

# BIBLE STUDY MONTHLY

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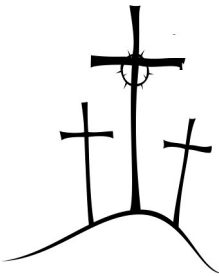
March / April 2026



After he had given thanks he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you..."

In the same way, he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, every time you drink it, in remembrance of me."

1 Cor. 11:24-25 NET



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# 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)

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Secretary & Treasurer: Nicholas Charcharos

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*"Do this in remembrance of me."* (1 Cor. 11:24 NET)

Remembering people from the past is commonplace. How often do we hear its been ten, twenty or one hundred years since a musician, composer, sport star or actor from popular culture was born or died. In April it will be a hundred years since the birth of Queen Elizabeth II. However the one person we must remember is our Lord Jesus. The one event we are told to remember is his death at the Passover season.\*

The Last Supper found all twelve disciples in the Upper Room. Afterward Peter was in Gethsemane in the garden when he fell asleep while Jesus was praying, (Matt. 26:40), then at Jesus' arrest he cut off a soldier's ear, (John 18:10-11) and following Jesus to the High Priest's house denied Jesus three times. (Matt. 26:69-75; John 18:17-26) Notably Peter was one of the first disciples to run to the tomb and discover within 3 days the tomb was empty and that Jesus was resurrected. (Luke 24:12; John 20:4)

Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus with spikenard in the last week of Jesus' life "ready for burial." The women were first at the tomb very early on the Sunday morning with spices and knew of Jesus' resurrection before the disciples.

Peter was later to become a part of the royal priesthood (Gr. *basileion hierateuma*) that replaces the Aaronic priesthood of Old Testament times.

## THIS DO...

It was in the same night that our Lord was betrayed that He said, with deep concern in his soul: “...*this do in remembrance of me...this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*” (1 Cor. 11:24-25) Paul had not been dependent upon any member of the “twelve” for his knowledge of the order of events, nor for the nature of words and phrases spoken during the institution of the new Memorial. So important was every detail of the little ceremony to the mind of the risen glorified Lord, that it was He himself, and none other, who passed on to Paul the record of the event, and of the actual words used by the suffering Master when addressing the little band. “*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you...*” (1 Cor. 11:23) says Paul.

So sacredly and seriously important was all this detail, for the believers of a later day, and in a wider sphere, that the Caretaker and Shepherd of the Christian Church would not allow this detail to be dependent upon the possibly faulty memory of either Peter or John, or any other member of the band. Though there were many incidents of that night which could never fade from the disciples’ memories, and on which their recollections were likely to be trusty guides, there were these special words, and these little actions, that could not be entrusted to such leaky vessels. It is to the sanctified and exalted memory of the Blessed One himself that we owe the possession of this outline which the pen of Paul has placed on record. That fact invests those words with especial authority and accuracy, and gives to the Christian Church a firm foundation for the memorial celebration of the world’s greatest sacrifice.

When, therefore, Paul had stated the course and nature of the little ceremony as revealed by his gracious Master, there can be little wonder that he could speak and write with such jealous severity about the condition of those who from year to year met to “do this” in remembrance of the Lord’s dying hours. “...*whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be GUILTY of the body and blood of the Lord.*” (v.27 RV) Whosoever shall “do this” in an unworthy manner shall be held guilty, along with the actual betrayer, of a gross and wilful attack upon the person of God’s anointed Son. Blind passion actuated the treachery of the unhappy Judas; a similar blind inordinate lust would actuate the conduct of those who “ate” and “drank” such transcendently important morsels without due sense of their important symbolism and worth. Judas professed to desire the establishment of the Lord’s throne among men, yet, in his impetuous haste he had not discerned the need for

