

GOOD TIDINGS

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Write "Good Tidings" 236 N. Mary St., Lancaster, Pa. or Frank E. Eshelman, Business Manager, R. D. No. 7, Lancaster, Pa.

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SPRINGTIME AND THE RESURRECTION

We again witness the mysterious energy of life in the renewing of dormant nature; a veritable resurrection of all vegetable life. Though life was only suspended or dormant for a season, yet the mystery of it all is not lessened. It is a manifestation of the power of God, in the unfolding of the bud into beautiful foliage, lovely flowers and finally delicious fruits; and the bursting of dry seeds, developing into beautiful plants, bearing various cereals, for our sustenance and comfort.

The Apostle Paul was no doubt impressed with these wonderful operations in nature, for by them he was induced to prove the resurrection by way of comparison or symbol. He said: "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The Lord Jesus illustrated His death and resurrection by referring to the sprouting and growth of the seed when put into the ground. He said: "Verily verily I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and

die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

The resurrection of Jesus which, according to the reckoning of time, took place at this season of the year, is an old and oft told event; yet it is ever new and inspiring to His followers. They are forcibly reminded that this was the crowning act in the glorious plan of salvation—this was now the "much fruit" which He as the Tree of Life was bearing. When Jesus was here He performed many miracles, but His resurrection had a greater import in its far-reaching consequences than all the others. Without it the plan of salvation could not have been perfected. Would He not have had power to "lay down His life and take it again," we could not be saved. The Apostle said: "And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." 1 Cor. 15: 17, 18.

He came forth and won a great victory—the victory over death and hell! He proved the immortality of the soul. Since He was the firstfruits of the resurrection, "afterward they that are Christ's at His coming"—herein is promised immortality and glory for His followers. Can we not rejoice if we have been made partakers with this Prince of Life whom God raised from the dead? The Apostle says: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom. 8: 17. He also says: "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end"—only unto the end of life's brief day, and then be raised incorruptible and immortal, and hear the welcome plaudit: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit

the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May the glad Springtime not only awaken in our minds a sense of beauty and admiration for the works of nature; but inspire us with more fervent love and adoration for God the Creator and for Jesus the Savior who said: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

THE MILLENIUM

The doctrine of a millenium reign of Christ upon the earth, either in person or in spirit, is generally held by professors of the Christian religion. It is believed that this reign will continue a thousand years; that during this time the world will be filled with righteousness and the church will enjoy a degree of prosperity never before known. It is also claimed that war will then cease and love, peace and union prevail.

It is greatly to be feared that the idea of a millenium as entertained by the professors of religion generally originates from a misapprehension of the true character and mission of Jesus Christ while upon earth. We therefore invite attention to the mission of Jesus. He was foretold, prefigured and foreshadowed from the beginning. Unto Him was ascribed power, might and a divine character; that He would build up the waste places and repair the desolations of many generations. When He appeared upon the earth He demonstrated by His pure and spotless life, by His power to pardon sins and to raise the dead, that He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. The Apostolic writings bear testimony to His divine character and the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice (Romans 3: 10, 11): "For, if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more,

being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life, and not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

The effect of the sacrificial offering of Christ upon those who came under the power of it is so clearly stated by Christ and his apostles that no sincere person can mistake it. Paul testifies (Titus 2: 14): "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." The Scriptures present such an array of testimony as to the character of Christ's kingdom that no one can break it. The forgiveness of sin, the restoration to the heart of the image and love of God, and the consequent union of souls are the grand characteristics of Christianity. We read (John 7: 17): "If any man will do *his will*, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." If mankind were subject to the will of God, divisions would cease, love and union would prevail. An eminent writer says, "If all men were Christians, there could be no war."

As to the millenium reign of Christ: We do not entertain the belief that there will be such a general diffusion of true religion upon the earth as many persons claim. We sincerely believe that the kingdom of Christ was established upon the Day of Pentecost and has existed since then, now exists and will continue to exist unto the end of time in the hearts of those who by the word and Spirit of the Lord have been, are now and will be renewed to the divine image. It might be asked from whence has originated the doctrine of the millenium. We reply, from an apparently defective fulfillment of the prophecies of old. The human mind is never at rest and when every thought is not taken captive under the obedience of Christ, it will

devise scheme after scheme to satisfy its wants. Thus the revelations of St. John are interpreted so as to harmonize with the idea of a general diffusion of Christianity. While I shall not undertake to explain the (in many instances) mysterious Revelation of St. John, yet I believe that most of his Revelation has been fulfilled in the victory achieved by Christ over Satan, in His acceptable offering upon the cross and triumphant victory over death, by a glorious resurrection in which Satan has been measurably bound; and in the varied scenes presented by a persecuting world and the Church's relation to the same for a period of eighteen centuries. It is not only from the Revelation of St. John that the millennial idea is gotten, but also from the prophetical declarations.

We consider our friends as being in error in this matter. They misapprehend the true spiritual import of the prophetical declarations. I have before stated that Christ's reign upon earth in the hearts of his people by his Spirit was inaugurated upon the Day of Pentecost, when they beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and learned war no more. "Christ is our peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Under the Old Testament economy two classes of people were recognized, Jew and Gentile. These were at enmity. This enmity was taken away from the hearts of all (both Jew and Gentile) who were by the process of God restored to the original condition of man; war between these converted souls necessarily ceased and will continue so until the end of time. Christ speaks of but two kingdoms or nations. When he speaks of the children of men, he makes no distinctive nationalities but embodies all under one.

When he speaks of the children of God he recognizes universal unity: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall ye learn war any more." "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." The Christian nation, the defenseless Church in whom the Spirit of Christ reigns, where peace, love, union and purity of heart prevail, who are upheld by the power of God and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, will not rise up in arms against the world. Internal revolutions will occur in the kingdom of the world. I sincerely believe that now is the time when the law shall be written in the heart and put in the mind of the faithful, and they shall see eye to eye.

The prophetic declaration of Ezekiel concerning the waters issuing out from under the threshold of the temple went into effect upon the Day of Pentecost and has continued since. Christ teaches whosoever believeth on Him, out of his belly shall flow streams of living water. Our hearts shall be the true temple, and these being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, the Divine graces shall flow in thought, word and deed. The earthly hearts renewed will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Here the waste places shall be built up and the wilderness shall blossom as the rose. It is a painful circumstance that those persons generally who profess to be looking for the millenium are in opposition in principle and practice to that which they profess to love and be laboring for. They justify divisions, litigation and war—all of which is at variance with the fundamental principle of Christ's kingdom. If our friends were willing to yield their will to Jesus, suffer His Spirit to control them, have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, they would then experience that Christ now reigns. Finally, peace, love, union and joy in the spirit will forever

characterize the Church of Christ. He will reign by the sceptre of His word and Spirit. O, glorious Church! O, blessed reign of Jesus!

Chambersburg, Pa.

J. S. L.

THOUGHTS ON SCRIPTURE SUBJECTS

FRAGMENTS OF TRUTH.

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." John 18: 37.

To Eve the serpent said: "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." When Eve saw that it was "a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit." A desire to be elevated caused the fall. Vain ambition is a dangerous spirit to the children of truth. To Cain the Lord said: "Sin lieth at the door; . . . thou shalt rule over him." By not ruling over our desires and temper "sin lieth at the door," ready to enter, to make us "servants of sin." Disregard of God's appointed order brought the penalty of the Deluge, but God offered grace through Noah, as He now offers safety through Christ, the spiritual Ark. Joseph by his righteousness was raised up to be governor of Egypt, that he might be a savior of his people, foreshadowing the Savior of the world, who by His righteousness saves us.

So strict is the Law that when Moses and Aaron failed slightly at the rock in bringing forth water, the Lord said, "Therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them." When we depend on our moral works to save us we are under the spirit of works and cannot receive "the promise." The promise is through

faith in the merits of Christ, yearning for His Spirit, and longing to obey Him.

Repentance belongs to the mission of John the Baptist, but that preparatory step does not save us, with all its works of ceasing from sin, for John was not the Savior. The effort in repentance to rid ourselves of the spirit of sin brings us to a sense of our helplessness, and of the need of higher Help. Conversion is the change to a new life, which the Spirit of God must work in us, and it comes through a perfect willingness to obey God in all things as they are revealed to us. This state is the consecration of the creature to the Creator, to live and die unto Him.

