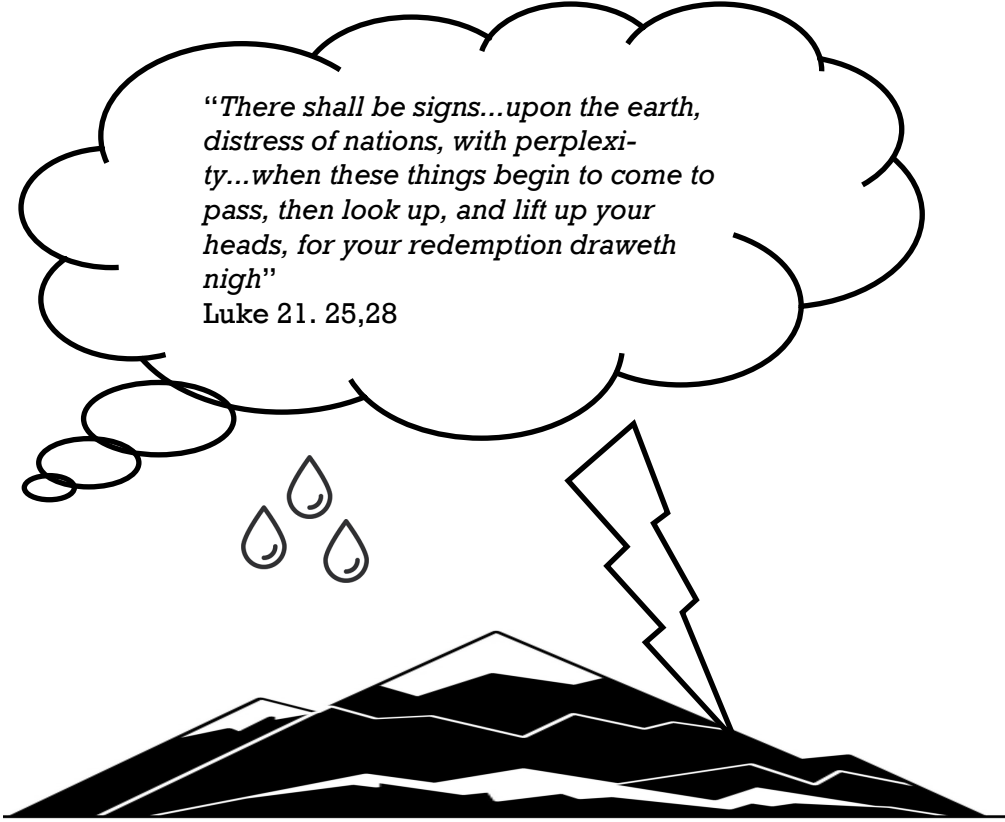


# BIBLE STUDY MONTHLY

Volume 96 Issue 5

September / October 2019



*"There shall be signs...upon the earth,  
distress of nations, with perplexi-  
ty...when these things begin to come to  
pass, then look up, and lift up your  
heads, for your redemption draweth  
nigh"*

Luke 21. 25,28

## Contents

Thought for the month	162
Spiritual Drought	164
A thought on Gen. 8. 22	167
Zechariah—Pt. 11	168
Asaph The Chief Musician	173
Patient in Suffering	179
The Heavenly Calling	182
The Gathering Home of Saints—Pt. 3	190
Paradise on Earth—A booklet	193
Notices	199

# BIBLE STUDY MONTHLY

FOUNDED 1924

The Bible Study Monthly, published to promote knowledge of the Bible, sees the Scriptures as a true record of God's dealings with the human race, needing to be understood in our generation. It stands for the pre-millennial advent of our Lord, and His reign of peace and justice on the earth.

*"Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ" (Ephesians 4. 15 NRSV).*

The Bible Study Monthly is sent free of charge on request to all who are genuinely interested. It should never be sold for money.  
Secretary & Treasurer: Nicholas Charcharos

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Climate change has come sharply into focus this year with claims there is a worldwide climate emergency. Therefore Prime Minister Theresa May committed to cut greenhouse gas emissions to almost zero by 2050 in the U.K. She said there is a "moral duty to leave the world in a better condition than what we inherited". This went further than the Climate Change Act 2008 which tied the country in to reduce emissions by 80%.

Many have perused the thought that this will be a challenge for the economy. The British Chancellor of the Exchequer stated the it would cost £1 trillion by 2050. Phil Taylor of Newcastle University said the "UK Policy is still way off the mark and the foundations are not in place to be able to meet this target. Even with all the evidence before us we are still opening new mines, extending Heathrow Airport and flirting with fracking". Here there are two projects which will add to greenhouse emissions. Mrs. May stated though "you can lower emissions...and have economic growth at the same time."

Water is important to sustain life. Too much or too little is a problem. Places like Australia have a lack of water as does the Sahara Desert which has been increasing in size. Flooding, often blamed upon climate change even if only for the frequency of the floods, has become a problem. This summer in June there was flooding in Lincolnshire. Siberia, Russia has also been hit by flooding with twelve killed and nine missing according to 'i' on 2 July. Fifty-five towns and villages were affected. For the Christian it's the former, drought, that is a spiritual drought which must be avoided.

We need the water of life. David knew that he could do this by seeking God as he wrote in Psalm 63. 1, from his time in the wilderness of Judah. For the Christian needs to be watered like James 5. 7-8 says of the former or latter rains that we may grow in grace and knowledge and be found producing the fruits of the spirit, such as patience, joy and love.

Despite these concerns about the climate the message in Gen. 8. 22 gives the comfort that while the earth remains there will be seedtime and harvest. Harvest is important as it provides food for the hungry. In an unequal world some are going hungry, some only get sufficient food if they use food banks and yet obesity is a growing problem. Obesity affects health as on 3 July Sky News stated that obesity was the major cause in four cancers now rather than smoking. Focus has been placed on sugar recently in drinks and processed food. Processed food has also been criticized for adversely affecting health in Western Europe.

Weather metaphors are used in the scriptures particularly in relation to prophecy. Asaph in Psalm 83. 13-15 used the wind and whirlwind to convey the thought of divine judgment on those coming against Israel. Jesus in Luke 21 referred to signs in the sun, in the seas and waves roaring to express the state of society and nature of events at the end of the age.

Nevertheless a wonderful prospect awaits the Church class to reach the waiting arms of the Father at our appointed time. A marvellous prospect awaits all men and women in the paradise that God has planned when climate change will be a concern of the past, as well as pollution and natural disasters. What exactly mankind will eat and drink and how the world will be powered one cannot be totally sure but it will be very good.

### IS IT RAINY, LITTLE FLOWER?

Is it rainy, little flower?  
Be glad of rain,  
Too much sun would wither thee,  
'Twill shine again;  
The clouds are very black, 'tis true,  
But just behind them shines the blue.

Art thou weary, tender heart?  
Be glad of pain.  
In sorrow sweetest things will grow,  
As flowers in rain;  
God watches, and thou shalt have sun,  
When clouds their perfect work have  
done.

*Poems of Dawn*

Magazine content. What is published is believed to have a wide interest, but everything printed may not necessarily be the opinion of the editor and his colleagues.

---

## SPIRITUAL DROUGHT

*A lesson from the life of David*

According to the heading in the A.V., the fifty-first Psalm is the expression of David's sorrow and penitence after his double sin of adultery and murder. In trying to arrive at a proper understanding of this penitential Psalm, we should not forget that prior to writing it David had been in an impatient attitude for many months. It was after the prophet Nathan's visit and the enormity of his guilt had been brought home to him that his pent up, deliberately repressed feelings found vent in this spate of self-condemnatory words—words which have been the medium of repentance for countless thousands of men and women, in more recent times, when throwing themselves upon the mercy of Almighty God.

This black spot, the blackest spot in his whole life, shows that David was a man of like passions with other men; that in unguarded moments the black depths of his heart showed how even the best of humankind is fallen in sin. It shows the truth of Paul's dictum "there is none righteous". The inclusion of such a story in Holy Writ shows that the Divine Author has drawn a true picture of man when He said that the heart of man was desperately wicked and deceitful above all things. It is included, not because God approved of the sin, but for the very opposite reason, because He disapproved and strongly condemned it, and that it might serve as a model of His clemency and grace to the thousands who should repent and confess their weaknesses and shortcomings. It stands on record as a permanent testimony that man's life is barren and cheerless when earth-born clouds intervene between God and His earthly creatures, and illustrates the truth of Jesus' words that "man does not live by bread alone" but only when in touch with the words of the Lord.

