.)

But true and glorious as are these promises, they would still leave our hearts with misgivings and fears, if it were not for another factor that enters into the matter. The coming of the Lord can hold no hope to any except those who stand in the grace of God. All Christians are conscious of deficiency and personal unworthiness. I say not this to excuse or condone sin. But as we advance in the Christian life and our conscience becomes more tender and sensitive, we are less and less disposed to bank on our own record of faithfulness, and more inclined to say, "Lord, be thou merciful to me a sinner." However we may have grown we feel that we fall immeasurably short of the likeness and stature of the glorious Lord whom we adore. If taken simply at my personal worth and value, how could I be joyful in the expectation of my Lord's return? Would I measure up under his all-seeing eye? Would I not rather be inclined to "put far off the evil day"? I fear that is what many do, and that is the explanation of their repugnance to the doctrine of Christ's return. It is evident that unless *this* point were settled that the coming of Christ can be no comfort or hope to us. But the Lord has provided an answer of peace to this question.

"Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind," writes Peter, "be sober, and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:13.) He will come with *grace* to His own. Now grace is always God's free favor to the unworthy and undeserving. Grace meets us where we are, and makes good all our lack. It was, and is, and will be, by grace, that we are saved; and there will be no boasting on part of any of God's redeemed ones. It is on this grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we are bidden

to set our hope perfectly. If any think that this assurance would make us careless in our lives, John tells us that the result will be the very opposite. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us," he says, "that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. But we know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is." Now note what comes of that: "And every one that hath this hope set on him [i. e. on Christ] purifieth himself even as he is pure." If he had said that we may have this hope on condition that we purified ourselves as He is pure, it would not have helped us: we could never come up to that. But the hope is ours first, and freely given; and everyone who has such a hope will on the strength of it purify himself even as he is pure. The hope of Christ's coming therefore is a purifying hope. And they who have it will also love His appearing; and to all such will the Lord, the righteous Judge give the crown of righteousness in that day.

CAN IT HAPPEN HERE?

As we read of what has taken place in other parts of the world, no longer do we dare to say, "It can never happen here!," for with the invention of the atomic bomb a new and startling element of uncertainty has suddenly been injected into the life of every one everywhere. It has once and for all removed even the most secluded parts of the earth's surface from any possibility of isolation and has added new meaning and force to the statement that "thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov. 27:1.)

Humanly speaking anything may happen. may happen anywhere and at any time, with the sudden unleashing of hitherto almost undreamed of forces of destruction. With the tremendous bitterness and suspicion among the nations which is constantly being manifested, even as their representatives are seated around the peace tables, the future prospects of the world seem to be darker than ever.

However for a true Christian there is a glorious ray of divine certainty amid the threatening clouds of human uncertainty and confusion. This certainty lies in the knowledge that:

1. *God has a Definite Program for the Nations of the World.*

In Matthew 24 and elsewhere there is a clear outline as to what we should expect and in what course world history shall continue to run until the consummation is brought about through the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. In His omnipotence God will permit nothing to interfere with the fulfillment of His Word, regardless of the plans and attempts of men and of the forces of evil to thwart or to change it.

2. *God Has a Definite Plan for His Church.*

The Lord Jesus Himself promised to Peter that the unshakable

foundation of His Church would be the absolute and changeless Deity of His Own Person and that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). The certainty of the fulfillment of God's plan for His church is guaranteed in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

3. *God Has a Detailed Blue-Print for the Life of Each One of His Children.*

Every true believer KNOWS that he is a child of God, by reason of his personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as his own Savior and as Lord of his life, to Whom he has unreservedly committed himself for time and for eternity. (1 John 3:2; 4:12-15.)

He KNOWS also that the Lord has a definite work for him to do and a definite plan for service and witness in that particular sphere which He, and He alone, has appointed. Moreover the success and satisfaction in living will be in exact proportion to the degree in which his life is lived in accordance with God's plan for him. (Eph. 2:10.)

He also KNOWS that nothing can come into his life in the way of danger, disease, disappointment, nor even death itself without the Lord's permission. Moreover, that permission will be granted only with the purpose of God's glory and of His blessing upon the one who meets them. (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 9:8; Job 23:10.)

With this threefold assurance in your heart you may begin each day of your life in calm assurance and confidence, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28), and knowing also that since you are clasped in the love of Christ, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39).

Without this assurance life cannot but be dark and foreboding in view of the universal uncertainty that prevails. Only as your life is definitely committed to the Lord and as you are consciously and continually under His guidance and His protection can your future be assured, either in this world or in the world to come. If you have not yet taken this step, why delay doing so any longer? Now is the day of salvation." Just now accept Him in your heart as your Savior and Lord and begin today to rejoice in the experience of His presence and power in you and step out in faith under the sure guidance of Him "Who knows the end from the beginning."