The service of the Church, with water baptism and all the other ordinances, is not to save, but to aid those who are saved by the good influence which fellowship and mutual care bring. The Church is rightly called the Sheepfold, for it protects. The relations in the Church are peculiar. The redeemed are called "a peculiar people," for they have learned to know their natural sinfulness, which makes them meek and fearful of the "sin which easily besets us." Owing to this they are approachable when they fail, and they will accept admonition, and they who admonish desire the same temper to enable them to do it cautiously and kindly from love to the holy cause that it may be kept blameless. With this in view, one of the builders of the first churches, who gave his life for the faith, teaches: "We command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly." The fact is undeniable that members who do not obey cannot be kept in the Church of which Christ is the Head. Obedience to this appointed duty will keep the members

united in confidence that the Church will hold a united front against the inroad of loose conduct. Overseers are appointed from the body of the Church, who are sound in faith, to execute scripture teachings.

Every believer is "a temple of God," who shows the high character of the Church. But, inasmuch as sin is in the flesh, failings will occur which must be amended, or members cannot hold their high place in the Church. Inward conflict is understood when Satan assaults those who try to walk in the light. Paul writes of the conflict, though rejoicingly he says: "I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness!"

CHRISTIANS SUFFER WRONG.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." Matt. 5: 38-39.

In the Sermon on the Mount the Savior repeatedly refers to the Law of Moses, changing its precepts. He established a higher dispensation. By the former law redress for wrongs was permitted, but not for individual or private retaliation. The case at issue had to be acted upon by a court of judges, somewhat similar to present-day proceedings.

Christ's mission was to reinstate love in the souls of the redeemed, that hatred might be subdued. He defines the command not to resist evil by examples. If smitten on the cheek the Israelites had the right to appeal to the judges to have the offender punished. The Savior's rule is, turn the other cheek also. A fair interpretation is, that we shall not resist the first abuse, and shall bear the second. He says, if His disciples are persecuted, they shall flee, but not resist. Matt. 10: 23. If deprived by law

of one garment, they are to let the aggressor have the other also; if compelled to go a mile they are to go two. The spirit of this teaching is in agreement with the passive nature of love manifested by Christ. "When He was reviled He reviled not again." 1 Peter 2: 23.

Spiritual strength is required to obey a doctrine so directly opposite to our human nature, but its peculiarity gives it a divine stamp. No one can escape the impress on the mind made by a person who has the fortitude to bear insults, wrongs and imposition without resistance, and who will continue to do services of love to the offender. Christ suffered for us while we were enemies; we are to follow His steps. 1 Peter 2: 21. If we follow the example and doctrines of Christ we walk in the light; if we depart from them, we walk in darkness. The value of souls exceeds all treasures; and the life of the disciple is to gain souls just as the life of the Master was spent to that end.

Part of the text is, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." Our Savior in the other part of the text turns to the law of Moses. It is safe for us to go to the same key for explanation of this unqualified command: "If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren . . . thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth." Deut. 15: 7-8. All these appointed duties are possible for the branches that are nourished by the "True Vine."

GOD-FEARING DANIEL.

This specially endowed prophet, by Divine aid, could tell King Nebuchad-

nezzar the dream forgotten by him, and could interpret it, to convince the heathen king of its correctness, bringing the confession, "Your God is a God of gods." Dan. 2-47. Daniel, with other Israelites, "desired mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret." When their prayer was heard, Daniel answered the king: "This secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living." He was not self-gratified, but directed praise to God from whom every excellence comes.

The same king had another dream which he asked Daniel to interpret, after he had appealed to other noted ones, and had been disappointed. In our extremities we go to safe counselors. The end of this circumstance was that the king said of God, "Those that walk in pride he is able to abase." Dan. 4: 47. How sad that we creatures of dust are inclined to pride and display!

Belshazzar, the son of the former king, in his revelry, saw the ominous handwriting on the wall, which made him cry aloud amidst his desecrations. The queen remembered the wisdom of Daniel, and he was called to interpret the mysterious handwriting. The message was fatal—that night Belshazzar was slain.

For his wisdom Daniel was elevated in position, which provoked envy among his peers, and they conspired against his life. They flattered the king that his subjects wish a decree demanding that for thirty days no one in his realm shall make petition to any God or man, save to the king. The plot succeeded, and knowing of the habit of Daniel to pray to Jehovah, which he continued regardless of the insidious decree, his enemies brought on him the penalty of being cast into a den of lions. God closed the mouths of the lions, which marvel caused the king to proclaim

throughout his dominions that "the God of Daniel is the living God." Dan. 6: 26.

Faithfulness in Daniel to his sense of right caused the truth to become known. By his firm devotion to principle he was divinely sustained and his faith was published to the glory of God. Against true principle, a true life, an obedient Church, "the gates of hell shall not prevail."

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. H.

TRUE WORSHIP

"Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children." Eph. 5: 1.

The admonition of Paul to the Ephesian brethren clearly defines the spirit of true worship. It implies that man must give up the desire to follow his own way or the way of sin, and accept Christ the Savior as his guide. He must humble himself and essentially change the course of his life; he must turn about and go in the opposite direction. He must undergo a radical change, so great a change, that the Scriptures refer to it as a new birth. The Savior demands it as an absolute necessity for He said to Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again."

The primary step in true worship is repentance, sorrow for sin and an anxious desire to be relieved of the burden of condemnation, of the wrath of God and of the judgment to come. An humble, submissive spirit characterizes the new birth. All souls who have experienced it are willing to follow the Lamb, Christ Jesus, whithersoever He leads them. They become passive and pliable and as clay in the hands of the potter, the great Designer who molds them into vessels "meet and sanctified for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." Now they can wor-

ship God and follow Him as dear children. Their hearts and minds have been changed to the mind of Christ, which is love, sympathy, mercy and compassion for sinful man.

Christ was willing to give His life, a ransom for many. He prayed for those who nailed Him on the cross: "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." His spirit of forgiveness and forbearance will be manifest in His followers. They will not retaliate or resist evil, but will return good for evil. His Spirit of love will ever lead to true worship. It is the gift of God through Christ and will ever inspire appreciation and thanksgiving. It will lead to fellowship and association of kindred spirits, and a desire for baptism and the Church.

True worshipers who have access to the visible Church will observe all the ordinances commanded, not in a legal spirit, but as representative of love, fellowship, and unity. They will observe the holy communion as commemorative of the Lord's suffering and His death on the cross, that secured for them the hope of salvation. When they observe this ordinance they call to mind His meritorious work in their behalf and are filled with love and gratitude to the great God and the Savior Jesus Christ. They realize that the fundamental principles of true worship are prayer, obedience, unity and peace, and that they are all fruits of the spirit of love in the heart.

Man is inclined to view worship as a duty of obedience and to hope by performing his duty that he will receive the reward promised. He may even consider baptism and observance of Church ordinances as duties or service to God, not realizing that those ordinances were only intended to serve and encourage the worshiper instead of God the Creator

who has need of nothing from His creatures.

The Apostle says, "Be followers of God as dear children." Naturally, dutiful children kindly obey their parents, and find comfort when their parents show appreciation. This natural experience may lead man to proceed in doing all he can to please the Lord by literally obeying some of His commands. He may rest under such delusion without searching the word as to all its duties and requirements. He may ignore many impressive commands as for example: "Ye must be born again," and, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Christ did not come to impose duty of service upon man. His first command is to "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

By believing in Jesus man's "sins are blotted out and the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." When he attains this blessed condition he can be baptized and then observe the ordinances in faith and love as a seal and testimony to the spiritual change wrought in his heart. He can glorify God, not by work of his own or by literally obeying the commands, but by believing in Jesus, who Himself said: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." John 6: 29. All of our good works will not avail; only the "faith that worketh by love" will receive recognition by God.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. K.

MENNO SIMON

The religious denomination known as Mennonites, of which there are now many classes, derives the name from Menno Simon, who was a prominent leader of the 16th Century. The Reformed Mennonites, who have no connection with other sects of Mennonites,

hold that there is no saving virtue in a name, nor do they put their trust in being followers of Menno. They realize the Church of Christ consists only of truly enlightened believers, who have the spirit and mind of Christ, and are obedient to His Gospel teachings. It is of little consequence what name they bear; but they believe Menno Simon was a true follower of Christ; that his life and teachings accorded with New Testament doctrine, and they are to-day in full agreement with his writings. They have adopted the name of Reformed Mennonites, to distinguish themselves from other Mennonites, who are no longer united with the precepts and practices of this pious man.

Those who have access to the Works of Menno Simon are familiar with his history. For the benefit of those who have none of his writings, it might not be amiss to give a brief account of his life.