It was after the birth of Bathsheba's child that Nathan came to David to tell him that the death of the child was to be part of the punishment for his sin. The better part of a year must therefore have elapsed between the sin and the deep repentance for it of which this Psalm is the expression. What had been going on during this time? What had David been doing all this while? The Scriptures do not say directly, but certain hints are given which help somewhat. We may form some conception from our own particular experiences of sin not immediately repented of—of sin never honestly faced, never dragged out into the light of God's presence and there confessed. David was trifling with his better self; playing tricks with his conscience. He was substituting diligence in his duties as king and magistrate—his duty to man—for his duty to God. He heard and settled the disputes and grievances which came before him as Israel's

chief judge (as did Solomon later when asked by the two women to decide whose child was living and whose dead); he received petitions addressed to the throne; he went up to the house of God to worship; he endeavoured, no doubt, to conform to and administer the law with even greater diligence. This we realise from his hot anger against the rich man who took the poor man's ewe lamb to feed his visitor, as Nathan unfolded the parable. (2 Sam. 12)

It is likely that he had reasoned within himself again and again that he had done nothing more than eastern monarchs did at any time they pleased. Was it not the commonest thing for an Oriental despot (and was not David such a despot) to send for any woman he pleased to become a member of his harem, and to get rid of any man who stood in his way either by violence or strategy or both? "What more have I done than is done every day by my fellow sovereigns?" David might say and think, and would he not make recompense for it by more attention to the administration of the law in coming days, throwing his protection over the weak and oppressed; the rich man should smart for his theft of the ewe lamb when brought before his tribunal!

David had lulled his conscience to sleep so much that he did not recognise his own portrait in the parable of the prophet while it was being narrated to him. Not for an instant did he realise that his own conduct had been much more reprehensible, wicked and hard-hearted than the rich man. All these months he had been hushing up his sin, trying to silence his conscience by his activities (his war with the Ammonites for instance) until the Spirit of God winged those four words, "*Thou art the man*" to his guilty, restless heart. It was with David as it must be with all who leave their misdeeds unconfessed, he was restless and wretched. Listen to his own words in Psalm 32. 3 and 4, written also about this time, "*When I kept silence, my bones waxed old...day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into (like) the drought of summer.*" There was such a hard, dry, stiff, formal life all these months, so unlike the constant play and uprush of spiritual emotions in his earlier and happier days. His conscience was asleep, his soul was in chains, his creative genius was stifled, his life was like a summer's drought.

Oh! how many others, like David, have played tricks with their conscience over some unconfessed sin or weakness, and have carried their burden for days and weeks and months until the drought of summer has come over them too. All the joy of the Truth has gradually disappeared; all the gladness of soul has evaporated, the songs have turned to sighs and


perhaps an attempt has been made to substitute service for repentance, and the longer the fight has been attempted against the voice of the Lord within, the cooler the Altar fires have become until love has waxed cold.

You who read this, if the joys of the Lord which once you knew have been lost; if your soul is in chains, will you not ask yourself the reason why? Is there some dread spectre in your life, some weakness unconfessed, unrepented of? Is there some earthborn cloud intercepting a Father's smile and blotting out the sunshine of His love?

Read the story of David, and profit thereby, for God was very gracious to him though He left him not unpunished. It is not necessary that there should have been anything so flagrant as David's sin to shut the windows of heaven over one. Spiritual dryness and lethargy can come about by sheer neglect, or it can be the result of some little "incident" where we could not have our own way, and hence we have failed to assemble together, and slowly the drought has crept over our souls. No stimulus from fellowship, no iron sharpening iron, no occasional songs of praise to lighten the load on one's shoulders, and later on, no joy of exultation in the morning and evening prayer, till we shrink from the bending of the knee—and then, all the little weaknesses unconfessed and unforgiven. Then the heaven becomes as brass and there is no rain for us. So David's experience became our experience. Spiritual dryness, spiritual lethargy, spiritual deadness, the loss of "the first love," the loss of the response to the things that once stirred the soul. How tragically sad and how prevalent!

God grant to all such a message from some faithful Nathan, which may start the tears of repentance flowing and bring down the showers of blessing to end the drought and cause the blooms and fragrance of restored verdure (greenness) to shoot forth again in the heart.

TH



*And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.*  
Ezekiel 34. 26

## A THOUGHT ON GEN. 8. 22

*“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter...shall not cease” (Gen 8. 22).*

At the close of the agricultural year God’s promise to Noah comes with significant emphasis. The cycle of Nature has repeated itself many thousands of times since that word was uttered but its validity extends into the infinite future. It remains as an expression of the Divine determination that there shall be a family of ever-living creatures, earthborn yet also sons of God, who will live their lives to all eternity in an environment created for them and suited to the conditions of their existence, an environment in which the ever-repeating cycle of Nature’s processes will produce all that man will ever need and provide also that continual variety of outward things which is so characteristic of all that God creates. No dead, dull uniformity such as man’s own creations tend to produce; no growing of trees and plants in regular straight lines in which each several one is the exact replica of its fellow. No mountains built in the form of exactly square cubic blocks or rivers constricted within parallel straight banks. The world God designs for man is one which, like the tree of knowledge in Eden, is good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and greatly to be desired to make one wise, but unlike the initial effect of that tree, bringing nothing but beneficent results to those who inhabit it. Hence...we can step out into the unknown experiences and circumstances which it will surely bring in the certain knowledge that despite the fear and turmoil, the apprehension and foreboding of the day in which we live, we are that much nearer the time of light and gladness when under the Divine rule of the coming Age, all the strife and suffering and death of the present will be gone, and the time of man’s final period of training for eternity will have come. It is because of our certainty that this glorious future awaits all men that we can truly look forward to the future.

*AOH*



THOU hidden Source of calm repose,  
 Thou all-sufficient Love divine,  
 My Help and Refuge from my foes,  
 Secure I am while Thou art mine,  
 And lo! from sin, and grief, and shame,  
 I hide me, Father, in Thy name.

*C. Wesley*

## ZECHARIAH, PROPHET OF THE RESTORATION

### 11. Prelude to the Great Day

The last three chapters of Zechariah's prophecy tell the story of the end of this Age. They commence with the rumblings of the coming conflict, the confusion of nations in their hostility to Israel and the incoming Kingdom. They go on to tell of Israel's growing awareness of her Divinely ordained destiny and the development of a "remnant" which will be faithful to God through the fiery trials which lie ahead; of the emergence of new leaders, stalwarts of olden time returned to rule in righteousness during and after the crisis; of God's promise that He will surely defend Jerusalem. A spirit of grace and supplication begins to become manifest among the people, a recognition of their past national failure to accept and believe on Christ, culminating in a campaign against the modern political idolatry which will still have great influence in affairs.

Nevertheless the nation as a whole is not yet truly converted; some there are who face the coming crisis with apprehension and unbelief and some, perhaps, who are in the land only for the material prosperity it brings them and not by reason of any real faith in the Divine purposes. These will be purged out, cut off from the land, exiled, when the test of faith is applied. But a loyal section remains, steadfast while the enemy advances, and at that moment Divine power is manifested for deliverance. The 14th chapter tells in detail of that final phase, when the forces of unrighteousness meet head-on with the powers of Heaven and are destroyed. So the story closes. God's earthly "people for a purpose", the "Holy Nation", is standing secure among the nations and ready to embark upon its destined mission, that of proclaiming God's salvation to the ends of the earth.

Verse 1 of chapter 12 is an introduction to the momentous happenings of chaps. 12 and 13, covering the preliminary events of the period immediately preceding the dramatic moment when God rises up to deliver Jerusalem. It is important to realise that these three chapters do cover happenings occurring over a period of time; the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem and the fiery trial into which the people enter and from which only the faithful "remnant" emerge is not the work of a moment. Many distinct and varied factors enter into the sequence of events which characterises Israel's history at the end of the Age and they have to be viewed in their proper relation one to another. Hence the solemnity of this introductory verse. *"An Oracle"* says the RSV *"The word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus says the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him"*. It is a



strange verse, seemingly having little bearing upon the prophetic statement which follows, and yet, of course, it is vitally connected. The predominant theme of these three chapters is the all-pervading power of God, and His absolute supremacy over this earth that He has created and the men thereon to whom He has given life. In these three chapters the armed might of this world's evil is brought to a focus and launched against the earthly citadel of God's holiness, and is utterly broken. Nothing in all the earth can stand against God when He rises up to act. Hence it is fitting that right at the outset He declares himself the One who brought heaven and earth into being and made men to have the powers they possess. And having thus stated the fact, God goes on to declare His intention. "*Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem*" (v. 2). The "cup of trembling" is a figure of speech used several times in the O.T. (see Psa. 75. 8 and Isa. 51. 21-22); it is the cup of wine put into the hands of an enemy to cause stupefaction and confusion, and so assist the ease with which that enemy can be repulsed and defeated. This is what Jerusalem (a figure for all Israel) is to become to the nations. During the whole of a century that has been true. Since 1917, when General Allenby captured Jerusalem and liberated the land from Turkish control, the consequent political problems have been a source of stupefaction and confusion to the world's politicians. And the problem has grown worse with time. "*On that day*" God says "*I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it shall grievously hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will come together against it*" (ch. 12. 3 RSV). The word for "grievously hurt" means to be cut and lacerated by a burden too heavy to hold; how true it has been that in these latter years every political power which concerns itself with the problem of Israel finds it one that is "too hot to hold", to use our modern colloquialism.