—T. Stanley Soltau

HYPOCRISY AND REALITY

To do religious works to be seen of men is hypocrisy. To get away from hypocrisy one must do what he does with reference to God. Reality is something we must fight for to have it. And we must be constantly vigilant, for hypocrisy (even as its instigator and promoter) creeps upon you.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

(Continued from February Issue)

Robert B. Boyd

You will notice that the title of my message is First THINGS First. But I want to point out just now that before we can get people to put first THINGS first, we must get them to put the first THING first. Things—that is plural, and recognizes that in the numerous choices we must make each day, we must learn to give some things the preeminence. But before we can get people to do that, we must get them to settle in their hearts as to the first *thing*. We cannot read the life of the Apostle Paul, after he became a Christian, without being impressed with the fact that here was a man who truly put first things first. But you will also notice that the Apostle Paul first gave his own self to the Lord! He first took care of the one thing needful. He believed that in *Christ* He had found everything. He could have gloried in the flesh—"if any other man thinketh to have condence in the flesh, I yet more." But when he found Christ as his personal Savior, all things that were gain to him became as nothing. He says, "Howbeit what things were gain to me, these Have I counted loss for Christ. Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse. that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith" (Phil. 3:8, 9).

Paul, what have you given up? Were you not in position to reap great fame, prestige, honor, yea, even wealth? Were you not well on your road of great success among your people? Yes, that is right, Paul could answer. All of that is true. And more than that (he could say), I was personally sincere, earnest, and greatly zealous, and as touching the righteousness which is in the law, I was found blameless. And now, Paul, since you are a Christian, what have you found? Everything! Did you say, Everything? Indeed, that is what I said! But Paul, didn't you lose the favor of your own people, didn't you lose your job, your popularity and prestige? Yea, I suffered the loss of all things. And what has happened since you've become a Christian? Well, I've worked hard and faithfully as a servant of Christ. I've been put in prison, and I've received stripes above measure, and I've often suffered death, though not yet dead! "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered ship-wreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:23-27). And now, Paul, how do you feel a-

bout the situation? Well, I simply now, as always, want only that "Christ shall be magnified in my body whether by life, or death, For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Those things that were once gain to me,—well, compared to Christ, they are but "refuse," or garbage!

On one occasion Jesus entered a certain village, "and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving; and she came up to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister did leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. But the Lord answered and said unto her. Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:38-42). Did you notice what Jesus said to Martha? "One THING is needful."

Let's get the picture. Jesus, the man who spake as no other ever spake, from whose lips flowed forth the marvelous words of life, entered into the home of his good friends. We'll make the scene up to date, in our description thereof. In the living room Jesus started talking, and Mary immediately fell at His feet. We can see her there, with upturned face, listening as though in a trance, and perhaps with wide eyes, or maybe they were moist with tears, and with her mouth open in astonishment at His marvelous talk. But in the kitchen Martha is very busy. She is preparing a meal. It is not an easy job, and often works on the nerves, as the cook begins to get hot, and surrounded by dirty pots and pans. The longer she worked, the more irritable she became. Perhaps she began to make unnecessarily loud noises with the utensils as her irritation increased. Where is my sister? Why does she leave me to do all of the work? What does she mean by just sitting in the living room, doing nothing, while I slave away to prepare a good meal for our honored guest. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She bursts in upon Jesus and her sister, and ignores the beautiful scene of the living room. She rudely interrupts the Lord, and says, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister leave me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." Did Jesus arise, and apologize to Martha? He did not. He took occasion to teach a much needed lesson—needed then, and needed now. Martha, you are in the wrong, and Mary is right. Now, Martha, it isn't wrong to cook, prepare meals, and to serve. No, indeed, God bless the hands that labor so diligently to feed the servants of God their physical food. But Martha, it is so easy to give improper emphasis to proper things, and that is what you are guilty of. You are trying to be courteous to me, I know that; but Mary was the more courteous. When I started to speak, she could have left the room, as you did; but no, she made the choice of listening to me, and my words. You see, Martha, there is one thing needful—and Mary hath chosen to put that one thing first. Mary has chosen wisely, and you have chosen unwisely. Well, from this story, we see again that

if we are to put first *things* first, we'll have to learn to put the first *thing* first.

THE SOLUTION

So the *first* requirement is to lead God's people to a full surrender of the entire being to God. They must be born-again people who not only have received the gift of the Spirit, but who have, in some measure, at least, yielded to the leadership and power of His presence. After all, our choices are between things spiritual and things material. Our choices are between things that appeal to the flesh and those that appeal to the Spirit. Our choices are those that contribute to the satisfaction of self or God. Now, the *natural* man chooses things that contribute to material satisfaction. Therefore, if a child of God is yet carnal, his choices are those of the natural man. And the natural man is at home in *this* world. But the Spirit of God is interested in eternal things above all else. Thus, when we command carnal Christians to put first things first, it may be that through the processes of human reasoning he can see that, on a mathematical, calculative basis, eternal things are more important than temporal things. But the carnal Christian has not the *desire* for spiritual things. So any amount of conformity to a spiritual set of rules is a burdensome thing, and soon he will be found again going the way of the flesh. The only way not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh is to "walk by the Spirit." Only when we are spiritual can we say with success: "We make it our aim to be well-pleasing unto him."