Menno was born in Witmarsen, Holland, in the year 1496, and died in Woesteveld on January 13th, 1561. He lived during the time of the Reformation, when such leaders as Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Bucer and Bullinger had caused many souls to forsake the domination of the Church of Rome, which was evidently in a deplorable state of corruption.

In the year 1524 he undertook the duties of a priest in his father's village of Pingjum. Never had he touched the Scriptures, having feared that, if he should read them, they would mislead him. He confesses that he and his associates spent their time in drinking and frivolity; and thus he put in the first two years in the priesthood. During the third year a thought occurred to him, as he handled the bread and wine in the mass, that they were not the flesh and blood of Christ. Believing the

thought was a suggestion of the devil, he tried to get rid of it—confessed it often, sighed and prayed, but could not be freed.

At length Menno resolved to examine the New Testament closely. He says, "I had not proceeded far therein, ere I discovered that we were deceived. My conscience, which was troubled on account of the sacramental bread, was soon greatly relieved, without any human aid or advice: though I was encouraged by Luther in the belief that human authority cannot bind to eternal death." As he continued reading the Scriptures he gained in knowledge, and began to achieve renown as an evangelical preacher, although condemned in himself that he was not following the doctrine of Christ.

Before he learned of the existence of brethren, he was surprised to hear that a man, named Sicke Snyder, had been beheaded for being re-baptized. In searching the Scriptures to see if a second baptism is mentioned, he became concerned about infant baptism. Unable to find divine authority for the ordinance, he conferred with a number of leaders who practiced it. None could give a scriptural ground, but advanced various reasons for the observance. This did not satisfy Menno, who began to see that they were also deceived there, and that the New Testament commands baptism only upon a believing adult.

For some time Menno continued preaching, gaining in knowledge and fame, seeking and receiving the honor of men, treating of the Word of God without spirituality or love, and making disciples of his own stamp. Though he began to vigorously oppose some of the false doctrines of his time, he still lived an impure, sensual life, desiring only to live comfortably, and without the cross of Christ. Eventually he became

greatly troubled about his own hypocrisy, fearing he would make himself partaker of other men's sins. "My soul was troubled, and I reflected upon the result of my doings, namely, that if I should gain the whole world, and live a thousand years, and at last have to endure the wrath of God, what would I have gained?"

Menno now prayed earnestly for the gift of grace, longing for a clean heart, and wisdom and strength to preach the unperverted word. Then he began publicly to declare the true worship of God, and to reprove all sin and ungodliness, and to present the right observance of the ordinances and doctrine of Christ.

This continued for nine months, after which he voluntarily forsook his preaching, renounced all his worldly honor and reputation, and willingly submitted to distress, poverty and the cross of Christ. "In my weakness I feared God: I sought out the pious, and though they were few in number, I found some who were zealous and maintained the truth."

Another year passed, during which Menno exercised himself in reading, writing and conversing with truth seekers. Then came a number of persons to him, "who were of one heart and one soul with myself, in their faith and life, and, as far as man can judge, were unblamable, . . . separated from the world and subdued to the cross." They besought him to consider the great suffering and necessity of the poor, oppressed souls, and apply his talents in serving as their minister.

Gone was the assurance and boldness with which Menno had formerly acted as a teacher. Now he saw his weakness, his limited talents, his great ignorance, the timidity of his flesh, when measured with the holiness of the office, and the great responsibility before the world. He placed the matter before the Lord

and His Church, that they might pray earnestly for a season. Thus he was called to the office, as he says, "by a people who were ready to receive Christ and His word, led a penitent life in the fear of God, served their neighbors in love; bore the cross, sought the welfare and salvation of all men, loved righteousness and truth, and abhorred wickedness and unrighteousness."

God blessed the labors of Menno and his co-workers, so that many souls were delivered from Babylon, and the truth shone forth gloriously. Although they were bitterly persecuted, their numbers increased, and the scattered, God-fearing souls, who withdrew from the corrupt religious practices of that day, were gathered into one fold of love. Many of their numbers were slaughtered, tormented, deprived of homes and families, and compelled to live in fear and seclusion: but they sought that "better country," and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. Menno himself wrote, "Yea, when ministers repose on easy beds and downy pillows, we generally have to hide in secluded corners; when they at weddings and feasts, pipe and beat the tambour, and vaunt loudly, we must look out, when the dogs bark, lest the captors be at hand."

Menno Simon confesses that he was rebaptized but never claimed to have founded a Church. It is worthy of notice that he, unlike other reformers, did not continue to preach and teach after he separated from the Church of Rome. He saw that, if he was serving as an officer in a non-Christian body, he was not called of the Lord to that office. He found the Savior commissioned His disciples to teach only after they had received the Holy Ghost, and he knew he did not possess the Holy Ghost prior to his conversion. When light came he

received a knowledge of himself, and saw that he was as all other men, and could not presume to minister in holy things until he was rightly called of the Lord through His Church.

The people with whom he united had stood aloof from all unsound doctrine, being spiritual descendants of the Waldenses—a people whose faith and doctrine appears to have been of unbroken succession from very early times. It is quite likely that these obscure, peace-loving people date back to the foundation of the Church, and separated from the multitude of professing Christians soon after the Apostles' time, when impure doctrine was introduced, known sinners admitted, and Church and State united.

Although Menno's life was constantly in danger, he was spared (sometimes miraculously) to labor earnestly and faithfully in the vineyard of the Lord, until his 66th year, when he died a natural death.

Stevensville, Ont.

W. I. T.

THE SOLDIER AND THE CHRISTIAN—A COM- PARISON

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." 2 Tim. 2: 4.

When a man becomes a soldier, he loses his citizenship and becomes a servant of the country under whose banner he has enlisted. Like his fellow-soldiers he wears the insignia of their service. He does not have the privilege of a vote, nor has he the pleasures of his home or family ties, but he must be subservient to the service. He must go where he is ordered, he is taught to obey. He is drilled and instructed in the science of

war; generally he must endure the hardship of the march, the camp and the trench, the adverse conditions of living, extremes of weather, and at times the privation of food and sufficient clothing. Often he is under fire, faces shot and shell and various engines of destruction employed by the enemy. He must endure the thoughts of home. He must be alert, straining every faculty of mind and body to protect his sleeping comrades and the army from surprise and sudden destruction. In the charge he will follow his captain, and strive to gain the victory over the enemy.

His reward for faithful service is the honor and praise of men and whatever monetary remuneration his government may give him. To be a good soldier he will accept these conditions cheerfully as belonging to the service, that he may help preserve his country from its enemies. Great is the sacrifice he makes. He cannot entangle himself with the affairs of this life if he would serve his country as a true soldier.

A Christian is a follower of Christ, one who accepts His word as guide, who enlists under His banner in the good fight of faith. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Finally, my brethren be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world." The Apostle was calling his brethren to enlist under the great Captain of their salvation, Jesus Christ, who taught love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and per-

secute you. He also said to Peter, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Matt. 26: 52. Paul wrote to Timothy, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." 2 Tim. 2: 3-4. These scripture passages teach us, that to be a lover and follower of the Lord we would of necessity become a soldier under Christ Jesus, the author and Captain of our salvation.

The Christian, not wishing to conform to the fashions of dress, desires to wear a simple dress or uniform, in agreement with scriptural instruction: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." 1 Tim. 2: 9-10. "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3: 3-4. A plain dress is a constant reminder to the wearer that he is a soldier of Jesus; and to the world, that he is not ashamed to own Him as his Captain, and like Paul he is "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1: 16.

As the soldier loses his citizenship, so does also the Christian. The Savior's words are, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and

love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matt. 6: 24. The Savior makes it very plain that it is impossible to hold citizenship in a worldly kingdom, and be a Christian, notwithstanding the popular belief.

The Christian is not to consider an earthly home, or family ties above his service to his Lord and Captain, who said, "I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me." Also, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

The Christian desires not the pleasures, honors, or riches of the world; but to render a whole-hearted service. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be ye not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind; that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

The Christian desires to use to the utmost of his ability the weapons which the Lord provides; for though we walk in the flesh: we do not war after the flesh: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." The soldiers of Jesus will use these weapons with the utmost fidelity to defeat the work of the enemy of their souls.

The Christian will use all vigilance to thwart the subtle influence of the enemy, will pray without ceasing, read the word of God, and not forget to assemble with his brethren that together they may speak to themselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord.

The apostle Paul writes of the Christian's reward, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight,

through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Glen Elder, Kansas. E. F. S.

A PRAYER FOR THE AGED CHRISTIAN

O God, remember Thou the aged saints
Who're waiting now Thy call to come.
In mercy hear their pleading cry for help
Sustain them as they journey home.