The expression "come together against it" seemingly refers to the gradual hardening of opinion against Israel typical of the present time. Judah and Jerusalem are associated together in the crisis and, later on, in the deliverance, this being the implication of the phrase in verse 2. Why it should be thought necessary to stress this fact when it would normally be expected that Judah, the land, would naturally share the fate of the capital city Jerusalem might be thought rather strange, but it may be because in the historic invasion of Judah by Sennacherib two centuries or so before the time of Zechariah Judah was desolated whilst Jerusalem was delivered, and since that invasion was evidently the background against which Zechariah's presentation is set there might be an indication here that in

this particular detail the reality does not correspond with the background. Three times in the narrative it is made plain that Judah and Jerusalem come through the crisis together.

Verse 4 pictures the next development in the situation among the nations. The Lord will “*smite every horse with panic*” (not “astonishment” as A.V.) “*and his rider with madness, and...every horse of the people with blindness*”. Horses in prophecy are metaphors for the military might of nations; the well-known passage in Isa. 31. 1-3 is a good example of this. Blindness, madness, panic; surely these are the characteristics manifest in the policies of the nations in their dealings with the “Middle East” problem today. That which commenced with the cup of stupefaction, becoming a burdensome stone which lacerates all who pick it up, develops finally into complete failure to apprehend the true nature of what is happening, that the Most High is preparing the way for his intervention in the affairs of earth. Blindness, madness and panic is a very late stage in the period of preparation for the last siege of Jerusalem.

Now the workings of God begin to become outwardly evident. At this point, when blindness, madness and panic begins to grip the nations, “*I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah*” says the Lord “*and the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again*” (ch. 12. 4-6). This is a most remarkable statement, for it speaks of a time in the end of the Age, prior to the deliverance of Israel and therefore prior to the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom, when the leaders of Israel avow their own faith and the faith of their people in God. “Our strength” say these governors “is not in the arm of flesh nor in carnal weapons, but in God”. This implies an awakening of faith in the nation, a beginning of that turning to God which blossoms into fulness at the time of the actual deliverance. At this moment God has opened his eyes upon the house of Judah and some have responded.

Who are the governors? These are political leaders of a new kind, for none of today’s statesmen, even those of present-day Israel would adopt so hazardous a policy as faith in Divine protection, and neither would their peoples. These governors are men of God, raised up from some totally unexpected source. There is good reason for the conclusion that they are none other than the promised heroes of Old Testament days, the

“Ancient Worthies”, restored from the dead to lead the nation into the Kingdom. If this in fact be so then the chapter has already carried us to a stage in the events of the end of the Age very near to the final act, the consummation when Divine power is employed to bring the kingdoms of this world to their end and establish the earthly Kingdom of God in their place. By that time the “change” of the Church will have taken place and the work of the Messianic Age be at the point of commencement.

The impact, upon mankind generally, of the advent of these governors will be tremendous. *“Like a blazing pot in the midst of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves”* says the RSV, *“they shall devour to the right and...left all the peoples round about, while Jerusalem shall still be inhabited in its place”* (ch. 12. 6). This verse is so momentous that it needs to be viewed in correct relation to the rest of the narrative with some care. It has its place prior to the active intervention of God to save the city at the critical moment; the influence of the “governors” is felt among the nations for a little while before, and it is a consuming influence. It is almost as if the battle commences and rages for some time before God steps in, and during that time the burden of defence rests upon the governors and the nature of that defence is indicated in this verse. Something of this kind appears to be demanded by the more detailed narrative of chapter 14 where the siege continues with sundry losses to Israel but without harming the faithful remnant, until, after the nation has been purged of its apostates who then go into exile, the time of actual Divine intervention comes and the city is saved.

*“The LORD will give victory to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over that of Judah”* (ch. 12. 7 RSV). The expression “tents of Judah” really denotes the dwelling places of the ordinary populace of the land—derived from Israel’s early experiences at the Exodus; “tents” became a term throughout the Old Testament for homes, whether temporary or permanent. There is a contrast here between the people of the land generally and the “upper crust” of society concentrated in the city and the king’s court. Many of the invasions of Old Testament times saw the country dwellers despoiled and enslaved whilst the walled and defended city Jerusalem held out and escaped. There will be nothing like that in this battle of the Last Day.

The entire land is to be delivered from the invader; further, in order to intensify the fact that God is fighting for his covenant people as a whole and not just for a few elite, as it were, in the city, the countryside is to be

first to experience deliverance, so that neither the royal ruling house of David nor the aristocracy of Jerusalem can claim priority of Divine favour over the masses of the people. The application of this symbolism to the time in question, when no Davidic kings rule nor is there any “aristocracy” element in restored Israel, is a little difficult to perceive. Perhaps it is intended to convey the idea that despite various vivid Old Testament pictures of the siege of Jerusalem, which from the literal viewpoint would involve the subjugation of the surrounding countryside, in this case the whole of the land of Israel is to be inviolate. It is certainly true that the siege of the city is just as truly a siege if the invaders are drawn up around the frontiers of the land instead of just outside the city walls and this would certainly be more appropriate to the idea of an entire nation awaiting the assault of the enemy in perfect trust in God and experiencing deliverance thereby.

*“In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem”* (ch. 12. 8-9).

This is the final stage. David of old was the champion of Israel; his exploits both as a “guerilla” fighter, as we would say, in his early days, and as a warrior king later on, made his name a legend. “Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands” sang the maidens of Israel after one of his resounding victories. Even the weakest of the people “in that day” will be valiant as was David; not by dint of physical prowess in material warfare, but in the triumphs that faith will then bring. The house of David in ancient times was the ruling house, the royal family. “In that day” the ruling house will be the company of the resurrected Ancient Worthies and they truly will be “as God, as the angel of the Lord before them”. Just as the Angel of the Presence went before Israel in the days of the Exodus, guiding and protecting them, so will the men whom God has appointed prove themselves sure guides and strong defenders in Israel’s time of trial. So the Lord will defend his people and render ineffective all the assaults of their adversaries.

*(to be continued)*  
AOH

---

*Count your blessings, name them one by one*

---

## ASAPH THE CHIEF MUSICIAN

*“For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God.” (Neh. 12. 46).*

Asaph was a great choirmaster; so great that his name lingered on for many generations after his death and in all Israel's after history the Temple singers were known as “sons of Asaph”. Here was a man whose talents and whole life were consecrated to God and used in one particular direction, in the ministry of sacred song. Who knows how many hearts in Israel were turned more reverently toward the God of Israel and how many minds to the more sober consideration of the Covenant and their responsibilities as a chosen and separated people to God, in consequence of that ministry? The ascending of praise and thanksgiving to God is a very lovely thing in Divine worship; and it is more than that. The heart's devotion can rise to heaven on the wings of song, and the renewal, the re-affirming, of one's own consecration can be carried to God by the voice of thanksgiving. It is part of the service in which all can join and express for themselves in their own way the love and gratitude they feel for all his benefits.

Sometimes a speaker, anxious to conserve as much of the time allotted to the service as he can for his address, requests that one of the hymns be omitted, or the long ones shortened. He does not well who does so. The Father looks upon the praises and prayers of his people in their gathering together with as much interest and sympathy as he does upon the ministry of the spoken word and, who knows, maybe he gets less weary of listening to the praise and thanksgiving of the congregation than he does of the sometimes overlong perorations (utterances) delivered in his name by the minister.

Asaph lived in the days of David. He must have found in that king a very ready sympathiser with his services and a quick readiness to make use of his characteristic talents. David himself in his younger and—who knows—happier days had been a singer and a poet. As a shepherd lad he had whiled away many a pleasant hour on the hillside, while the sun shone warmly down, composing and singing simple songs of praise to God. In later years, when in the service of King Saul, he played the harp and sang the same songs to his own accompaniment. Now, with all the cares of state pressing on his shoulders and the claims of several wives to satisfy he probably had less time for such direct indulgence in his musical tastes; but when he came to organising the worship of God he remem-

bered the charm that music had always had for him, and realising what it could mean in the worship of Israel, he looked around for a suitable man to place in charge of such things and found a twin soul in Asaph.