the breaking of the body, nor of the shedding of the blood of the Lord. Dazzled by the prospect of sharing great honour with the coming King, he wanted to hasten the day of power; but, because Jesus did not move toward the expected goal with the speed Judas desired, his love for Jesus—if it ever existed—and his respect for the Great Teacher evaporated. In his vexation and annoyance at Jesus' tardy progress towards the Kingship of Israel, he came, at length, to think of him as just a mere common claimant to David's illustrious throne, so much so, that he hesitated not, nor scrupled, to connive with the scheming opponents of Jesus for his apprehension. Perhaps Judas believed that Jesus would bestir himself when under arrest, and do some great thing, not only to free himself, but to mete out recompense to his enemies. In all the guilt-worthy aspects of that great tragedy enacted between the Gethsemane agony and the death-cry of Calvary, one man, and that one man's vile act, was guilt-worthy above all else. The compact of betrayal and the false kiss of the once "familiar friend" plumbed the lowest depths of infamy and shame, and to this day, wherever Christian standards are accepted, this base treachery is esteemed the vilest of all the world's vile acts.

Judas was guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, not only in that he connived at his mishandling, but also by reason of his failure with open eyes to esteem the speaker of the kindly word, and the doer of the gracious act for what He was. He dared to challenge both the testimony of his Lord, and the corroboration of his God, as to the object for which Jesus had come into the world. Whatever the full range of his guilt might be, he was guilty of not appreciating the body—the person—and the blood—the spotless life—of Jesus for what it truly was.

Judas was the first man to "eat" the "body," and "drink" the "blood" of the Lord in an unworthy manner, and while all later cases may not be so flagrant or so vile, Judas stands as the awful example of all who eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord unworthily. Failure, after enlightenment, to appreciate all that the body and blood of the Lord Jesus means to the Plan and Purpose! Treating with levity or light-hearted esteem the facts of the life and death of the Man of Sorrows, so that one can present himself at the Table of the Lord as a professed follower of the Lord, with unclean hands and sin-stained heart! Failure to appreciate all that it means!

"Not a very serious indictment, that," the unworthy offender might say! But if the spiritual sensibilities of any have been dulled, through neglect of attention of spiritual things, or through failure to attend at the Throne of

Grace, or through the chilling influence of modern life, or the increasing difficulties of present-day experience, it is very necessary not only to take stock of the situation, but also to pray earnestly for grace to help towards the restoration of spiritual tone in the heart and mind, and in every activity of life, so that attendance at the Table of the Lord may be a blessing of real worth. Surely it can never truthfully be said in these momentous days, after so many years of contact with the Truth and with the Lord, that any child of God would become “guilty” of the body and blood of the Lord! Surely our knowledge of the “deeper” truths would prevent any who have covenanted to follow the Lord by “baptism into his death” from incurring grievous responsibility by failing, even though under stress and strain, to appreciate all that the Saviour’s person and sacrifice mean to the purposes of God!

Though persuaded that all who have entered into the secrets of the Lord will ardently desire to take the proper course when appearing before the Lord, yet Paul’s words stand on record as describing a possibility which could occur. Paul’s warning still stands as a red light, telling of what could be, but entreating that it should not be the case. No true child of God would long to be listed with Judas, and bear the onus of being “guilty” in the sight of God!

It is a privilege beyond all comparison to have learned the purpose for which the Sinless One assumed human form, and shed his precious blood. To know that the body and blood of the Lord was the one thing—the only thing—absolutely indispensable to the Plan of God, that without it there could be no Plan, no redemption, no restitution, no eternal peace on earth, is to know the quintessence of all earthly knowledge, and of all heavenly revelation. To know that these eternal and absolute facts are represented before us in the simple elements of bread and wine will lift the little ceremony into a sphere all its own. To know that the modest act of “eating the bread” and “drinking the cup” is accounted in the highest heaven as “eating the body and drinking the blood” of the indispensable Lamb of God, will invest the occasion with a sacred seriousness too deep for words. To know that this act of partaking is not only a token of feeding upon the Lamb of God, but also of participating “with him” in the great surrender to the Will of God will create an atmosphere of solemnity as though God himself stood there.