This human form, this tenement of clay
Gives evidence of sure decay.

I pray remember those who trust in Thee,
Give faith and hope to cheer their way.
Forsake them not when age is drawing nigh,
When strength grows weaker day by day.

Give brighter vision of that home on high,
Upon Thy grace help them rely.

O God, hold Thou them fast, they wait the tide
That bears them on the unknown sea.
Be Thou their Pilot to that haven fair,
To be forever more with Thee.

Waynesboro, Pa. A. S. F.

FAITH AND ITS BLESSED FRUITS

Most persons have faith in a Godhead, a Creator. It would be almost impossible to look upon the face of nature and not be impressed with the thought of a great head—a Creator of all this beauty. But the faith of the gospel is the trust or confidence in a risen Savior. The Apostle defines it as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The faith to which the Apostle refers and which gives promise of eternal life is the faith that is born of God and gives assurance of the efficacy of the atonement. This faith leads us to the means that has been provided for our salvation and creates within the heart a love for Christ and a desire to obey His will. The children of Adam are under the curse of sin and

only those who through faith become penitent and obedient can be saved. "By grace through faith are ye saved and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

There are many notable examples recorded of the faithful prophets and holy men of old. These examples were given for our encouragement. Abraham (the father of the faithful) was called upon to leave his father's country and go into a strange land whither the Lord would lead him. He obeyed at once and though he was old and childless he staggered not at God's promise to make of his posterity a great nation. When later a son was given him, he was told to "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac whom thou lovest and offer him as a burnt sacrifice to the Lord." He went at once, his faith did not falter. According to our human reasoning it must have been a wonderful trial of faith. The Lord accepted the will for the deed and a ram was miraculously provided for the sacrifice.

The faithful before Christ came were justified by faith, and it was imputed unto them for righteousness. The Savior said that Abraham rejoiced to see His day, looking forward with hope and expectation to the promise of the Messiah to come. They had obtained a good report, but the fulfillment of the promise came only after Christ's atonement.

The covenant of old, the law, was given to Moses written upon tables of stone. The Apostle says, "For us, God has provided some better things." Christ the Mediator of a new and better covenant says, "I will put my law into their minds and write them on the tables of their hearts." Under this new law we live by faith, not by sight, and by works of obedience faith is made perfect. The old covenant was an earthly

or temporal one, but it pointed to spiritual and eternal things. The law with its sacrifices and ceremonies was the shadow of good things to come. The gospel is the image, the substance itself, including all spiritual and eternal good. Faith in this Messiah and the blessedness that was to come with His reign, sustained the holy men of old. They were pilgrims and strangers and looked forward to a better country. They knew of the promise made to Abraham of a Messiah to come but they died without seeing His appearance.

Faith is an act of the will as well as of the understanding, and many disbelieve for want of inclination rather than from want of evidence. When some came to the Savior asking, "What must we do that we may work the works of God?" He replied, "This is the work of God that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." Faith is the beginning of a transformation in the soul wrought by divine influence and by which we are justified and can have peace with God. Realizing God's purity and holiness and feeling our weakness and dependence we are humbled and must come to Him in humility of spirit for grace and strength.

In the absence of faith we are liable to yield to the desires of our fallen nature. The Apostle admonishes us that, "Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." The besetting sin is the one that meets us at every turn, or the one to which we are most exposed and the one by which we may be drawn aside from the service of the Lord.

Want of faith may be the besetting sin. Unbelief is an enemy we must strive to overcome, and our prayer

should ever be, "Lord increase our faith."

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

BRIEF NOTES

Spring is here again to cheer us with balmy air and the beauties of nature. The renewals of growth showing everywhere remind us of the daily miracles that are never fully appreciated because they are unfailing. We live in a world of trouble and many hearts know much of sadness, anxiety and dismay, but still the sun shines, the rains fall and the sleeping earth returns to life as our Heavenly Father intended when it was created.

Jesus frequently said, "Take heed how ye hear." We might also say take heed how ye see. There is always a Divine lesson for the observant. With reverence and gratitude we think of the God of this wonderful universe and long to properly adore Him. The Psalmist sang "All thy works shall praise thee." May man as the crowning glory of creation not forget his part.

* * * * *

It is well for us to be reminded that it is our interpretation of life that determines its quality and happiness for us. We have little control over outward circumstances. They are the scenery in which our lives are set. Our experiences are made up of two elements, the fortunes that befall us, and our manner of taking them. We cannot change life but we can change our attitude of thought toward it. We can try to be Christ-like. To have faith in God and cherish a submissive spirit is a wise and blessed way. God, as a loving Father, sends what is best for us and our aim should be to interpret everything as

coming from His beneficent hand and being for our eternal good.

* * * * *

It has been said we are known by our resting places, by the things we like best and the situations that are most satisfying to us. It is natural for us to be active in body and spirit and how often in looking back we see little to show for our pains. May it not be as Jeremiah said of the Israelites, "They have forgotten their resting places."

Our great failing is that we too often forget to nourish the inner life, the communion with God that brings rest to the soul. A prayerful heart, filled with love to God and man finds many resting places along the way of life, places that are like oases in the desert or quiet retreats from a noisy highway to the weary traveler. The prophet Isaiah said, "My people shall dwell in quiet resting places." Job said, "When He giveth quietness who then can make trouble."

An appreciation of God's goodness to us rests many a sad and troubled heart as does the invitation of the blessed Savior: "Come unto me and ye shall find rest."

"Christ never asks of us such busy labor
As finds no time for resting at His feet."

* * * * *

Each one has his own peculiar difficulties, each one his own special call for patience. As our dispositions differ so do our trials and it is a wise man who knows himself and recognizes his temptations. It is our explanation of life, the way we accept the things that come to us that shows our inner spirit. We may be outwardly an example of goodness but if our inner adjustments are not correct, if we do not have the peace of God in our hearts and the patience of Christ in our thoughts we fail to show the work of regeneration.

If only we could come to God in a fuller faith with all our insufficiencies. He is as a full store-house, ready to supply all our needs. It is not our failings that will bar us from the heavenly kingdom but our unwillingness to come under the power of the Good Spirit and its wonderful regenerating influence.

* * * * *

That we are God's workmanship is a thing we should remember. We go our busy, varied ways in life with a tendency to accept the popular idea that we make ourselves what we are. Those who look back over the years and see success, worldly favor, and accomplishments are tempted to take credit to themselves. Others who have little to show are apt to feel they did not have the right opportunity and are inclined to be discouraged.

These are all tendencies of self-love and self-esteem and show that we think highly of ourselves. This spirit must be overcome if we accept the fact that we are after all, God's workmanship, we are "God's building," placed here to do the work He intended in our creation. The gifts and abilities we have are not our own but what He gives us and no matter what good use we make of them there is no place for pride. As to whether we make a show of importance or not does not count with the One who knows our hearts and who looks upon us as His rightful possession. Our work is to keep open hearts to the Divine influences that we may indeed be His workmanship.

* * * * *

We always rejoice to hear of those who are willing to come to the Lord. Nothing we do in life can yield such a rich reward. It means comfort and peace while here and a hope that reaches into the eternal world.

"Remember Thy Creator," though

said to the young was meant for all ages. But the resolution to serve Him in youth is a special honor to God. Our desires do much for us and in youth habits of thought and action are formed that often make us a benefit or a burden to ourselves and those around us. What a privilege to enter the Lord's service, to be a child of our Heavenly Father. Many a snare and heart-ache is avoided by cherishing the pure and lovely precepts of Christ and building on a so sure foundation. There are soul-satisfying compensations in following the Apostle's advice to Timothy. "Flee youthful lusts, follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

Our good wishes go out to the ones here and there who are accepting Christ as their Savior. They desire to take His cross and follow Him knowing that they who lose their lives for His sake shall save them in the true sense. In the words of the apostle Paul, "May God, even our Father, who hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and stablish you in every good word and work."

LIFE OR DEATH

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Rom. 8: 13.

The first record we have of any human being or of life, is when the "Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Gen. 2: 7. God created man in His own image, which would indicate that he was supremely happy. By heeding the counsel of the serpent all was changed. "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was

afraid." Adam well knew that God had said, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2: 17. Through transgression Adam and all his posterity became subject to temporal and spiritual death. We are all familiar with the effect of temporal death, and as Adam lived hundreds of years after the sentence went into effect, it is clear that he died a spiritual death, which severed his communion with God, as it is written, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Rom. 6: 16.