It was when King David had brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem after its long sojourn in the house of Obededom, following its capture by the Philistines in the days of Eli two generations earlier, that Asaph received his appointment. According to 1 Chron. 16. 4-5, David had *“appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the Ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel: Asaph the chief...”* As the account goes on, we find that there were players on psalteries and harps, and priests with trumpets, and Asaph himself, in addition to his duty of leading the choir, *“made a sound with cymbals”*. It seems evident that this Temple music was by no means a subdued affair; more likely is it that it bore some distinct resemblance to the Salvation Army bands of our own day. But the Lord blessed it; that is the important thing; He blessed it! That is a point to remember when we feel disposed to decry and condemn a form of service which some others are conducting to the Lord’s glory but a form which does not appeal to ourselves. The Lord’s arm is not so short—nor his imagination so limited—that He is compelled to confine himself to just one way of doing his work and although we do tend to flatter ourselves that we are the only ones who understand his Plan and therefore the only ones entitled to work for him or to speak in his name, there is plenty of evidence to the unbiased observer that the Lord does find use for many of the efforts put forth by Christian disciples of many differing theologies despite the shortcomings of some of them as respects a clear vision of his Plan.

Now Asaph was not only a musician, he was also a prophet. He must have been a very self-effacing one, for there is no mention of the fact during the time of his own life. Perhaps the greater glory of his royal patron obliterated any lesser radiance that might have shone from the Chief Musician. But in the days of Hezekiah, several centuries later, there is a casual reference which goes to show that his prophetic office was remembered equally with his musical skill. 2. Chron. 29. 30, tells us, in connection with Hezekiah’s restoration of the Temple service after the idolatry of Ahaz, that *“Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped”*.

So Asaph was a seer—a prophet! In his musical preoccupation he found

time to study the Word of the Lord and to become a fit medium through which the Holy Spirit could speak. What would be the subjects of his prophecy? Without much doubt he would prophesy, as did all the prophets, concerning the King and the Kingdom, and the conditions of entrance into that Kingdom. Like all the prophets, he would speak of Judgment and Restitution, and call the people to repentance and dedication of life to God's service—to consecration. How would he speak to them? Surely through the medium of his sacred office! Not for Asaph the free, unrestricted wandering through the countryside in the manner of Amos the herdsman or Joel the vinedresser. Not for Asaph the standing in the royal court in the company of princes and politicians of this world, like Isaiah or Daniel. His duties kept him in the place where daily worship was being constantly offered, and it was there, and in the course of that worship and those duties, that his prophecy, if it was to be given at all, must be uttered. And therefore it is that for the prophecies of Asaph we must look into the psalms of Asaph.

There are twelve in number, these psalms which are accredited to David's chief musician. Some have suggested that they might not all actually be from Asaph; that the structure of at least one seems to indicate a composition of a much later date, but there is really little or no evidence to support such hypotheses. These twelve, Psalm 50 and Psalms 73 to 83 inclusive, are entitled "Psalms of Asaph", and there is every reason for concluding that we have here compositions that are the work of this fervent-hearted Levite, set to music and rendered under his direction by the sacred choir in the days of David. And being a prophet, what more natural than that he should incorporate in these songs the understanding that the Holy Spirit had given him?

It would take many pages to exhaust the doctrinal and prophetic teaching left on record in the twelve psalms that enshrine the ministry of Asaph. A few brief allusions must suffice. And no such short survey can start on a more appropriate theme than the one which led Asaph to compose the 73rd Psalm—the Permission of Evil. Not exactly a doctrine, as we understand the term today, perhaps, but how vital a foundation for our own orderly and satisfying appreciation of the Divine mysteries. "*I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked*" he says (Psa. 73. 3)..."*they are not in trouble as other men...they have more than heart could wish...and they say, How doth God know?...When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; THEN UNDERSTOOD I THEIR END.*" (vv. 5,7,11,16-17) Ah, yes, that is where we, too, understand why God has permitted evil, and that He

will not allow evil and the evildoer to continue for ever. It is in this psalm, too, that Asaph coined a word that has been an inestimable source of encouragement to the disciples of Jesus in all the centuries of this Gospel Age; *“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.”* (Psa. 73. 24)

It must have been this realisation of God’s determination to vindicate the righteous in due time that led Asaph to the train of thought revealed in Psa. 77. *“I have considered the days of old”* he says *“the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever?...Hath God forgotten to be gracious?”* Then, in a swift revulsion of feeling *“I will remember the works of the LORD...I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.”* (vv. 5-12) In the study and consideration of the Plan of God as revealed in his past actions Asaph found both consolation and instruction to explain the apparent inactivity of God. *“Thy way, O God, IS IN THE SANCTUARY”* (v. 13). That was the great lesson and it is so still with us. The teaching of this Psalm is the over-ruling providence of God and his wise direction of events for the ultimate good of all men. He is leading them through many strange and hard experiences that they might learn at last the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and come willingly and voluntarily in harmony with God’s righteousness. *“Thou leddest thy people like a flock”* are the concluding words of the Psalm. To the doctrine of the Permission of Evil therefore we have to add the doctrine of Divine Providence that doeth all things well.

The next theme to which Asaph devoted his talents was that of Divine Judgment, and here two of his Psalms, 82 and 83, share the burden of the song. *“God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods”* is the tremendous opening of Psa. 82. None of all created beings are exempt from God’s judgment if so be that sin has entered and found a lodgement. Even though they be called gods, children of the Most High, they will die like men, and fall like one of the princes, should the contaminating effects of sin so demand. If wicked men take counsel against the people of God, and say (Psa. 83. 4) *“Come...let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance”*, He will rise up and cause them to scatter and be no more, as the rolling leaves and dust before the whirlwind, twisting and twirling about in the terrible blast of his anger (vv. 13-15). And Asaph saw clearly—so clearly—that the final effect of Divine Judgment is *“that men may know*



*that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth” (v. 18).*

Now Asaph comes to prophecy. In Psa. 78, 79 and 80 he sings of God’s chosen people Israel, of his goodness to them and their unfaithfulness to him. *“Give ear, O my people”* he cries *“to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old”* (Psa. 78. 1-2). Then he sings of the great deeds of old, the victories and triumphs of Israel in the wilderness, the continued faithfulness of God in face of the persistent unfaithfulness of Israel. So, at last, *“he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel: so that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh...and delivered strength into captivity”*. (vv. 59-61) But when God saw the distress into which his people had fallen, and how the enemies of righteousness exulted over the sorry state of those who despite all their faults and all their failures and all their perversities were still the people of God, then *“the LORD awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine. And he smote his enemies...he put them to a perpetual reproach.”* (vv. 65-66) What a wonderful commentary upon the Divine Plan it is to say, as Asaph here says *“so he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.”* (Psa. 78. 72).

The song drops to a lower key. Asaph’s prophetic insight showed him that in days yet to come, long after he himself would be sleeping with his fathers, there would be trouble and distress upon Israel because of renewed unfaithfulness. He saw a day in the which fierce Babylonian soldiers would come and despoil the city and the sanctuary, and take all the treasures thereof captive to Babylon. *“O God”* he cries in agony in the opening stanza of Psa. 74 *“why hast thou cast us off for ever? Why doth thine anger smoke against the sheep of thy pasture?”* In vision he saw the Temple destroyed and lifted his voice in impassioned protest. *“A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees. But now they break down the carved work thereof...with axes and hammers. They have cast fire into thy sanctuary...they have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land”*. (vv. 5-8) But it is in this psalm that he rises up to a lofty plea for the fulfilment of God’s Plan, a fulfilment which he knows is sadly needed because of the world’s sin. *“Have respect unto the covenant”* he urges *“for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty”*. (v. 20) Psalms 74 and 75 both reveal Asaph’s knowledge that such a time of disaster must come upon Israel, and that it would be followed by judgment upon the nations that oppressed them. *“In the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red...the dregs thereof, all the*

wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them” (Psa. 75. 8). So it is that in Psa. 76 he passes on to a brighter view of prophecy and glimpses something of the day of light and gladness that is to follow the overthrow of God’s enemies. “*When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth...surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain*” (Psa. 76. 9-10). There is his faith in the Millennial Day, in those “Times of Restitution” which Peter, long centuries afterward, was to declare had been spoken of by all God’s holy prophets. Asaph was one of those prophets.