I close with this illustration. One time a young man, who had studied violin under a great master musician, had reached that point in his studies that he was to present his graduation concert. The auditorium was filled with music lovers, and well wishers. He played his first number, and the audience was well pleased, and demonstrated their pleasure with a good round of applause. But the young musician seemed not to notice the applause. He did not smile, or bow to the audience, but with a very serious, solemn face stared at a certain spot in the balcony. He played another number, and the audience applauded even more, but still he gave no sign of recognition, but again stood solemnly looking toward the same spot in the balcony. Finally, when he had played his last number, the crowd went wild. They applauded loudly, cheered, and let it be known in various ways that they considered this musician a great success. But still he stood looking toward a certain spot in the balcony. Finally, as he stood looking, he began to smile, and as his smile grew broader, he bowed politely to his audience.

After the performance, a friend of his asked, "What was wrong with you tonight? Why did you never acknowledge the tremendous applause the audience gave you after each number? And what were you looking at in the balcony?" The successful young musician replied: "After each number, I looked up at a certain spot in the balcony because that was where my Master was sitting. And finally, when you saw me smile, and bow to the audience,—well, I did so

because I saw my Master nod his head in approval. The applause of the audience meant nothing to me without the approval of my Master. My aim was to play so as to please him. If it pleased the audience, but did not please him, then I was a failure. But when my performance pleased my Master, then all was well."

Well, I wish that Christians everywhere were that conscientious about pleasing their Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. May God help us to make it our aim to be well-pleasing unto Him. May we who preach be granted of God the grace and the power to lead folk to a completely surrendered life unto Christ—to count him as everything, as the one in Whom all the fulness dwells, as the one Who is more precious than all of the treasures of earth, Whose nod of approval is more to be desired than popularity or prestige. Then we will have no difficulty in putting first things first.

SEED THOUGHTS

(Contributed by Brother Bolly)

"A creed," says Huxley, "is fatal to science."



"What are you trying to prove by this?" an observer asked a scientist concerning an experiment the latter was conducting. He replied, "A scientist does not try to prove anything—he is only intent on finding out truth."



A Christian is not afraid of the scientific spirit. He welcomes it. If only there were more of real scientific approach to the word of God—just and sincere, without blind pre-judgments or pre-commitments. The men of Berea (Acts 17:11) had the true scientific spirit.



"I know where the lamp-lighter is by the string of lighted lamps behind him," said Harry Lauder. So can one trace the trail of the Bible among men and nations.



Shakespeare's saying—

"There is a tide in the affairs of men

Which taken at its flood leads on to fortune;

Omitted, all the voyage of their life

Is bound in shallows and in miseries"

—does it not apply as to salvation also? "Today if you hear his voice, harden not your heart."



"Cemetery" is a word of Christian coinage. Literally it is "*Koimeterion*"—"a sleeping place." Never before the Christian era was a burial-place so called. But the Christian's death is a blessed "falling asleep" in the Lord. They do not die (John 8:51) for their Lord has died *for* them. They fall asleep. That means rest, relief,

release, and departure to be with the Lord, which is "*very far better.*" (Phil. 1:23.) These, too, like the saints that are living on the earth, wait for that blessed day of triumph and glory, the day of our "adoption, to wit the redemption of our body," at the coming of Christ.



"Some murmur when their skies are clear
And wholly bright to view,
If but one speck of dark appear
On their great heav'n of blue.

"And some with thankful love are filled,
If but one ray of light
One gleam of God's good mercy gild
The darkness of their night."

—Richard Chevenix Trench



Talk about fatalism! There is no fatalistic predestination like that of unbelieving materialistic science. Truly according to it "out of the first clay the last man was made." The machine of Cause and Effect must run for evermore, until it runs itself out; and nothing can change its course. And then what?



The love of God has contradictory effects: It liberates, but it constrains; it sets free, but it imposes a yoke; it delivers from servitude and bondage, and it makes us slaves to Him that loved us.



To some highly educated folk all the old truths are lies, and all the new lies are truths. This is the triumph of the modern wisdom.



"You men who followed Napoleon across the Alps must have been greatly devoted to your leader," one said to a veteran of Napoleonic campaigns. "Devoted?" replied the old soldier—"why, man, we *believed* in him. If he had told us to march to the moon we would have started, and looked to him to make the way." O that men had such faith in Jesus Christ, who alone is worthy of it!