Having become the servant of the devil or of darkness through transgression, since God's law cannot be broken, man's way to return to God would have been forever closed, had it not been for God's great love for His creatures. He said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This was the first promise given to fallen man and it gave him a prospect of a Redeemer and a hope of deliverance.

All who truly feared God and had faith in His promise looked forward in hope. Job testified, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19: 25-27. The Holy Ghost revealed to the aged Simeon that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. To the shepherds it was said, "For unto you is born this day, in the City of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." The wise

men from the East came to Jerusalem and inquired of Herod, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Matt. 2: 2. All the Prophets looked forward in faith and instructed the people to believe and obey the word of God. Christ said to the Jews, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." John 5: 46. Deut. 18: 15-18.

The mass of the Jews did not accept Christ when he did come. John says, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1: 11-13. This agrees with Christ's words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

According to the Scriptures all are dead in trespasses and sins, and consequently cannot do works of righteousness. Rom. 3: 9-23. When persons realize that they are *dead* in trespasses and sins, and sin becomes exceedingly sinful to them, and they are willing to die to sin and through faith in Christ plead for mercy, they have the promise of spiritual life and shall be called the sons of God. Then they become of that class whom Paul addressed when he said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

The Apostle writing to his Ephesian brethren very clearly sets forth the na-

ture and character of those who were *dead* and have been made alive in Christ. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)." Eph. 2: 1-5.

It is evident that we are all free agents and have the liberty to choose whom we will serve, whether we will consent to sin and remain in death, or whether we will be obedient to the calls of mercy and grace and accept the righteousness of Christ which is offered unto us and live. Seeing the uncertainty of life, we should seriously consider how we spend this time of probation. There are two conditions set before us, eternal life to dwell in the presence of God and the holy angels, or eternal death to be punished with the devil and his angels, as it is testified: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

May we be wise unto salvation and endeavor to serve God by a true living faith and a consistent life as God gives us grace. As the natural body without the spirit is dead so is a profession of religion, if spiritual fruits are not manifest. James 2: 26. May we consider well the fruits of the Spirit, and the works of the flesh as defined in Gal. 5: 19-26, so that we may discern whether

we have the mind and Spirit of Christ and thus possess *life*, or whether we delight in the works of the flesh which we know will end in death.

Humberstone, Ont.

A. C.

THE PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE

“A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard: Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him: Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.” Luke 13: 6-9.

This is one of the many parables which the Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples, and it has a deep significance. He no doubt wanted to impress the Jews of their favorable relation to God, and His chosen people—planted in His vineyard—and then of their becoming disobedient and unfruitful trees; on account of which disobedience they had suffered numerous captivities. Judgment demanded a reckoning and would have cut them down as trees that encumbered the ground. But the grace and mercy of God intercedes and extends mercy and affords opportunity and time that peradventure they might repent, and again return to the Lord. Herein we behold that God’s mercy, love, and compassion, is inclined to temper and restrain judgment.

To temper righteous judgment partly constituted the ordained office and mission of Jesus Christ: for God gave Him to the world, not only as a Savior and Redeemer, but also as an Intercessor before His Father for the sins and failures of His followers. In Him the prophecy of the Psalmist was fulfilled: “Mercy and truth are met together; righteous-

ness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.” Psalm 85: 10.

We, then, can learn an impressive lesson from this parable, for this fig-tree may typify the soul who has been planted in the vineyard of the Lord. Now he must bear the Gospel fruits—“Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Gal. 5: 22-23. If these fruits would not be manifest, then he would only be a fig-tree with leaves, representing only an outward profession, and not a heart work inspired by God’s Spirit. Again, he might bear fruit for a time, but through lack of vigilance, prayer, and through unbelief, the enemy of the soul, “who walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,” may again darken his spiritual understanding, and supplant the love of God by self-love, rendering the tree unfruitful. “Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground!” Jesus said, “Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.” Matt. 3: 10. Here, however, mercy again restrains immediate judgment. Through Jesus and His ambassadors, appeals are made to the Throne of Grace for the erring one. He is “reproved, rebuked, exhorted, with all longsuffering and doctrine,” (2 Tim. 4: 2) for a season. If the spiritual life and light has not entirely vanished in the soul, he may again be restored by the love and mercy of God. But if he would persist in his stubbornness and sin, and not respond to the appeals of love and become penitent, he finally would be cut down as a barren tree or separated from God’s people.

The Lord Jesus and the Apostles gave many warnings to be watchful, prayerful and submissive in the spiritual pil-

grimage. Jesus said: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and pray always." Luke 21: 34-36. Grace, mercy, and forgiveness are unlimited to all penitent and humble souls; but we must not tempt the Lord and sin wilfully because grace and mercy doth abound. The Apostle Paul said: "What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid! Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." Romans 6: 15-16. The Apostle also said, "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." Heb. 10: 26.

May God grant grace that we may continue to be fruitful trees in the vineyard of the Lord, until the great ingathering of the harvest of the world; that we may continue to trust in the Lord and hope for His glorious appearing. Then we shall be as the prophet says: "A tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Jer. 17: 8.

Lancaster, Pa.

E. H. W.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM AND REIGN UPON EARTH

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be

established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah 2: 2-4.

In these days of religious confusion, there is much comment as to when Christ's reign on earth will take place. Among Bible students and professed Christians, there is a great diversity of opinion, but to the truly converted mind, this is not a question, because Christ is reigning in their hearts, and they are a part of His kingdom. Christ's reign was revealed to the prophets hundreds of years before He came. Isaiah, in our text, also Micah in the first seven verses of the fourth chapter of his prophecy, reveal the nature of Christ's Kingdom and the disposition of the subjects of that kingdom.

"The last days" were the days just before Christ was born. The prophet spoke of this kingdom as a mountain. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills." This lofty standing is symbolic of Christ's Church, which stands above everything else in the world—as Christ said, the light of the world and the salt of the earth: a city that is set on a hill which cannot be hid.

"And all nations shall flow unto it." When this kingdom came down from heaven on the day of Pentecost, and was established on earth, there were, at that time, in Jerusalem, men of every nation

under heaven. And those who accepted the word, and came under the influence of the Holy Spirit, were added unto the Church. In this was fulfilled the prophecy that "Jesus should die for that nation (Jewish), and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." Jno. 11: 52.

"And many people shall say, 'Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob.' " This quotation is fulfilled in the desire of God's children, his Church, to assemble in worship and in the invitation they extend to all unconverted souls to come into the fold, under the protecting care of His mighty hand, and there receive His blessing, which Christ promised in Matt. 18: 20, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name" (meaning gathered together in the same spirit), "there am I in the midst of them."

"And He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths." The prophet Jeremiah, in the 31st chapter of his prophecy, tells of how the Lord would make a new covenant with his people, a covenant different from the one he made with their fathers in the day when he took them by the hand to bring them up out of the land of Egypt. He said, "I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, 'know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest of them.' " The soul that accepts Christ and is born again needs not man's teaching. The grace of God, that inward monitor, which the Apostle said has appeared unto all men, teaches them how to live,—“soberly, righteously, and godly.”

When Christ was here upon earth, He taught, led or directed his followers. After His ascension, He sent the promised Comforter or Holy Spirit, which He said would lead them into all truth. John 16: 7. This Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost upon those who were assembled in prayer at Jerusalem awaiting the fulfillment of the promise. When the Spirit came upon them, three thousand persons became of one heart and of one soul. This oneness brought about the Church of Christ, and in this Church or kingdom, the Spirit reigns and guides those who are under its influence, as it is ever their teacher. It teaches them the ways of the Lord: "Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." This same Spirit today unites all souls that truly believe on Jesus and obey His teachings, for it is this unity of souls that constitutes the Church of Christ on earth. Jno. 17.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The law given to Moses was for God's literal children, on which law the kingdoms of this world are based. Christ, who came from heaven and had the witness of the Father, gave the law from the spiritual Zion or Jerusalem to govern His spiritual kingdom, the Church, in which He is now reigning. "This is my beloved Son, hear him," were the words from heaven. This message was to impress the disciples that the old dispensation was about coming to a close, and that Christ's teaching was to be recognized.

In the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, Christ's reign was so clearly revealed to the prophet that he speaks of it as an event that had already taken place. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." He

here refers to a kingdom which would be established and of one who would be born who would rule it. Christ is the Supreme Governor, or Ruler of this Kingdom. His word never changes. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. "And of its increase there shall be no end." There are souls being continually added to His Kingdom—those who accept of His grace and obey His teaching—a continual increase.

"Upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." The word throne denotes power. Christ is referred to as the son of David. David was a man after God's own heart. Acts 13: 22. He reigned justly and with judgment; he overcame the enemy of God's people, the Philistines, even Goliath, just as Christ overcame Satan, the enemy of the children of His Kingdom, Christ's kingdom, is an everlasting kingdom. The prophet Daniel in the 44th verse of the second chapter of his prophecy, mentions a kingdom which the God of Heaven shall set up, a Kingdom that shall stand forever. He says that all other kingdoms shall be destroyed. All the kingdoms of Daniel's day, all kingdoms since that time, and all others that may be established shall be destroyed at Christ's coming, but Christ's Church or Kingdom shall never be destroyed.

Isaiah foretells very beautifully the disposition of the subjects in the kingdom over which Christ reigns, "And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks." They are a peace-loving people and their desire is to carry out Christ's teaching, which harmonizes so beautifully with the revelation of the prophet. In Matt. 5 he says, "Resist not evil, love your enemies, bless them that curse you,

do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." Isaiah, in 11: 6, 9, makes a beautiful comparison as to the varied natures of the subjects over whom Christ reigns when he compares them to beasts. Some people by nature have the disposition of a wolf, leopard, bear or lion, but after they receive the Spirit of Christ, and have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, their natures become changed and they dwell together in peace with those of dispositions like the lamb and the kid, and they all feed upon the same spiritual food as is typified by the lion eating straw like the ox. "And a little child shall lead them,"—that child-like spirit that each one possesses. In God's holy mountain, His Church, they shall not hurt nor destroy.

In addition to the many revelations to the prophets, as recorded in the Old Testament, telling of Christ's reign in His Kingdom here on earth, John the Revelator describes very specifically in the twentieth Chapter of Revelation, how he saw an angel come down from heaven, meaning Christ, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, denoting power, and laid hold on Satan and bound him a thousand years. Since a thousand years is as a day, and a day as a thousand years with the Lord, 2 Peter 3: 8, we can only reckon this as a period of time, the time from the day of Pentecost until the second coming of Christ or the full day of grace. To believers it is the time between the day when they accept Christ until they are called from time to eternity. During this time Satan is bound to them and cannot harm them. No matter of what nation, they shall be deceived no more: they shall reign with Christ a thousand years.

Lancaster, Pa.

J. C. L.

GOSPEL TEACHINGS

Christ taught His people saying, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." We may ask, "What are His commandments?" If we study the Sermon on the Mount we shall find a number of them, and then we should ask, "Are we obedient to them."

We read that Christ is the door to the sheepfold. "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." Is it not so? One door, one fold, one Shepherd.

The world rejects the teachings of Christ. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I might not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

It is notable that the command given to the Disciples to wash one another's feet is little heeded. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you."

The New Testament, the words of the Son of God, is given to us as a guide into all truth. If we claim to be followers of Christ, and do not the things which He says, we are none of His. Would that many might become seriously concerned to know what His good

and acceptable will is, and, being stripped of their own views and prejudices, ask in sincerity for light and understanding to lead them in the right path. "For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

Medway, Ohio.

E. F. K.

THE POVERTY OF MAN

"What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" 1 Cor. 4: 7.

Man is born into the world, a helpless and dependent creature. There are no exceptions. The high, the low, the rich and poor if left to themselves in their infant stage would perish. All need the help of loving hands to care for them. But as time goes on, and they grow to manhood and womanhood they are no longer dependent upon their parents, but are able to care for themselves, naturally speaking.

But all through life, from beginning to end, man needs the aid of a Higher Power to provide him with the necessities of life. The Apostle James says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights." With the Psalmist we can well say, "Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Every blessing we enjoy, and everything that is good, pure, holy and lovely emanates from God's throne of grace.

Man is dependent upon Him for all temporal blessings. These He showers upon mankind without favor. In Matt. 5: 45 we read "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." He has said that as long as the

earth stands there shall be seed time and harvest. Man sows and reaps, but God gives the increase. We are apt to think that these blessings are the fruit of our labors, and inclined to take the honor upon ourselves for our accomplishments, but if for one day God would withdraw His hand we would all perish. We are dependent upon Him for even the air we breathe.

We are dependent upon Him for spiritual blessings. In 2 Pet. 1: 3 we read, "His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Man, through yielding to sin became so blinded that "the thoughts of his heart were evil and that continually," and of his own self he could not lift his eyes heavenward. Through sin he had closed the gates of heaven against himself, and could not again open them. But "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." His grace appears to all, teaching us the sinfulness of sin, our need of salvation, and the remedy in Jesus Christ. Without His grace, we would not desire to seek His face. Jesus said, John 6: 44, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." By the cords of love God draws all who will come, to Jesus Christ. He is the center of all our hopes. He lovingly calls, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." He invites us to come, He makes it possible for us to come, but it remains with us whether we will accept the invitation. Man cannot merit salvation, it is all of grace and not of debt. Salvation is everywhere spoken of throughout God's word as a gift. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, 2: 8 says, "For by grace are ye saved

through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." We have done nothing, can do nothing, but accept as a gift that which has been accomplished for us.

The believer especially needs the help of God. Having come to a full realization of his sinful condition and depraved nature, he sees in his flesh dwells no good thing. Without the Lord's help he cannot think a pure thought, much less do that which is pleasing in His sight, as the Lord told His disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." The believer sees the evil influences surrounding him and Satan and his host arrayed against him. His own inability to stand against these forces of evil impels him to flee for refuge in Christ, and come to Him daily for strength and help. The Lord who is rich in grace and plenteous in mercy never leaves nor forsakes His children. In Him they find a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

The poverty of man—the richness of God, what a contrast! Our inability to do anything good of ourselves, should humiliate us in His sight. We have received all; we should be proud of nothing. The prophet Jeremiah says, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" for all that we have, or are, or do, we owe to the rich grace of God.

Buffalo, N. Y.

C. S. N.

THE MAJESTY OF JESUS CHRIST

The first intimation in the New Testament that we have of the kingly power of Jesus is when we read of the wise men from the east who came to Jerusalem inquiring, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" This question troubled Herod the king, but unnecessarily so, because Jesus did not attempt to set up an earthly kingdom in opposition to his.

When Jesus fed the multitude of five thousand men with the five barley loaves and two small fishes, those men which had seen the miracle said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." But "when Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone."

We find a note of skepticism running through the remarks of Nathanael when Philip told him they had found the Christ. He inquired, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" When Jesus greeted him with the exclamation, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" he was convinced and said, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel."

At the close of his life the people accused Him of forbidding them "to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ a King." At this time Pilate asked Him, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" to which He answered, "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Evidently all the people said against Him did not affect Pilate's opinion for he "wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." When the chief priests of the Jews objected to this plain statement of fact, "Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.'"

When He was crucified He was placed between two thieves who reviled Him as

did others there, but He did not deserve to be in such company. Though He was mocked and derided, His innate majesty and power were so strong as to overcome any temptation to descend to lower levels. So the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself." After Jesus' death Joseph, a rich man of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, took the body of Jesus and prepared it for burial according to the custom of the Jews. He laid it in his own new tomb which he had hewn out in a rock. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews who had come to Jesus by night to inquire into His mission, also went with him and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes which they wound in the linen clothes in which he was buried. In His lifetime these rich and influential men lacked the courage to follow Him openly, but they were not ashamed to care for His body after death, being convinced He was the Christ. The prophecy of Isaiah confirms these events, "He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth."

Jesus warned His disciples that they could expect persecution, to be delivered to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for His name's sake. Later the Apostle Paul referred to the wide-spread influence of Christ upon the people when he replied to Festus, that King Agrippa "knoweth of these things, before whom I also speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." Though this peace-loving doctrine of Christ is despised in the world, yet we always see there are some men who understand it, and are willing

to shield His followers from unjust accusations.

Likewise Peter, who enjoyed the companionship of Jesus while He was on earth said, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty." Although many references are made to earthly kingly power, this was not that which Jesus came to establish. For the prophet Isaiah wrote, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," and Peter informs us, "when He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not: but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

Why did Jesus not retaliate when He was thus persecuted? No doubt because of confidence in His mission, He exercised patience, knowing that in due time God would reveal Him as the promised Messiah. Silence becomes all true greatness because no amount of speech can overcome the power of truth. He had already given evidence that He was the Christ but they did not believe Him. Jesus and His most active followers were brought before courts of justice on the plea that they caused unrest among the people. But is this not the first step in awakening to newness of life? Jesus did not manifest His dignity and power as man would do, and so the mass of the people were unable to understand Him. Through prophecy He was called the Prince of Peace and it was said, "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."