It was in the 50th Psalm that the great singer attained his loftiest height of vision. In that wonderful paeon of praise and prophecy he traverses briefly the whole of God’s later works, succeeding that earlier phase when Israel after the flesh was the only instrument in God’s hand. There in Psalm 50 Asaph has taken a mighty stride forward and sees the development of another Israel, gathered to God in another covenant, and in the ecstasy of that revelation he calls “*Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice*” (Psa. 50. 5). Perhaps that last vision of all showed him the majesty and power of God more vividly than anything before. It was at any rate with this train of thought in his mind that he uttered the sublime words that we have used so often ourselves to describe the all-power of our Father and our God: “*For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills*”! (v. 10)

“*Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*” (v. 23) The vibrant words die away into silence; the melody fades away in the distance. Asaph the singer, the musician of David’s choir is no more. He sleeps with his fellows, awaiting the call to enter the new world about which he so constantly spoke and sang; but his words live on after him, and we, three thousand years later, find strength and encouragement and inspiration because an obscure but zealous and earnest man of God, away in those far-off days, used his talent for music and poetry to sing praises to the God of his salvation.

AOH

That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
Sees it and does it:  
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.  
That low man goes on adding one to one,

His hundred’s soon hit:  
This high man, aiming at a million,  
Misses an unit.

R. Browning  
*A Book of Daily Readings*

---

## PATIENT IN SUFFERING

*“Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times.”* Romans 12. 12 (GNB)

*“Love is patient and kind.”* 1 Corinthians 13. 4.

Patience is an interesting quality because of the various ways in which we express it. Some people find it easy to be patient in doing a job of work but would find it difficult to show patience towards people. Others are just the reverse: they find it easy to be patient with troublesome people but readily become upset with mundane objects that appear to be difficult to handle. Perhaps it is as well that we are not all the same but in the end both types of ‘patience’ are necessary in the development of character if we are to follow the pattern of Jesus.

Interestingly, the old Authorised Version (King James Version) brings out the meaning of the well-known passage in 1 Cor. 13 more accurately than most modern translations. The AV uses the word ‘longsuffering’, Weymouth translates “Love is patient”: many other translations give “Love is Patient”. The same kind of thing has occurred in translating the “fruit of the spirit” in Galatians 5 but Moffatt and Rotherham show the distinction noted in the AV. Schonfield too shows the difference in the Greek from which the words are translated.

The two words occur in Col. 1 .11 where the AV translates “*Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness*”. Longsuffering is a characteristic of love or a fruit of the spirit and concerns an attitude towards people. It is apparent when someone refrains from reprisal although hurt or offended. In a sense it is the opposite of retaliation and therefore is that perfection of character taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5. 38-48) when He told His disciples to be like their Father in Heaven. It was a characteristic of His whole life and in particular on Calvary. It is the fruitage of our life when lived with Jesus, when filled with the Holy Spirit and after much prayer and devotion. It is not part of our human nature for we naturally want to ‘hit back’ whether in words or actions. The attitude of revenge is observable in every walk of human life and in every field of human activity. We do not like someone else to ‘do us down’, to get the better of us, to take unfair advantage and to appear to ‘win’. So, human nature will employ whatever fair or unfair tricks it can adopt to restore its wounded pride. Not only is revenge ungodly, it is illogical and counterproductive to all goodness, as is all sin.

William Barclay shows, in his book about Greek words, that this quality ran counter to moral thinking in the ancient world. The Greeks believed that it was wrong ‘to tolerate any insult or injury’. Honour had to be satisfied. Not so with the Christian who must express patience with all people. He must learn to accept suffering and trouble from other people, even fellow Christians, without even wanting any kind of requital, but this is fruit of the spirit and it takes time to grow. This is an aspect of the kind of love described by Paul in 1 Cor. 13 and by Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan. It is also the attitude of the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son but not that of the older brother. We need to beware in pronouncing ‘judgment’ for we hurt ourselves more than we hurt the one we judge.

Jesus warned His disciples about persecution. After His death and resurrection they experienced it because the world is opposed to the Gospel of love. It was in suffering and cruelty which Jesus and the early Church endured that longsuffering matured but not in the fashionable church of later centuries except by the afflicted ‘heretics’. Today, the temptation is sometimes more subtle. Human immoral influences seek to destroy Bible standards of behaviour. While it is right to witness in defence of Christian principles, the bitter attacks against Christians must be taken with ‘longsuffering’. It is never right to try to defeat Satan’s kingdom with Satan’s methods. Violence in word or action is always wrong.

There is another kind of patience which is more directed towards things, events and happenings, rather than towards people. It has rather the sense of ‘endurance’ when things go wrong or take a long time to reach the results we so much want. It has been illustrated in scripture by the continuous effort of a long-distance runner. This is certainly not a ‘sit down and do nothing’ attitude which accepts difficulty with insensitive submission hardly seeming to care. This is a waiting in hope, joyful hope, knowing that however long it takes for God’s purposes to develop we must wait with unwavering trust, without complaint knowing that He does everything well—albeit slowly. Barclay writes of George Matheson who “stricken in blindness, disappointed in love, wrote a prayer in which he pleads that he might accept God’s will ‘not with dumb resignation, but with holy joy; not only with the absence of murmur, but with a song of praise’.”

God waits to see these qualities of character mature in His people by the power of the Holy Spirit. The world doesn’t understand them yet but its

very attitude is helping the followers of Christ to become prepared for their work of restoring the image of the Creator in all humanity. We grow spiritually by imitating our Lord and avoiding the ways of the world. By this alone can we be ready to heal the nations.

New Testament use of the words described above are found in the following references.

Long suffering (Gr. Makrothumia )

Rom. 2. 4; 9. 22; 2 Cor. 6. 6; Eph. 4. 2; Col. 1. 11; 3. 12; 1 Tim. 1. 16; 2 Tim. 3. 10; Heb. 6. 12; Jas. 5. 10; 1 Pet. 3. 20.

Patience (Gr. Hupomone)

Luke 8. 15; 21. 19; Rom. 2. 7; 5. 3,4; 8. 25; 15. 4; 2 Cor. 1. 6; 6. 4; 12. 12; Col. 1. 11; 1 Thess. 1. 3; 2 Thess. 1. 4; 3. 5; 1 Tim. 6. 11; 2 Tim. 3. 10; Tit. 2. 2; Heb. 10. 36; 12. 1; Jas. 1. 3,4; 5. 11; 2 Pet. 1. 6; Rev. 1. 9; Rev. 2. 2,3,19; 3. 10; 13. 10; 14. 12. DN

Eph. 4. 1-3 I..beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

1 Tim. 1. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Luke 8. 15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Rom. 8. 25 If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Rev. 14. 12 Here is the patience of the saints...they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

## REFINING

Stars shine brightest in the darkest night, spices smell best when bruised, young trees root the faster for being shaken and gold looks the brighter for scouring. Such is the condition of all God's children. They are most triumphant when most tempted; most glorious when most afflicted; most in the favour of God when least in man's and in their own. As their conflicts, such are their conquests. As their tribulation, such their triumphs. They live best in the furnace of persecution.

*Bible Study Monthly June 1948*

## THE HEAVENLY CALLING

*“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” James 5. 7*

The nature of the heavenly calling can be simply described as being called to leave this world in order to enter the heavenly realms. This is the hope of all the Lord’s consecrated followers: that at the close of their earthly walk they will find themselves in the presence of their beloved Lord and loving Heavenly Father.

However, the reality of this calling is that the treasure of the new mind is held in an “earthen vessel,” our fleshly bodies, and our difficulty is to move from our natural mind to our spiritual mind, learning to walk in the spirit. Now the Word abounds with instructions to this end and faithful pastors and teachers of past times have diligently opened up their meaning to the faithful followers of the Lord. Here we hope to simply “stir up our pure minds” by way of remembrance to the principles that underpin the Word.

- “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)” (Ephesians 2. 5).
- “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses” (Colossians 2. 13).
- “For he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength” (Job 37. 6).
- “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth” (Hosea 6. 3).

### **Repentance necessary**

It is clear from the foregoing scriptures that the commencement of this walk is initiated entirely by the holy Spirit for the purpose of leading us to repentance and the first step of this walk. As we respond, we find ourselves ready for the next leading of the Spirit. What is not always clear is that, although this work is spiritual, we are still as yet responding by way of our natural mind.

The Apostle Paul clearly explained the nature of this problem in some detail from his own experience. “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I

would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not..." (Romans 7. 14-18).