"Daddy, isn't it funny to hear a man speak who means what he says," said a little girl to her preacher daddy after a missionary spoke. The missionary was shabbily dressed and had made a rather doubtful impression on the daddy.



The church at Laodicea didn't mean their religion. If the things of the Lord are true we should set our hearts completely upon them.



You can't find a church that majors on the world's amusement that amounts to anything for the Lord. Such a church is dead while she lives. 1 Tim. 5:6.



"I looked at Jesus, and the dove of peace flew in my heart. I looked at the dove of peace, and it flew away."

PROTESTANTISM AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The sixteenth-century Reformation may be described briefly as a *revolt in principle* from the whole idea of mediæval Christianity; an attempt to get back to *Scriptural* simplicity in doctrine and church order. It was a protest against the *Papacy*—against its hierarchical system, with the abuses, corruptions, and intolerable usurpations that had grown up in connection with it; against its monastic system, and enforced celibacy of the clergy; against its doctrinal system—its adding tradition to Scripture, its doctrine of the Mass, its obscuring and perverting of justification by merging it in baptism,* and connecting it with works; its doctrines of penance, indulgences, purgatory, etc. These things, with the papal claims generally, the Reformers swept entirely away, declaring them to be neither Apostolic, Scriptural, nor Primitive, and upholding in their place the supreme authority and sufficiency of Holy Scripture, the universal priesthood of believers, a non-priestly ministry, the lawfulness of the marriage of the clergy, justification by faith alone, and good works as the fruit of faith, not as a cause of salvation.

To judge how far the Reformers were justified in this uncompromising rejection of Roman claims and doctrines, it is necessary to look a little more closely at the *nature and grounds of these claims*. The Roman Church, as built upon the rock of *Christ's promise to St. Peter*, "Thou art Peter," etc. (Matt. 16:18), claims to be one and unchanging, incapable of error in doctrine, and in the person of its head, the Pope of Rome, successor of St. Peter, and Christ's vicegerent on earth, exercising an unchallengeable supremacy in the Church, and (were its rights conceded to it) over secular state as well. This, its fundamental claim, rests on a series of propositions of the boldest kind. Such are—that St. Peter was invested by Christ with a primacy among the Apostles and in the Church; that this primacy descended to successors and continues; that St. Peter was the first Bishop of Rome; that the Roman bishops are his successors; that the succession of these bishops has remained from the beginning unbroken and inviolate; that the Pope, in his official capacity, is infallible; that he possesses a temporal as well as a spiritual supremacy. Claims these, so vast in their scope as to be well-nigh unthinkable; so daring, when read in the light of the forms they have assumed in history, as almost to take one's breath away; so presumptuous that, if not true, they verge on the blasphemous! But are they justified?

The claims in question, fortunately, admit of being brought to the bar of Scripture and of History, and here, it is plainest fact to say, they *break down* utterly. Impartial interpretation of Christ's promise to St. Peter in no way upholds the theory of a general rule of that Apostle over the whole Church—a rule of which the apostolic

* This the Catholic do by making water the efficacious agent. In simple New Testament faith baptism is not an act of merit, but simply an expression of faith. To the simple Christian baptism is faith reaching out its hand for God's free salvation.—R. H. B.

history and Epistles afford not the slightest glimpse. St. Peter, in his great confession, speaks, not for himself, but for the whole Apostolate. It is not the man, but the confessing Apostle, to whom the word is given, "Upon this rock I will build My Church." The Church was built on the confession and teaching of the Apostles—all of them—"Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." (Eph. 2:20; cf. 1 Cor. 3:11.)

St. Peter, again, may have been at Rome¹ in the very end of his life, and may have suffered death there; but that he was ever "Bishop" of Rome, or in that capacity exercised any general rule over the Church, is *unhistorical fiction*. With this falls the idea of a transmission of authority to Roman bishops (Popes) in unbroken succession to the present day. The succession itself is a fiction (anti-Popes, Papal Schism). From its political position and importance the Church at Rome gradually rose to honor and pre-eminence; but the attempts of its bishops in early times to dominate the Church were strenuously resisted (e. g., by Irenaeus and Cyprian). The claim to infallibility is a late growth; became a "dogma" only in 1870.² More than one of the Popes was tainted with heresy. Zephyrinus and Callistus (beginning of third century) are accused by Hippolytus at once of doctrinal heresy and of scandalous laxity in discipline.³ Pope Honorius I was condemned and anathematized by the Sixth Ecumenical Council (A. D. 680) for holding the Monothelite heresy. Succeeding Popes down to the eleventh century endorsed this condemnation in an oath at their accession. The claim to temporal supremacy rests on equally fictitious foundations (Donation of Constantine; Forged Isidorian Decretals).