Let every child of God scrutinise and judge himself or herself with searching severity, as we draw nearer to the hour for this act of remembrance, scanning every motive of heart and mind, to find, if it be there any

morsel of the old leaven of sin. (1 Cor. 5:7-8)

By the kindly providence of God we have been brought forward on our way, and through dangers manifold have been kept and preserved through another round of time. Another year of grace and favour has slipped away, and, through it all, his promise has not failed. Another year lies behind—that means one less in front, with all its tokens of Shepherd care. What, then, can we render to him who has blessed our pilgrim way?

With the Psalmist we can do none other than say: *“What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits towards me? I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.”* (Psa. 116:12-14)

*Bible Study Monthly  
March / April 1986*

## IN MEMORY OF THE SAVIOUR’S LOVE—A HYMN



IN memory of the Saviour’s love  
We keep this simple feast,  
Where every consecrated heart  
Is made a welcome guest.

By faith we take the bread of life  
Which this doth symbolize;  
This cup in token of the blood,  
His costly sacrifice.

This cup shall e’er recall the hour  
When Thou didst set us free;  
Soon with new joy in Kingdom power  
We’ll drink it, Lord, with Thee.

What rapturous joy shall then be ours,  
For ever, Lord, with Thee!  
Clothed with our resurrection powers,  
Thine endless praise shall be.

*Bible Students Hymnal*

This ancient hymn is about 200 years old having been written by Thomas Cotterill who was born in Cannock in 1779 and died in 1823. He was an Anglican minister in the county where he was born and later in Sheffield. He found time to be a prolific writer of hymns and was published firstly in 1810.

Here are some verses which may have inspired the writer:

**John 6:33-35** For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger.

**Luke 22:14-20** ...when the hour was come...he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

**1 Corinthians 11:25-26** This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

**1 John 3:16** (Diaglott) By this we have known Love, because he laid down his life on our behalf, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

**1 Thessalonians 4:14-18** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him...For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

**John 14:2-3** In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

**1 Corinthians 15:45** And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

**1 Corinthians 15:42-43** So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.

**1 Cor. 4:5** Until the Lord come...then shall every man have praise of God.

Common tunes are St. Flavian and Winchester Old.

## THE CUP OF COMMUNION

*A word for Easter*

*“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” (1 Cor. 10:16)*

It is impossible to lay too much stress upon the word “communion” in this very well-known passage. All too often it is taken to mean an entering into fellowship, a sense of union, of “being together,” much as is implied by modern usage of the English word “commune.” There was more, far more, than that in the Apostle’s mind when he penned these words. The ceremony he was talking about, the remembrancing from time to time of our Lord’s death, with all that it implies for the Church and for humanity, is something too holy and too sacred to be defined merely in terms of a getting together in the bonds of a fellowship or a family relationship, intimate though these bonds may be. Paul here is reminding his readers that in putting to their lips the chalice which represented the lifeblood of their Lord, slain on their behalf, they were deliberately and knowingly associating themselves with him in the purpose for which He was about to die, the reconciliation of humankind to God. This word communion, *koinonia*, means to share, to participate, and this implies action, joint action with the One who was about to give his life for the world. That meant in turn that they were consecrating themselves to follow him into death, baptised into his death as Romans 6:3 has it, that they might rise with him in newness of life and thenceforward be associated with him in his destined work of giving life to the world.

The key to the inner meaning of the text is perhaps found in our Lord’s words at the Last Supper, recorded in Matt. 26:27-28. *“He took the cup...and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New testament (Covenant), which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”* The ceremonial drinking of the cup with him in the knowledge that it represented his shed blood denoted a great thing. It meant that they were to share with him, to be associated with him, in that still future work which was ensured by the shedding of his blood. To drink of his cup meant to follow in the same way, to be devoted to the same end, to be dead to the world in the same sense as was Jesus, and consequently to be joined to him in the resurrection life and be co-workers with him in all that He is to do for humankind in that resurrection life. It is not always easy to distinguish between the two aspects of our Lord’s sacrifice and death. In the first place He came to earth to give himself a Ransom for all, as Paul states in 1 Tim. 2:6, and this is something He must needs do alone, for only He could be acceptable in the sight of the Father as the Redeemer