Nevertheless, as the Apostle assures us, having this initial quickening of the Spirit, it is now possible for us to learn how to walk, not after the natural mind, but by the power of the holy Spirit. Quickened and forgiven, we walk in grace, and with prayerful supplication for all the overruling of our daily experiences, we endeavour to "work out our own salvation". "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8. 1) The Apostle Paul knew only too well that the fledgling Churches under his care were failing to apprehend that this quickening of the Spirit which they had all received was simply an "earnest" of what would actually be needed to bring into being a fully developed New Creation. Through the spirit we might "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4. 13).

### **Early Church Examples**

The Church at Corinth is an example of this progress. Paul's description of their standing in Christ makes this plain. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat...For ye are yet carnal..." (1 Corinthians 3. 1-3). They had received all that they required for their development in Christ, very richly so: the quickening of the Spirit; instruction into baptism and in many cases the actual baptism by the apostles themselves—Paul, Apollos and Peter. It seemed natural to them to follow men and not see Christ in their daily lives. Paul had to ask. "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" He knew only too well that until they learned to use that first measure of the Spirit and integrate it with the "first principles of the oracles of God" at that point, they could be given the strong meat of the Word. To understand the deeper things of the Word would require a much greater measure of the holy Spirit and they were not ready for such responsibility.

This very same situation comes before us in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"Of whom (Melchisedec) we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye

ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” (Heb. 5. 11-Heb. 6. 6).

It is important to remember here that the “earnest” of the Spirit is only a small part of the powers of the world to come; a foretaste with which to prepare us, and then, only “if God permits” in His own wisdom, for His child to go forward. The response of the brethren at Corinth in this same situation, as described here, is very instructive and is recorded in Paul’s second Epistle to them.

In the first Epistle we find that there were many problems indeed in this young Church stemming from the fact that they were not making the proper use of their spiritual gifts; not “exercising their spiritual senses by reason of use.” However, we break into the epistle at Chapter five to detail here the most grievous example, to place the lesson in view. And next on to Chapter ten where the fundamental nature of their problem under the heading of baptism is illustrated in type in Exodus.

“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan



for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed". (1 Corinthians 5. 1-7)

With this example Paul puts his finger firmly on the problem. To be a new Unleavened Lump we need to have a much deeper appreciation and understanding of Christ as our Passover sacrifice. Not just to be doctrinally sound on the matter but to "show forth His death" by being dead with Him in His Baptism. So then to Chapter ten.

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was (represented—present verb) Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Corinthians 10. 1-11)

Even if Paul had not particularly stated that this was a type, a modest assessment of the state of the Church at Corinth reveals how perfectly their situation parallels Israel in the wilderness.

Now Paul continues, for these dear brethren had not fully entered into the reality of their spiritual gifts; they knew that they had been brought out of the darkness of idolatry to worship the true God and brought with spiritual gifts into the Kingdom of light and truth. With so much done for them it was perhaps little wonder that they thought that the work was complete. Paul had of course dealt with this earlier in his letter. "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God

ye did reign, that we also might reign with you,” (1 Cor. 4. 8) and with this illustration of the nature of their misunderstanding now set before them he gives then a timely warning.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” Then an even more timely illustration of the way forward, still of course, from this perfect scriptural “ensample”. “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry” (1 Cor. 10. 12-14).

Now in that fatherly yet masterly way in which he strove to bring his infant churches into the deeper working of the Spirit, Paul lays aside the word of ignorance and lifts their spiritual eyes.

- *Verse 15. (Now) “I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.”*

Let us also look into the depth of the Apostle’s words here. Yes, they had all drunk of their Saviour as of a living stream. But now they must learn how to partake of His blood poured out for their new life.

- *Verse 16. “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?”*

As their manna He would more than suffice them till, with all the overcoming saints, they would, as they progressed in their walk, pass over Jordan and begin to partake of the “powers of the world to come” (Heb. 6. 5), that is the “old corn of the land”. (Joshua 5. 10-12) Yes, the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

- *Verse 17. “For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”*

But that “one”ness, that “communion,” of course, was sadly lacking and Paul dare not spare them. His beloved church had to see that a deeper commitment and fuller measure of the Spirit had to come.

## **2 Corinthians 2. 1-11**

In this passage, we have recorded that this church did indeed judge itself. First, we have the deep repentance of the individual, brought back with a deeper understanding and renewed standing in Christ and his true place

amongst His spiritually begotten people. Paul later comments on this.

“For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things” (2 Corinthians 2. 4-9).

And indeed. What obedience!

## 2 Corinthians 7

“For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you” (verses 8-12).

Surely now, before our eyes, is set forth a church fitted for the filling of the Spirit. This twofold creative work of the Spirit is revealed to us in many ways and under many heads. The great examples come before us throughout the scriptures. The greatest and foremost must suffice here.

The Logos, the firstborn of every Creature, having created all things by the mighty power of His Creator must lay all aside, be made perfect in the things He suffered, and being made the firstborn from the dead, raised by the mighty power of the Spirit, becomes the head of a New Creation. And it does not surprise us that at the commencement of His earthly ministry

the same principle meets our eye.

“And Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil...” (Luke 4. 1,2).

Luke then recounts the success of the Lord in overcoming the Devil, concluding the account in verse 14, “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.”

Here then lies the principle behind our Heavenly Calling: first, Spirit-quickened and led; with the specific intention of being tested, yet “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation” (1 Peter 1. 5), finally, to be made “more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8. 37).

### **Our Walk in the Lord**

We can now return to our departure point in the Epistle to the Hebrews and perhaps, from here on, mark our own personal walk in the Lord.

“For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Hebrews 6. 7-12).

To the extent that our hearts “have drunk” in the refreshing blessing of our “earnest of the Spirit” coming “oft upon us” and we have begun to enjoy some of the “fruit of the Spirit” that is the “herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed,” let us “shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end” “for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which we have shewed toward his name” and will surely bless us with that full sealing of the Spirit that we “through faith and patience may inherit the promise” of our Heavenly Calling.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming (presence) of the Lord.

Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the Early and Latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming (presence) of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5. 7,8).

*FB*



## GOD’S JUDGMENT DAY OF BLESSING

When the judgments of God are abroad in the land  
Then all of the children of men  
Shall learn of his righteousness—know of his love,  
And none shall have fear of him then.

For his knowledge shall flow to the ends of the earth,  
As the waters do cover the sea.  
Not any shall ask dost thou know of the Lord,  
For his Spirit shall over all be.

They will walk up the highway of holiness then,  
With nothing to hurt nor destroy,  
For sin shall be vanquished—the evil one bound,  
And sorrow shall give way to joy.

The Paradise lost, shall again be regained,  
And all those now dead in their grave  
Shall hear the sweet call of their Saviour and Lord  
Who died that their lives he might save.

God’s judgment day nears bringing blessings and peace.  
He’s promised all this in his Word.  
For Christ and his bride shall then reign o’er the earth  
And his name evermore be adored.

And so let us pray from the depths of our hearts  
“May thy Kingdom come”—haste the day.  
For the judgments of God will bring blessings for all,  
With all of earth’s tears wiped away.

# THE GATHERING HOME OF SAINTS

Part 3

## THE WAITING ARMS OF THE FATHER

*O Lord, that I might view my present walk,  
each test, each trial, each concept of Thy Truth,  
against the glory of that perfect day.  
Oh that with retrospective wisdom blest,  
I could retrace each step, remould each thought,  
with noonday vision of my Father's face.*

In Exodus 24, verse 9, we find, with Moses, seventy elders climbing the holy mountain.

Exodus 24. 10-11 “And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.”

We know this was a visionary representation. We have the words of spiritual authority saying, “No man hath seen God at any time.” (John 1. 18) Likewise must this apply to other visions of the divine presence and glory, to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John. Genesis 32, verses 24 to 30, speaks of Jacob wrestling with God until the break of day. “I have seen God face to face.” The thought filled Jacob with deepest awe and wonder. “I have seen God face to face, and live”\*, for no man can do this. No man can see God's face and live!

Thus is conveyed to our minds the underlying vastness of truth, the utter holiness of God. Such holiness is a consuming fire of all that is feigned, all that is impure, all that is unworthy to stand in His most holy presence.