The whole structure of papal arrogance thus falls at the slightest touch of historical criticism. It is not otherwise with the *doctrinal* development—with the changes, e. g. which multiplied the two simple sacraments of the New Testament into seven, and gave them so magical a character; which transformed the bread and wine of the Supper into the literal substance of the body and blood of the Lord; which converted the ministry of the word of apostolic times into a "sacrificing priesthood"; which made the Lord's table an "altar" on which the sacrifice of Calvary was reoffered (the Mass); which forbade marriage to priests and monks; which evolved the doctrines of the perpetual virginity, then of the actual sinlessness, then of the immaculate conception of Mary; which made her, with saint and angels, an object of worship; which made justification an inward change accomplished in baptism and completed in good works; which, when grace is lost, elaborated a complicated scheme of pen-

¹ Even of that there is no real proof; and all the evidence of the New Testament is contrary to the assumption that Peter was ever in Rome much less that he was "Bishop" there.—R. H. B.

² In the Roman Catholic controversies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in England it was again and again declared that "it was not an article of Catholic faith . . . that the Pope is infallible." **Keenan's Catechism**, up to its 24th edition, declared this to be "a protestant invention."

³ **Refutation of all Heresies**, Book IX.

ance for its restoration, aided by indulgences (application of superfluous merits of the saints), and by purgatory (a place where the balance of temporal penalty is worked off). Not one of these figments has a foundation in the teaching of Christ and His Apostles; the history of each can be exactly traced; the centuries can be pointed to when they were unknown, and when their introduction was resisted by Catholic writers. The Reformers had thus the amplest justification for their overthrow of the whole obnoxious system.—James Orr in "*Faith of a Modern Christian.*"

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

(The Conference at Jerusalem (Acts 15) continued)

Again, we should examine carefully the use James makes of the prophecy of Amos. His language is frequently interpreted to mean that this extension of the gospel is the fulfillment of the prophecy. But that is not what James said. He did not say, "In this the words of the prophets are fulfilled." He did not use the word "fulfill" at all here. What he said was, "And to this agree the words of the prophets." The word is *sumphonea*, from which comes our word *symphony*. It is not the same as that used in Matthew 1:22; 2:15, 17; 4:14, etc., where it is *plero-o*—to fill full. The idea here is simply that of agreement, of harmony. That does not necessarily imply fulfillment. Tones do not have to be of the same pitch to harmonize beautifully with one another. The thought is, "This movement concerning which there has been so much controversy is in harmony with the words of the prophets; it is not contradictory to their teaching."

Now why, we may ask, did James say just that? Why, indeed, unless it was to answer a question which was perplexing the minds of some present or to refute an objection that had been raised? We are not informed concerning all the questions and arguments that had passed back and forth in the course of the discussion; but James was fully aware of the thoughts that were troubling his Jewish brethren. And when we consider the hopes cherished in the heart of every loyal Jew for his nation—hopes that were based upon many clear, definite predictions of the prophets—we also can understand something of their bewilderment because of the unexpected turn of events. For the prophets had foretold a time when their Messiah, son of David, would sit upon his father's throne, at which time the nation Israel was to be in the ascendancy, with the Gentiles rendering homage to her and to her King. The nations would share in the blessings of Messiah's glorious reign, certainly, but while still occupying a position subordinate to Israel. Often they had heard these prophecies read in the synagogue services; and they had believed them. But here was something different—something wholly unexpected! The evidence that it had God's approval was overwhelming; yet how could it be fitted into His scheme of things as revealed

in the prophetic word? Their own nation had for the most part rejected the Lord Jesus and were becoming increasingly hostile toward His disciples; and now Gentiles were being admitted into full fellowship with them without conformity to the requirements of the law. It all seemed so confusing—so contradictory to the prophetic teaching which they knew so well. Perhaps James himself had been troubled; but now his mind is enlightened and he is able to speak words of assurance: “No, brethren, there is no contradiction; it is all in perfect harmony with the words of the prophets.”

The third feature of this speech that claims our special attention is the phrase with which James introduces the quotation from Amos: “After these things.” Let the reader turn to the passage in Amos 9:11 and he will see that it does not occur there. Neither is it found in the original Hebrew, nor in the Septuagint translation. James adds it—prefixes it to the portion of the prophecy which he quotes, and surely for a purpose. Why did he do so? To what things did he refer? The context in Amos supplies no satisfactory answer, but the context in Acts does. James had just spoken of God’s taking out from among the nations a people for His name, the present gospel movement. When He has finished this work, when according to His purpose the body of Christ has been completed, then the Lord will return and rebuild the tabernacle of David, then He “will build again the ruins thereof” and set it up, “that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called.” The Jews were not wrong in receiving those prophecies in their plain, natural, obvious sense. The Lord does not find fault with anyone for believing in all that the prophets have spoken! There is here no attempt to “spiritualize” these predictions of Israel’s glorious future. There is no justification, here or elsewhere in scripture, of any system of interpretation by which “nothing comes out as it goes in, nothing really means what it appears to mean.” (J. B. Rotherham.) No, those Jews were right in their expectations based upon plain, specific statements of God’s word; only they were not informed concerning His plan for the present age. No word of His will fail; at the proper time it must surely come to pass.*