Waynesboro, Penna.

B. F. M.

WHAT IS MY HOPE TOWARD GOD?

Jesus said, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye and believe the Gospel." Mark 1: 15.

God's holiness and infinite love for sinful, fallen man caused Him to offer His only Son who became the Friend of Sinners. He reproved sin and was willing to forgive the penitent and ignorant, even dying upon the cross to make a full atonement for sin. Sinful acts and transgressions cause pain, sorrow and trouble.

As foretold, Jesus' time had come to preach the Gospel. He said, Repent ye and believe the Gospel which testifies of Me. The convicting grace of God, that searching light, visits all men. Every thoughtful, accountable person who is impressed and awakened by it to see himself as sinful and separated from a holy God, inasmuch as he failed to honor God and confess Christ, may be moved to ask the question, "What is my hope toward God and the ground of my faith?"

Christ's atonement by death on the cross does not change the condition of the sinner unless he becomes sorry for his past life, repents, believes the Gospel and accepts the offered grace. Christ, through grace will enlighten his eyes, reveal sin within the heart and without, and grant him His Spirit of love. By praying for the teaching and aid of this Spirit, he will find a path that leads to the well of living waters. If he thirsts after this and drinks of it, his mind will be renewed and eternal life will be born in his soul. He cannot convert himself: God alone can do that. Christ is willing to blot out his sin and reign in his heart, which will give him power to keep his sinful human nature in subjection.

What is this kingdom of heaven which is at hand? We are told, it cometh not by observation, it is within the changed heart. How has it changed the heart from what it was before? In the darkness of the world the sinner does not see his sins or he may excuse and tolerate them, and is not willing to obey what he knows. The fruit of the spirit of love or charity in the heart by which faith worketh and without which one would be as nothing though he understood all mysteries and all knowledge, produces obedience; it confirms the will of God in the recognition of what is true and right in sincerity and uprightness. He now feels his responsibility to his own soul, his accountability to God and that he cannot be saved unless he forsakes his sins and accepts Christ by faith in complete submission to His will, the revealed Gospel.

Throughout our lives we need the trials that come to us to give us experience and teach us that it is not in our own strength that we fight in the conflict for life or death, but in the strength and power of Jesus our Savior, ever cherishing His promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28: 20. Being divinely born and partaking of Christ's Spirit, the happiness and welfare of sinners and of all men will interest us, and our conduct will be regulated accordingly. May none of us waste this precious time and lose the opportunity of watching and being ready, resigned and loose from all things near and dear to us in this life, when our turn comes to give an account of the stewardship entrusted to us.

Lancaster, Pa.

A. B. W.

WHO WILL BE SAVED?

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13: 24.

This is one of the impressive sayings

of Christ, and it applies to all those who would be His followers until the end of time. All must enter in at the straight gate; and it implies that it is necessary to have more than a form of godliness, in order to be saved and to enter heaven. We must not only strive, but "strive lawfully if we would be crowned." This involves the whole duty of man which is to "fear God and keep his commandments." We must use every available means to overcome the flesh with its evil lusts. This requires self-denial and submission; an unconditional surrender.

The Apostle says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Rom. 12: 1. The flesh being in opposition to the Spirit, we become enlisted in a spiritual warfare. It is therefore essential that we be equipped with the proper weapons so that we shall be able to "withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." "Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Eph. 6: 16, 17. If we use these weapons effectively, by the grace of God, we shall be more than conquerors, and if we remain steadfast unto the end we shall be saved. Jesus said, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Matt. 10: 22.

It is said, "Many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." This expression would seem to indicate that there are many worshipers who say Lord, Lord, but evidently have not entered by the straight gate, which is Christ, because they do not the "will of

the Father which is in heaven." They are divided in religious sentiment and practice, and ignore unity. There is only one straight gate, one Christ, and He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Therefore, Christ is not divided and His whole Gospel teaches love and unity.

To enter the straight gate, we must obey all the commands; "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2: 10. We are also reminded that "many are called but few are chosen." This proves that the children of God are few in number. How impressive! How earnestly we should strive to be of the chosen few! The chosen ones are referred to as a little flock. But if this little flock remains faithful and obedient they need not fear, for Christ said: "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Luke 12: 32. "My Father is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10: 29.

Naturally, if we were striving for a prize, would we not exert our best efforts to follow the rules prescribed to obtain it? By being slack, and indifferent to the rules we could not secure the prize. So spiritually, if we would become slack and careless to obey the word of God and become disloyal to Him, we could not receive the prize or the reward promised the obedient in the world to come. God is love and He is merciful, but He cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance. He gave His Son Jesus to atone for our sins and open the new and living way of salvation. In this great sacrifice He has revealed His unbounded love and mercy to man. How inconsistent for man to suppose that God would extend love and

mercy to the disobedient and forego His judgments and punishments. God is just, as well as merciful, and will mete His judgments according to His word, as verified in Romans 2: 6, 10.

Abraham was justified by works, when he offered his son Isaac; and "by his works was faith made perfect." It was said, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." If we expect to be saved we must have the faith of Abraham; we must also have the works. "For by works is faith made perfect." James 2: 17, 22. Therefore, we must not only strive to enter in at the straight gate in the beginning of our spiritual pilgrimage, but we must continue to strive until the end; for the wide gate and the broad way are ever presented to our humanity. We must be faithful soldiers of the cross under the banner of our Captain, Christ Jesus, and He will ever lead us upon the "narrow way which leadeth unto life."

Williamsville, N. Y.

A. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Are there many ways to be saved?

A. There is only one way. Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4: 12.

Q. Is the past of our lives blotted out when we accept Christ as our Savior?

A. Jeremiah foretold God's dealings with His people under the New Covenant, "I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." With God our past is forgotten but with us habits good or bad formed in the past have their influence. They present themselves to be accepted or rejected in the light of better knowledge. While the past remains very much a part of us

we may profit by our experience. Its sins and follies may become incentives to be the more diligent in obeying God's commands and in striving to yield always to His Spirit.

Q. Does Christ's expiation on the cross free His followers from sin and suffering?

A. The apostle John wrote, "If we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Then further, "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves" but "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive." If we would reign with Christ, we must also suffer with Him. His Spirit is with us to guide us and when we do not heed His promptings we grieve the Spirit, we suffer remorse and must come again as penitents. So we are only free as long as we remain humble and willing to confess our faults. Not only do we suffer from our own shortcomings and failures but the sin in the world grieves us. We suffer when we see others professing to belong to Christ and yet lead worldly lives.

Q. Can we provide a covering for our sins?

A. No: for our very best deeds are imperfect and defiled with self-righteousness and self-love. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isa. 64: 6. The only effective covering is the "robe of righteousness" with which Christ clothes His faithful followers.

Q. When is religion a matter of opinion?

A. When worshipers are disunited and there is a diversity of belief; when the word of God is perverted in meaning and application; and they say, "Lo, here is Christ, or lo there!" When they do not obey all the Lord's commands, but argue and contend about scripture

doctrine, and interpret the word by carnal reason.

Pure religion is a principle born in the heart and not an opinion.

Q. What is the ground for belief in a bodily resurrection?

A. In John 5: 28, 29, it is said: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." See Matthew 10: 28; Rev. 20: 13; Acts 24: 15; 26: 8.

Christ's bodily resurrection is the earnest and pledge of our own resurrection. 1 Thes. 4: 14. The idea is embraced in the Redemption: "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. Phil. 3: 21; 1 Cor. 15.

Q. Who was Melchisedec?

A. The Apostle Paul wrote: "For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him; to whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem which is king of peace, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." Heb. 7: 1-4. This account would seemingly make Melchisedec a mysterious character, especially as to his origin, which has caused much controversy. We think, however, that this can be explained from the fact that there is no record in the Bible concerning his parentage. We know that though he was a noteworthy character, and stood high in the annals of sacred history as a Priest, and King

of Salem, he was nevertheless a human being and therefore must have had an origin common to all others. He was obviously a type of Christ, and the Apostle, by comparing the priesthood of Christ to that of Melchisedec, "having neither beginning of days nor end of life," is proving that the Levitical priesthood and its law, to which the Jews held so tenaciously, had ended, and that the priesthood of Christ abides; as he further says: "And it is yet far more evident; for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life, for he testifieth, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 7: 15-17.