*“Eternal Light! Eternal Light!  
How pure that soul must be,  
When placed within Thy searching sight,  
It shrinks not, but, with calm delight,  
Can live and look on Thee!”*

Yet once man did walk and talk with God in the cool refreshing breeze of evening, before sin intervened to alienate and estrange from the Creator the creature made to bear His likeness. What Adam sadly lost and missed the walk of faith has found and cherished. Communion of heart with heart, and in this age, one Spirit shared, and confidences too, between the

Father and His child. Save for that Way, that ladder He has made to bridge the distance separating Holy God from fallen man, no one would yet have come to know the Lord. There would have been no Word, no message sent of truth. Yet 'Way' did He provide when He sent His Son, a 'Way' anticipated by the faith of ages past. "*I am the Way...no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*" (John 14. 6)

*Here is the blessing of the pure in heart,  
who long for separateness from sin.  
Their oneness of desire, the Lord to please...  
Their total aim, His nod and smile to win.*

Bringing us to God is a process involving first the passing through that door, once found, of faith in that blood that lift away *sin's guilt*. It then entails pursuit along a road the end of which is to lift away *sin's power*. This road is lit by a lamp to the feet, the guidance of His Word, instructing steps, reproving slips, and strengthening resolve by the power of the Spirit of Holiness. All this is involved, and it would be an undertaking of impossible magnitude were it in any other hands than of the Captain of our salvation, Jesus. 'First and chief bringer', so does that title "Captain" imply, of "many sons unto glory." (Heb. 2. 10)

The provisions of grace sufficient for such work, the furnishing of every need to bring us to that final presentation before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, **all** is the Father's doing, **all** is the Father's work, the fulfilling of the Father's desire. To achieve this wondrous goal He employs the skill and judgment of His beloved Son, so aptly described as the Arm of God. Thus TWO most wonderful Minds, united by One Spirit, are actively directed towards the achievement of that moment of presentation, focusing every enabling power in common purpose to that one blessed end.

Oh that Wonderful Mind of my Father, that sees a long way off even the first turning of the eyes, hears that first groaning of the soul, that loathing of self, that dissatisfaction with the husks appropriate only to the lower beasts. That Mind that knew when man first left the safety of his dwelling with the One Who brought him forth, now following his own unworthy course, knew that one day that same man would return, return home. So, with arms outstretched, the Father waits for that hour when He might greet His wayward child and say, "This son of Mine was dead, and is alive!" That pathway of contrition do we tread today, before mankind. That Father's smile, its warmth along the path to urge us on, the whis-

pered voice, “Yet closer come, thou art not near enough...” all love’s constraining do we feel within our hearts. Each faltering step is thus endowed with light of hope, and ever present is the knowledge of those waiting arms that reach to take me to Himself.

This fellowship, this walk with God, we know, even now along that way. We know the power of those arms, sustaining, reassuring, everlasting, always there. We bow beneath that humbling hand when human pride rebels. Its disciplines we accept as tokens of His love, that of His holiness we should partake. In weariness and weakness, those arms become our bed. In face of stumbling, they bear us up lest we dash our feet and trip. And when, in disregard of his full warning, we may fall, yet still they lift again to set us straight upon the path that leads to closer walk, and deeper knowing, and more faithful love.

These are the arms we know and each have proved. They wait there at the end when faultless in His presence we shall stand, and know that full atonement with our God. Each one the Master takes by hand and leads them to the Father’s presence, as He says, “My Father, O Righteous Father, this is \_\_\_” yes, and then will He confess my name.

Faultless in the presence of His glory, blameless before the throne of His holiness, my righteousness will be all of Him Who is of holiness the Source. The vessel in His hands will be pure gold, in furnace tried, and on it will be stamped in everlasting character, *HOLINESS TO THE LORD*.

*Oh may it never end that age of love’s embrace, triumphant in the outcome of His work!*

If I in Thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,  
And shine a pure image of Thee,  
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break  
The fetters of flesh and be free.

I know this stained tablet must first be washed white  
And there Thy bright features be drawn;  
I know I must suffer the darkness of night  
To welcome the coming of dawn.

And O! the blest morning already is here,  
The shadows of earth soon shall fade;  
And soon in Thy likeness I’ll with Thee appear,  
In glory and beauty arrayed.



When on Thine own image in me Thou hast smiled,  
 Within Thy blest mansion, and when  
 The arms of my Father encircle His child,  
 O! I shall be satisfied then.

“O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles.” Psalm 43. 3.

DH

---

## PARADISE ON EARTH—A BOOKLET

Extracts from a B.F.U. publication 1987

*This booklet came from a series in 1986 and 1987. Its interesting to note that it was in April 1986 that the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Union occurred. Fossil fuels have not run out as expected although North Sea oil and gas production is much reduced and the U.K. relies on supplies from overseas. But the predicted introduction of wind and solar power and the consideration of tidal power has continued. Terrorism has posed an increased problem since 1987 with the various wars on terror. Food and the quality of food eaten has become more of an issue. Earthquakes and tidal waves have struck in the Indian Ocean on Boxing Day (26 December) 2004 as well as the one in Japan in 2011. The estimated world population reached 7.7 billion in April 2019 according to Wikipedia. In the Amazon forest according to Channel 4 on 11 June “last month deforestation in the Amazon basin hit record levels. It results from the pro-farming policy being pursued by Brazil’s new president...The Amazon rainforest is shrinking faster than any other.” (He also says) “the demarcated environmentally protected indigenous lands in the Amazon forest...hinders development”.*

The marvels of surgery have lengthened and made more tolerable many blighted lives, but world pollution and commercial food manufacture is shortening many more.

Research into the atom has made possible the manufacture of many useful chemical substances, the production of increasingly useful food plants and the treatment of baffling diseases: but it has also given us nuclear fission and the nuclear bomb, with all the horrifying possibilities inherent in that creation.

The benefits of the one are more than overshadowed by the menace of the other. And it was in foreseeing this that the Lord Jesus, knowing that such a day would surely come, described it in words burning in their intensity. *“There shall be signs...upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity...men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth”*. *“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but...those days shall be shortened”* (Luke 21. 25-26; Matt. 24. 22). But as though to assure those who in the end of the Age find themselves face to face with these dark events, He went on to say *“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption (deliverance) draweth nigh”* (Luke 21. 27-28). It is the recognition that the state of society and the nature of the events of which Jesus and the prophets spoke are those existing today which gives confidence that the great deliverance which they foresaw is in absolute fact imminent. The Day is at hand.

The nature and magnitude of world conditions and world events is such that Christian observers familiar with the Divine purposes no longer doubt that the time of the transition from human rule to Divine rule on earth is upon us. Our Lord characterised the principal features of this transition time as comprising universal war, famine and pestilence. Elaborated to a global scale this is just the situation confronting mankind. Since the first world war of 1914-18 the world has never been free from war in one place or another. The destructiveness of military weaponry has increased a million-fold. For the first time in human history the human race has it within its power to wipe itself off the face of the earth, and this not only at the behest of a few politicians ensconced at the top, but almost in the power of every terrorist and, perhaps, experimenting schoolboy. The fate of millions being determined by the irresponsible.

Behind them, in turn, stand the terrorist groups seeking to bring about their own systems of control, also by force. Home computers are already finding it possible to “muscle in” on the sophisticated defensive and offensive systems of the nations, and who knows, could perhaps “trigger off” a cataclysm.

The steady deforestation of the world at the behest of powerful financial interests, greedy for the timber, and the minerals lying below the forests, has its adverse effect in rainfall and world climate and leads to the creation of vast deserts where life is impossible. The last of the world’s

great rain forests, that of the Amazon region in northern Brazil, is now being systemically decimated and no one in authority or power cares. Two thousand years ago there was no great desert in northern Africa; there were forests and grasslands teeming with life. At the present the vast Sahara Desert which is already larger than the entire United States is increasing in size every year.

A related problem is that of over-population. From the beginning of the Christian era to the year AD 1700 it is estimated that the world's population increased from one hundred million to five hundred million. In the next two centuries, to AD 1900, it trebled to some 1700 million. Since then, in less than a century, it has shot up to over five thousand million, of whom three-quarters today do not get enough to eat. The fault does not lie in the land; there is enough potential food-growing land in the earth to feed a great many more than this present population. The fault lies in the present economic system under which food is grown for private profit and those who cannot pay cannot eat. That leads to the existing immoral system in which Europe and other productive lands build up huge stocks of foodstuffs which cannot be sold and are ultimately destroyed whilst in Africa and India sporadic famines occur and millions starve to death. Nothing can or will change this system.

Men and women, in the so-called civilised lands anyway, are living longer, but they are becoming increasingly susceptible to ill health. National health services are being stretched as never before. And the reason is becoming apparent. God ordained that food grown in the unpolluted earth should be sustenance for man, to maintain strength and vigour and life. But the land is no longer unpolluted, and the food it does grow is passed through a long series of manufacturing processes in which it is converted into "convenience foods" involving little or no labour for its presentation to the table but no one really knows what harm is done by the additives and preservatives and colourings which have been added to it in the process.