* The reader should examine the rest of the Amos passage from which James quotes only in part, noting that the prophet foretells great prosperity, the restoration of Israel from captivity, the rebuilding of their cities, and perpetual residence upon their land, all of which logically follows the raising up of the tabernacle of David—the restoration of the Davidic dynasty in the person of the Messiah. Note especially that after this restoration “they shall no more be plucked up out of their land.” That portion of the nation which occupied the land in the days of the apostles was soon violently plucked up out of the land by the Romans and scattered among the nations of the earth; and only in recent years have some gone back and set up the nation “Israeli,” now recognized by the United States and other nations of the world as a sovereign power. Indeed, it may be that the Lord has just about finished His work of taking out a people for His name, and that soon He will return, take them unto Himself (1 Thess. 4:16, 17), and then rebuild the tabernacle of David.)

The kingdom parables of Matthew 13 present much the same truth. In them Jesus set forth the mysteries of the kingdom. In the New Testament the word "mystery" signifies something hitherto unrevealed. Jesus was then revealing "things hidden from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 13:35.) The prophets had been enabled to foretell many things concerning the coming kingdom—its glory, its power, its world-wide extent, its blessings and privileges; but here were things which they had not been permitted to see, except, perhaps, in type and shadow. They had been hidden from the foundation of the world. What were these things? Seed sown, but much of it unfruitful. Tares growing among the wheat until the end of the age. Only partial success; increasing corruption. (The parable of the leaven must not be so interpreted as to conflict with Jesus's explanation of the parable of the tares.) This corresponds to the time of which James spoke, when "God is taking out a people for His name." It is after the harvest—the end of this age—that the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their father. (Matt. 13:43.)

In Paul's discussion of the problem of Israel's present rejection there appears another parallel. (Rom. 9–11.) There was a similar difficulty: what about God's promise to Israel, in view of present developments? "It is not as though the word of God hath come to nought." (9:6.) Were the prophecies to find their fulfillment in a "spiritual Israel"? Paul appears to know nothing of it. "God did not cast off His people which He foreknew," although they have stumbled. "But by their fall (trespass—marginal reading) salvation is come to the Gentiles." (11:2, 11.) That is now, in this present age, when God is "taking out a people for His name." But Israel's fullness—her salvation and restoration to God's favor—will bring even greater blessing to the Gentiles. (11:12.) The hardening of Israel continues "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in"—until God's special work for this age is finished. Then "all Israel shall be saved," even as the prophets have foretold. (11:25, 26.) God hasn't changed His mind about it; His word shall stand. (11:29.) So, following the lines of thought in these various scriptures, we arrive at the same conclusion: after this present age the prophecies concerning the Messiah's reign, the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David, the restoration of Israel, etc., will be fulfilled in their natural and obvious sense, even as many other predictions have been fulfilled.

THE DECISION OF THE COUNCIL. James ended his address with a definite and practical suggestion, which was adopted as the united judgment of the entire gathering. We speak of it as "the decision of the council"; but that is not quite accurate. This was not a "church council" in the ordinary sense of that expression; and the verdict rendered was not merely their own, which was reached after a debate in which the most clever disputant won a majority of the votes. "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us." The Holy Spirit was present in that gathering. There was full freedom of speech and much discussion pro and con; but to these brethren this was not incompatible with the facts of His presence

and guidance. He is not restricted to any one method of working; and this was the method used on that occasion. There was a sincere desire for the truth; there was deep love one for another, and for their Gentile brethren; there was an humble submissiveness to God's will and the Holy Spirit's guidance. And the result was full concord among themselves and with the Holy Spirit so that they could say, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us."

A letter was written and sent to Antioch by chief men among the brethren. There is no mention of circumcision, or of the keeping of the law. "For it seemed good . . . to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." They were free from the bondage of Judaism; they must be free from the bondage of heathenism also. So they must keep clear of all things pertaining to idolatry. The view seems to be rather widely held that the second and third of these prohibitions were "designed as concessions to Jewish feelings on the part of the Gentile converts" and so are not to be considered as of "unchanging obligation." This is inferred partly from verse 21. But when we see the reason for the prohibition which is given both in the law (Lev. 17:10, 11; Deut. 12:23) and in the previous injunction to Noah (Gen. 9:4), we hesitate to accept the inference. Let each be persuaded in his own mind! Against the fourth there was special need of caution: for it was commonly practiced even in the religious exercises of the heathen religions in which the Gentile converts had been brought up.