THE HISTORY OF JOB

The opening chapter of the Book of Job begins, "There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job and that man was perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil." Job's history is obscure. The author of the book has never been determined and the time in which it was written is unknown. Some commentators believe that Job lived in the time of Moses and the book of Job was written at a later date, perhaps during the reign of Solomon or following the Babylonish captivity. Job's expressions give evidence of the knowledge of God's law and that he was familiar with the promises of the Lord. This book differs from any other of the Bible. The first two chapters and the last ten verses are written in prose. The rest of the book is poetic in form and is often called a poem. It deals in subjects grand and sublime, conveys instruction both in divine and human things and abounds in precepts the most pure and exalted.

Job was blessed with an abundance of worldly goods, in camels, sheep, oxen and asses. He was eminent in wisdom, wealth and piety. He had a family of ten children. These children seemed to observe birthday festivals and Job after such occasions each year offered burnt offerings for them fearing that they might have sinned and forgotten God in their hearts.

There was a day when the sons of God presented themselves before the Lord and Satan also came among them. The Lord asked Satan, "Whence comest thou?" Satan replied, "From going to and fro on the earth and from walking up and down in it." The Lord then asked, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man one that feareth God and escheweth evil?" Satan replied that God hath set a hedge about him and all his possessions and blessed the work of his hands, but if He would remove these blessings and touch all that he hath he would curse God to His face. The Lord then allowed all Job's worldly possessions to be under Satan's power as though to test Job's integrity.

A messenger came to tell Job that his oxen and asses were carried away by the Sabeans, his servants killed; he, the bearer of the news was the only one left. While he was yet speaking another came to tell him his sheep were destroyed by fire from heaven, probably by lightning. Another messenger followed and said his flock of camels had been taken by the Chaldeans. Yet another came saying that a great storm had blown down the house wherein his children were feasting and all were killed. Job naturally must have felt the keenest anguish when he learned of the destruction of his children together with the loss of all his worldly possessions for, "He rent his mantle,

shaved his head, prostrated himself upon the ground and worshipped. Job then said, "Naked came I into the world and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

Job's patient resignation under all his trials must have been a disappointment to the Evil One, as we learn of him again appearing before the Lord. The Lord asked the same questions and received the same answers as in their first meeting. The Lord said, "Job still holdeth fast his integrity although thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause." Satan replied, "All that a man hath will he give for his life, but put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face." The Lord said, "He is in thine hand, but save his life." Job was then smitten by disease so loathsome that he sat among ashes and scraped his skin with a potsherd to relieve the intense itching. Yet his confidence in God was unshaken. His wife asked him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die." Job replied, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job reasoned well in his affliction and distress and, "he sinned not by word," yet he doubtless had many thoughts to tempt him.

Several of his friends hearing of his distress came to visit and comfort him. They saw him in his miserable condition from afar, but did not recognize him. They drew near, rent their mantles and wept, then sat upon the ground where they remained for seven days and nights without speaking. They thought he was suffering for some wrong doing.

Job was the first to speak and gave vent to his agonized feelings by lament-

ing the day of his birth and longing for rest in death. "There the wicked cease from troubling and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressor, the small and great are there and the servant is free from his master." Three of his friends who had come sought to convince him that his sufferings were sent upon him as a punishment for evil deeds. They counseled him to be patient under God's displeasure. But Job vindicated himself and plead his upright life, and felt he had room to complain. Realizing the sorrows of life he said, "Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee. . . . But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost and where is he?" Preferring death to this present loathsome life he said, "I would not live alway." The friends probably desired to help him but as his body was wasted by disease and suffering and his heart harassed by temptings of Satan, he could not receive the words spoken by those who meant to befriend him. These unjust accusations agitated him and he justified his life and conduct more than he otherwise would have done and he said, "Miserable comforters are ye all." His friends spoke well and truthfully but Job in torture compared his present condition with his former standing. Yet he recognized the Lord as the source of all power and wisdom in these words, "The fear of the Lord that is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding." He looked to the Lord as his helper in these words of trust and reliance: "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day

upon the earth, and though this body be destroyed yet in my flesh shall I see God." He felt he had a personal interest in the resurrection as he had in the Redeemer.

After he had again asserted his righteous conduct, Elihu, the fourth of his friends, younger than the others, took part in their speech. He seemed to have a better knowledge of human nature and of the divine law, and God's ruling in the moral world. He condemned Job for his confidence in himself and for trusting in his own righteousness and for not fully considering his frailty and imperfections. His words are impressive and an inspiration to the reader. They are different from the other speakers. He sought to impress their minds with the fact that the incomprehensible glory and excellence of God confound all the powers of human reasoning and that whatever good is in man, God is the author. He described the wisdom of God in sending the gentle rain upon the earth and depicted the thunder-storms and lightning in such majestic and terrific form that he seemed to be impressed and awe-stricken while relating it. Elihu had spoken well but when the Lord spoke, the case was ended.

The Lord then answered Job out of the whirlwind. It is thought a thunder-storm was in progress while Elihu was speaking, and that out of that whirlwind God's voice was heard to ask, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" He demanded an answer to the wonderful depths of His might, power and wisdom, in most elevating language. Job replied, saying, "Behold I am vile what shall I answer? I will lay my hand upon my mouth; once have I spoken, but I will not answer, yea twice but I will proceed no further." The Lord continued to speak of His might and power and Job ac-

knowledged his ignorance, saying he had uttered what he understood not, but as he now perceives God's wisdom he said, "Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Job was sufficiently humbled. The Lord's wrath was kindled against Job's three friends. He said, "They have not spoken of me the thing that is right as Job hath." They were commanded to offer burnt offerings and Job was to pray for them. This was done. Job's former friends came to comfort and congratulate him. He was blessed with ten sons and daughters and he again prospered and was blessed with an abundance of sheep, camels, oxen and asses. The Lord blessed his latter end more than the beginning. Job lived after his restoration one hundred and forty years. "So Job died being old and full of days."

Hagerstown, Md.

E. V. L.

A CHILD'S STORY

My dear little Children:

My last letter was written in the beginning of the new year, and in my letter I told you of the coming of the new King in the Year One.

I believe you would enjoy having me tell you more about Jesus the new King and some of the wonderful events of His life after He became a man.

We do not read much of His childhood only that He was subject to His parents, increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. We infer from this that He was an obedient son, and as His father was a carpenter we suppose that he taught Him that branch of industry.

One of the first events we read in the early life of Jesus occurred when He was twelve years old. His parents took

Him with them to a feast held in Jerusalem; when returning in company with many others, and thinking Jesus was among them, they went a few days' journey before they missed Him. Then they turned back very sorrowful to seek Him, and after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. After finding Him His mother said, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing?" His answer was such as they could not understand at that time, but His mother kept it in her heart.

When He was about thirty years old He began to tell the people who He was, and what He came to do.

Just as we love company, so we find Jesus choosing twelve men, as close companions. It is one of the wonders of our Lord's work that He chose simple and unlearned men to be His helpers in spreading the Gospel. Several were fishermen, one was a tax collector and none were men that we would name as leaders in the community. It cheers us to know that Jesus loved common people, the average man and woman, perhaps He knew they were more natural, freer from pretense and more willing to accept His teachings.

We must always remember that Jesus was more than a man. He was able to see what was in the hearts of those He chose and knew in what manner they could be useful. When we begin to think of fine companions, we are apt to select such as have good habits, fine manners, or perhaps even nice features, or wear fine clothes, and sometimes we do not make a wise choice.

Peter was one of the disciples that we all resemble somewhat. He was impulsive, quick to speak and easily made angry, but how soon he would repent when shown his mistake. And it gives us comfort to know that we will be forgiven too, when we do wrong and ask forgiveness.

John, the brother of James, has been called the apostle of love, and in all his writings there runs a current of love which we cannot fail to notice. He refers to himself "As the disciple whom Jesus loved." Thomas was a man who seemed to be timid and doubtful, even about Christ when he wanted to feel where the nails had pierced His hands and feet. Then, too, we read of Luke the beloved Physician; we know he was a kind man for only a kind man can be a successful doctor.

It would make my story too long to tell of all the disciples of Jesus, but we do not want to give you the impression that only men are chosen as helpers. In all the years there have been noble women, who have been examples and helpful in furthering the cause of Christ, and even children can sing His praise, and show the beauty of simplicity and truthfulness.

We love to think of the two sisters, Mary and Martha, in whose home our Savior found a haven of rest and comfort, and so all through the ages there have been faithful women, who ministered to the apostles, and later to the believers in Jesus. May we, the living, try to follow these examples, and learn to be helpers such as Jesus would choose if He were here.

Waynesboro, Pa.

A. S. F.