### **Food for the Nations**

Joel 3. 18 *"It shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters"*. The picture is that of earth bringing forth abundantly for the sustenance of all creatures that dwell therein.

The story of Eden and the first man recounted in Genesis enshrines the basic principles of human life upon earth, and this is true whether the

story is literal fact or as an elaborate metaphor. And when it touches upon the question of food there is one rather surprising factor. When the Lord told the first human pair of the conditions of life upon earth He said that He had provided the grasses of the earth for animal subsistence and the seed-bearing plants and fruit bearing trees for human subsistence. Said He *"I give you all plants that bear seed everywhere on earth, and every tree bearing fruit which yields seed: they shall be yours for food. All green plants I give for food to the wild animals, to all the birds of heaven, and to all reptiles on earth, to every living creature"* (Gen. 1. 29-30 NEB). The distinction between food for man and animals here is between plants fully ripe and in seed, *"eseb zara zara"*, and fresh young herbage suitable for animals, *"yerek eseb"*; and there is no mention of a meat diet. It can be reasonably expected that in the future Millennial world, when the "curse" on the ground is lifted and the earth yields its increase, the fruits of the earth will recover the elements needed for human sustenance and animal food become unnecessary. If it can be conceded that such was the case at the beginning, that the failure to maintain that position during the rule of man, this world of sin and death, rendered the alternative necessary, it might be reasonable to expect a resumption of primitive conditions in the restored and perfected earth.

### **Let the Earth Bring Forth**

The existing world economy is built upon energy produced from the consumption of fossil fuels coal, oil, natural gas—and the supply of these in the earth has limits and must one day be exhausted. It goes without saying that the nuclear power stations will have to go, and quickly. Mankind will be left with the original sources of power of ancient times—wind, water and the sun.

In recent years there have been serious attempts to use wind power to help solve current energy problems, taking the form of propeller-driven electric generators mounted on poles or steel towers. Russia had 30,000 such operating in 1954 and the USA had 50,000 in 1965. The United Kingdom is experimenting with them in favourable spots such as the North of Scotland and the Isle of Man, feeding electricity into the national grid. It is said (by the BBC) that 10% of Britain's power needs by the year 2020 will be met by wind power, nearly twice as much as the much-vaunted nuclear stations produce at present. And the potentiality is great.

Waterpower comes next. Every major country in the world has its hydro-electric stations where water stored in a man-made lake, fed by rivers or streams in the mountains, passes to a lower level where it operates

turbines driving electric generators. In the Middle Ages every English stream of any size had its waterwheels along the banks, turning millstones or operating weaving looms, or on farms pumping water. As with the wind, there is plenty there.

Tidal power and devices using the force of the waves of the sea are often talked about and some installations are in use. The potentiality is very great.

But all these devices involve intricate and heavy machinery and one wonders if man in the perfect state is intended to construct and use such means when the Lord can ordain the forces of Nature to serve his needs. There is one source of energy which in magnitude as well as simplicity exceeds by far all these devices of man's creating. That source is the sun.

Twenty years ago the U.S.A. Energy Sources investigators considered that by 2000 the United States will get 6% of its total energy from the sun, and by 2020 the proportion will rise to 55%.

The sun's energy is in its light, falling upon the earth. (The sensation of heat felt when the sun shines is caused by sunlight agitating the atoms of the atmosphere as it passes through.) The light is the energy and this is manifested either as heat in the familiar way, or transmuted into solid substance by chemical reaction as when falling upon a leaf, or transformed into electricity when agitating the electrons of certain light-sensitive metals in what is called a solar cell. The science of solar energy has developed for over a century but it is realised that we are as yet only on the fringe of what can be achieved. All kinds of devices for collecting and utilising the sun's energy have been tried.

It has been calculated that an area of the New Mexico desert only eighty miles square could supply all the power at present required by the United States. One thousandth part of the Sahara Desert could produce as much as is now used all over the world.

We live in an age when the fantastic of today is the commonplace of tomorrow. These endeavours of present-day researchers to solve the problems which are admittedly facing the world of the immediate future are pointers to the solutions which will undoubtedly come. The point being made is that solutions do not lie in the field of increasingly complex mechanical devices, a world of computers and robots, but in the field of Nature where the whole earth will bring forth everything that is good and

necessary for the service of man, where Nature is man's handmaid, and men learn to manipulate the forces of Nature to his own advantage and for his well-being. In the Eden story God put the man whom He had created in the garden, "*to dress it and to keep it*". (Gen. 2. 15) The two words mean in the first place to cultivate and in the second to preserve, as a steward or guardian. So in the Millennium mankind will learn to care for and to maintain this earthly heritage, so that, as it was said so long ago by the prophet the earth shall yield its increase. (Psalm 67. 6)

### **The Foundations of the Earth**

The field which has now to be considered is the sphere of so-called "natural disasters", earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, typhoons, tidal waves and the like if the Millennium is to be a time of peace and security.

The factor which has to be borne in mind is that all the experts admit that even in the present time there is no real certainty about the precise cause of these violent convulsions of Nature nor how they may be expected to develop in future ages. It is obvious that they originate from deep down in the interior of the earth but just what are the conditions in that interior is still largely a matter of interpreting the facts obtained from various detecting instruments.

Earthquakes have been the subject of many theories as to their cause, the favourite at present is that extensive blocks of solid rock called "plates", eighty miles thick and hundreds of square miles in extent, are "floating" upon the aforesaid fluid rock and from time to time exert a tremendous strain on each other until something "gives" and the earth's surface above is affected accordingly. There are now seismic listening stations all over the world which can detect these movements and give advance warning of the imminence of an earthquake. (It has been observed for ages past that animals and birds give evidence of sensing earthquakes before they happen.)

Although we may not understand, with our limited knowledge, just how these forces will be tamed, He does know, and at the right time will say to them, as Jesus did to the raging waters on the sea of Galilee, "*Peace, be still*". (Mark 4. 39) And there will then be great calm.

AOH

*"Nevertheless as I live...that all the earth may be filled with the glory of Yahweh".* (Num. 14. 21 Rotherham)

**NOTICES**

BIBLE STUDENTS SEMINAR DAY  
TBC October 2019  
Crick Village Hall, Bucknills Lane, Crick, Nr. Rugby NN6 7SX

BIBLE STUDENTS FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE  
12—16 AUGUST 2020

Thank you to the anonymous donor.

**UK CONVENTION 2020**  
**30 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER**  
HIGH LEIGH CONFERENCE CENTRE  
For early enquiries please contact  
Dina Hinde—dina6ro@yahoo.com  
Dorota Pilch—dorota.broda@gmail.com  
Nicholas Charcharos—nick.charcharos@btinternet.com

**Gone from us**

David Cousins (High Wycombe)  
Barbara Lowe (Warrington)

**OUR COMFORT IN SORROW**

There is no book like the Bible for the sorrowful. It tells of the Comforter; it points to the perfect plan according to which God is working out our blessedness: it insists that all things are working together for good; it opens the vista of the blessed future, where all the griefs and tears shall be put away for ever.

*A sorrow shared lifts half the burden; a joy shared is twice the joy.*

*Tears are often the means by which we see God's rainbow of promises.*

*Deep Waters and a Bubbling Brook  
Harvest Activities*





## THE LATTER RAIN

### James 5. 7

The latter rain is falling,  
Just like Mount Hermon's dew;  
And our Great God Jehovah,  
Is making all things new.

We've reached the end of harvest,  
And the gleaning must be done;  
Let us go into the vineyard,  
In obedience to God's Son.

Jordan's banks are overflowing,  
And the priests are standing by;  
They must step into the Jordan,  
Then the seabed will be dry.

For Joshua, our Great Leader,  
He now issues his commands;  
We must be strong and of good courage,  
We've approached the promised land.

We draw closer to Mount Zion,  
Where God's heavenly angels stand;  
Let's throw off weights of sin now,  
As Joshua demands.



So brethren let's go forward,  
Jordan's waters are a heap;  
Let us stand upon the seabed,  
As God's obedient sheep.

For our Leader gives assurance,  
Of his backing and his love;  
Let's praise his name forever-  
Our glorious God above.

*Where Eagles Gather*  
*Rosemary Page*

**Published by the Bible Fellowship Union**  
**12 Stanley Gardens, Tring, HP23 4BS, U.K.**

email—[editor@biblefellowshipunion.co.uk](mailto:editor@biblefellowshipunion.co.uk)  
[www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk](http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk)  
[www.biblestudymonthly.uk](http://www.biblestudymonthly.uk)