Accompanied by Judas and Silas, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch. They gathered the multitude together and read the letter. There was rejoicing "for the consolation." And well may we all rejoice because of the victory so decisively won for Christian liberty. The spirit of legalism did not die; in one form or another it has arisen again and again. Many times after the Jerusalem conference Paul had to battle against it; and in our day we need to be on our guard against it, remembering the apostle's admonition in Galatians 5:1: "For freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

SINNERS FACING GOD

Always men of Bible times were affrighted in facing angels. I wonder what sinners are going to do when they have to face *God*? We learn that the antichrist will be brought to nought by the brightness of His (Christ's) coming—one glimpse brings the lawless one to dust. People talk big now, but when they come face to face with realities, when they see God, they will melt away, they will fall into the dust. The most terrible thing that can be conceived is of a sinner in the presence of a holy God; the most precious and blessed thing is of a saint washed in the blood being ushered into His presence!

R. H. B.

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

JERUSALEM—AS IT IS TO BE

II.

James T. Barclay

Great as are the temporal blessings of the Millennial age, greater by far are its spiritual blessings. Satan being then bound, and the evidence of the Lord's presence ever before their eyes, who can form even the faintest conception of the blessedness and splendor of the glorious era when the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of "the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea!" For "wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times and the strength of salvation."

The waters of the Dead Sea would not only be "healed," but doubtless much increased in depth and extended in length: for the latter rain being also fully restored would form in concurrence with these copious waters, far more than a counterbalance to the evaporation by which this mysterious sheet of water is now restricted to its narrow limits; and being walled in by perpendicular cliffs towering to the height of one or two thousand feet on each side, while its breadth would not be much increased, its length must necessarily be greatly extended—particularly towards the south. It would seem, even from existing indications, that its length was formerly much greater than at present. And such a copious accession would doubtless cause its permanent outflow to the Red Sea—thus effectually sweeping away its bitter waters.

Very considerable geological changes will doubtless be produced by the great convulsions that accompany the subsidence and leveling of the tract of country lying between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, under parallels of latitude separating Jeba and Rimmon. And one highly beneficial result, amongst many remarkable consequences of the earthquake, will, no doubt, be a literal verification of a prophecy of Isaiah (xxxv. 6, 7), that has heretofore been regarded as exclusively figurative—"in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground become a pool, and the thirsty land springs." How glowingly is the prosperity of the land and nation of Israel set forth by the prophets, when Judah and Israel shall have been restored and brought in complete subjection to their prince, David—the Beloved—i. e. the Prince Messiah. (Is. lx. &c.)

But the most interesting and perhaps the most marvellous circumstance attending the Millennial condition of Jerusalem, remains yet to be mentioned. We are informed by Isaiah in the 4th chapter of his prophecy, that "when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning . . . he will create upon every dwelling-place

of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flame of fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a covering. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain" (3, 6) . . . "the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." (lx. 1, 3.) "The sun shall be no more thy light by day: neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory: thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended: thy people also shall be all righteous, and they shall inherit the land for ever—the branch of my planting, the work of my hands that I may be glorified: a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time." (lx. 19:22.) "Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." (xxx. 26.) "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (xxiv. 23.) From these passages it would appear, that when the Lord shall again record his name on "his dwelling-place in Zion" —(for "this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in—yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever"*)—there will be a revival, on a magnificent scale, of the "Glory of the Lord" as it anciently rested over the Tabernacle in the wilderness—"a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night"—such a manifestation of Deity, perhaps, as was once seen in Eden! May it not be to this Shechinah, thus overshadowing the Holy City as a glorious luminary canopy, that the astonishing change of climate is to be ascribed? And need any more direct divine interposition be invoked in explanation of the wonderful effects wrought on the whole vegetable and animal kingdom in relation to the fertility of the soil, the domestication of destructive monsters of the forest, the transmutation of poisonous reptiles into innocent creatures, and the prosperity, happiness, and longevity of its inhabitants. . . .

*"Thus said the Lord, heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool"; We are not, therefore, to infer from these and similar passages, that Jehovah will dwell at Jerusalem in any other manner than by delegation and the symbols of his presence. Nor do the Scriptures, rightly construed, intimate that the Savior will actually dwell upon the earth in *propria persona*—as contended by many—or that he will ever be seen upon earth except at Jerusalem, which, however, there is every reason to believe he will occasionally and perhaps stately visit in personal manifestations to receive the homage and adoration of his earthly subjects. The Throne of God and of the Lamb—where of course is the real seat of Divine Government—is the Heavenly Jerusalem above—the abode of the redeemed, whence, as kings and priests, and the partners of his throne, they will reign with Christ over the earth for ever and ever.