of humanity. When God “*so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son*” (John 3:16) He did so in light of the fact that no other Redeemer was possible and no other available. It is in Adam that all die, and it is only in Christ that all can be made alive. (1 Cor. 15:22) But the making people truly alive involves two things: they must first be raised from the death state into which they have fallen on account of sin, and this is the effect of the Ransom. They must then be restored to the Divine likeness in order that they can enter into the eternity, which is the crown of eternal life, for nothing that is defiled can enter into the Holy City. (Rev. 21:27) It is this work of restoration of man in which the followers of Jesus are associated and to which they pledge themselves when they partake of his Cup. It is a cup of dedication, of service, of endurance, of faithfulness even unto death. “*If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer (endure), we shall also reign with him.*” (2 Tim. 2:11-12) This is why Jesus called his blood the “*blood of the New Covenant.*” There had been an Old Covenant, an agreement with God entered into by Israel at Mount Sinai by virtue of which that people was constituted a holy nation dedicated to proclaiming the promise of Divine salvation to the ends of the earth and so, announcing the coming fulfilment of the Divine purpose. They failed, lamentably, because of unbelief and hard-heartedness. So, God told them through the prophet Jeremiah that one day He would make a New Covenant, which would succeed where they had failed; when Jesus came He made it clear that its success would be because the power behind it would be the giving of his own life as was foretold in Isaiah 53, and its ministers would be the faithful of the Christian Church, who would endure to the end in a manner that Israel had not.

If we share in the communion cup, then, we who are Christ’s are to be ministers of his in extending the blessings of the New Covenant to whosoever will of all humanity, living and dead alike. Those will then have the opportunity to turn from whatever there is of sin in their minds and lives and serve the living God.

*Bible Study Monthly 1986*



MY song shall be of Jesus,  
His mercy crowns my days:  
He fills my cup with blessings,  
And tunes my heart to praise.  
My song shall be of Jesus,  
The precious Lamb of God,  
Who gave Himself, my ransom,  
Who bought me with His blood.

*Bible Students Hymnal  
Fanny Crosby*

## THE MEMORIAL

When we meet to celebrate the memorial, we do so to commemorate an arrangement that was made by our Lord after the last supper had been ended. The expression in the Authorised version, “when he had supped” is rendered in the Revised version, “after supper.” (1 Cor. 11:25) The first part was the Jewish Passover, and the second might be called the Christian Passover or Memorial. Dean Farrar on Luke 22:19, says “The Christian Passover was no more to be in remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt, but of that far greater deliverance wrought by Christ.” The word remembrance is from the Greek word, *anamnesin* which means a remembering again. Heb. 10:3; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-25. We use the word Memorial for this expression.

The old Jewish Passover was instituted before the Law covenant was made, and the Passover lamb has no exact counterpart in the Levitical offerings. It seems nearest to the peace offerings. It was originated in Egypt and made Israel a nation. The manner was not repeated in the subsequent Passovers, which were not taken standing nor in haste. The following is a list of the festivals kept. (Exod. 12:18; Num. 9:5; Joshua 5:10; 2 Chron. 30:13-15; 2 Chron. 35:1 and 2 Kings 23:22; Ezra 6:19; Matt. 26:17; Luke 2:41; John 2:13; 6:4) It would appear from this list that the Israelites kept a second Passover in the wilderness and no more till they reached the promised land in the plains of Jericho. Jewish commentators say this was God’s arrangement. (Exod. 12:25-35; 13:3-5) The scarcity of the others is accounted for by the fact that they only recorded the special Passovers. The Passover was kept on Nisan 14 and the Feast of unleavened bread began on the 15th and lasted seven days to the 21st of the month.