Has not the Lord promised, in speaking of this very matter as portrayed in the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that he will make a covenant with the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, and the creeping things of the ground? (Hos. ii. 18.) There is no calculating the wonderful consequences that would inevitably result from the alteration of electrical, thermal, and magnetic agencies, to say nothing of those of celestial light from the overhanging Golden City in a meteorological and climatic point of view! And who can divine the wonderful change that will be wrought not only on man, but in the brute creation also, and indeed even in the vegetable kingdom, by the life-giving stream that flows from the oracle of God! Would it be any marvel that the carnivorous beasts should not only become herbivorous by feeding upon the vegetation growing on the banks of this marvelous water, but have their entire natures changed into something like what it probably was when Adam gave them names in the garden of Eden? If the juice of the grape when fermented is capable of producing an effect so astonishing upon man—mentally, physically, and morally—is there anything unreasonable in the supposition that the water of this river and the vegetable productions on its banks—which are not only healing but life-giving—should effect such a change even in ravenous beasts and venomous reptiles? Certainly not: “*because their waters they issue out of the sanctuary*”—a fact to which the prophet directly ascribes their wonderful properties. If the properties of the nitrous oxide (or exhilarating gas) are so different from those of the atmosphere (though formed of the same elements, and differing only in their relative proportions), why should not a slight change in the waters of the sanctuary be adequate to the production of all the effects ascribed to this Millennial “*aqua vitae?*”

There is no aspect in which the Millennial age can be regarded, that is not richly suggestive of the most pleasing and profitable themes of contemplation. Satan being bound, and man brought into complete subjection to Jesus Emmanuel, the whole creation, which had hitherto groaned in travail on account of man's sin, is vocal with praise—“the times of the restitution of all things” having now arrived! Who, that has a heart to feel, can refrain from praying and laboring for “a consummation so devoutly to be wished!”

TWO LETTERS

The following is a letter written last month by the editor of this department in answer to an inquirer. As a very brief summary of a question often asked, it may be of interest to others.

Re Campbell: his concept of the MM; his attitude toward brethren who were more outrightly premillennial than himself, etc.

It has been said that Alexander Campbell could be quoted on both sides of any question! There is some truth in this, due to Campbell's constant development and life-time growth. Much depends on *when* and *where* one picks up Campbell to quote him. His mind was continually expanding.

Only once, so far as I know, did he vigorously oppose any Premillennial writer, and that was not on the Premillennial issue proper—whether our Lord will come before or after the golden age; it was on the Throne of David question, in answer to H. T. Anderson, of Kentucky. Moreover, it was during the excitement and stir over the Miller Delusion in the early forties. On the other hand, Campbell printed, from the pen of others, volumes of prophetic teaching on Millenary lines, seldom challenging it in his paper, often commending it for honest study. He associated with himself editorially several men who were outrightly Premillennial, and who taught freely, as they pleased, in *The Harbinger*. In spirit, he was far above “drawing lines” against the brethren of this persuasion, even as he gave his life to lead believers out of the sectarianism into which they had fallen in the historic churches.

While in his earlier writings he was rather “Post” (and this did influence the Restoration Movement), he wrote many things in later life that sound more “Pre” than “Post” (See my article “Campbell’s Growth”, page 172 of the 1948 series *Faith of Our Fathers*). He did not profess to know by what means (human agency or supernatural) the Millennium would be introduced, nor by what degree of human process, or by the supernatural; he freely admitted it could be both.

This much, at least, can be said definitely: he looked for the Lord’s return; he expected Him actually to “stand upon the earth” (now denied by the “Post” brethren); he expected the conversion of Israel and their return to the land (cp. Milligan, McGarvey, Barclay, et. al.). He was, in short, a very poor prototype of present-day “Anti-Millennialists” among the Disciples.—E. L. Jorgenson.

Dear Brother Jorgenson: Your quotations in recent “Faith of Our Fathers” from brethren W. H. Carter and J. A. Harding in the Word and Work are of deepest interest to me personally. Brother W. H. Carter baptized me and my sister Lula (Mrs. Paul Holloway), nearly fifty years ago now; and the dearly beloved J. A. Harding was my ideal as a preacher and teacher in Potter Bible College where I was educated in God’s Word and inspired to go out and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. So I have not departed from the faith as taught by these grand and good men; but better still I am true to the New Testament Church of Christ as to her first establishment by Christ and His apostles.

Brother Carter was holding this meeting at the Schochoh Church in Logan County, near adairville, Ky. So I have not departed so far from the teaching of my father in the Gospel, nor from my beloved teacher, J. A. Harding, whom I hold in the tenderest and most honored memory. I wonder, if these brethren could come back, could they preach at these places where they held such great meetings and warmed the hearts of so many sinners for Christ and salvation. I fear that they could not! I cannot remember when I did not believe in the Thousand years reign of peace with Christ on the earth.

We all need to get closer to the Lord in these perilous days and to pray for those who would separate us from their company and cast our names out as evil. May God have mercy upon them, and upon us all.

Lexington, Ky., Nov. 18, 1950

H. N. Rutherford.