Edersheim tells us the Hebrew for Passover, is *Pesach* and the Greek and Aramaic are *Pascha*. The lamb or kid one year old or less is taken by the household on the 10th and slain on the evening of the 14th; that is between the two evenings; the period from the beginning of sunset, and its actual disappearance. They do not do that today; they have a roasted shank bone of a lamb, for there is no temple in which the paschal lamb could be slain. Jesus Himself has taken its place, and we symbolise our partaking of His flesh *and blood as well*, in what we call the memorial. By each exercising our common privilege to partake thus of His flesh we become united into one body. (1 Cor. 10:15-16) Similarly, the Israelites become one company symbolised by the altar, through all participating in the sacrifices on it. (v.18) Now the same thing applies to idolators,

therefore how could a Christian participate with them and remain distinct? Neither must we confound the Lord's supper with an ordinary meal partaken together, each bringing his own food. At the Jewish arrangement in the days of our Lord, they had four different cups of wine. The third cup was the Cup of blessing, and it was this one that was chosen for the memorial. (1 Cor. 10:16) Over the second cup the Jews showed forth the circumstances of the Exodus. This was called the *haggadah*. The Apostle Paul takes this point and says, as oft as you keep the memorial you do proclaim, or show forth, the Lord's death till He come. When our Lord comes this arrangement will be discontinued.

When our Lord said this is my flesh, and this is my blood, He did not intend these remarks to be taken literally as the Catholics say, for He Himself was present at the time in the flesh. These elements were but symbols of a truly mystical union between us and Him which resulted through acceptance of Him as our Saviour. We should on these occasions concentrate as much as possible on Him who said, this do in remembrance of Me. (1 Cor. 11:24,25) What we should remember of ourselves is that we ought to examine our hearts to see that we are sufficiently worthy of participating in the memorial. The date upon which we keep the memorial may differ from that of others: let there be no strife. We follow what we think John teaches; others think that Matthew and Mark differ from our interpretation of John's gospel. Edersheim and Farrar have had a controversy on the matter, but in good part. In the early church it was very bitter, and is known as the Quartodeciman controversy. Our Saviour died to bring us peace; let us endeavour to keep the peace and thus honour Him.

*Forest Gate Bible Monthly*

The heart-searching Memorial is near the saddest, and yet most glorious time of the year. It is so sad to think of a world causing such suffering to such a sinless man; and then rejoicing in that he was sinless and a ransom for all. Yes, it's sad and also glorious, for he will draw all men unto him, and all shall know him sometime and marvel at all the grace that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I also look further at the wonderful Jehovah God who made it all possible, whose voice came from heaven to strengthen his Son and help him to go on until the final cry,  
 "It is finished!"

*songs of the nightingale*

*Continued from page 42*

Those who were witnesses of Jesus' life, death and resurrection played a pivotal role in the early church and are witnesses to Christians today.

Jesus' resurrection is a guarantee that all will be restored in the resurrection. (Acts 17:31) Imagine the billions of human beings coming back, humans will have to get used to sharing land and resources as each generation, old and young, comes back to earth. All these events will be a result of Jesus' sacrificial death.



It has been said “The events of Easter makes more sense when one considers Passover”.

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the LORD. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance. (Exodus 12:1-14 NRSV)

## SIMON PETER—FISHER OF MEN

### 2. Walking on Galilee

Simon pulled on his oar silently. His fellow disciples were too busily engaged themselves on the same task to take much notice of his unusual quietness. It was only when the southerly squall struck them and rendered progress a matter of difficulty that they looked to him, as usual, for guidance. But this time he showed no sign of counselling an alteration of course so that they might use the wind to help them steer a course for the nearest shore. He went on pulling vigorously, without speaking. He evidently meant to obey the Lord's instruction to make for the shelving beach of Gennesaret on the western shore of the lake in reliance upon Jesus' word that, after His object in remaining behind on the eastern shore near Bethsaida was accomplished, He would join them. Neither wind nor storm was going to deflect Simon from that purpose; he laboured doggedly at his oar, leaving his comrades to do the same without question.

He had good reason for silence. He was thinking, deeply and seriously. Thinking did not come easily to Simon. He was a man of action; hasty, impulsive action for the most part, ill-considered action that often landed him in trouble. He was not given to quiet reflection. But this time he had much to think about. He had just witnessed a miracle surpassing anything he had yet seen save the raising from the dead of the widow's son at Nain. Together with his fellows, Andrew, John and James, and the others, he had for something like twelve months been following Jesus through the villages and towns of Galilee, spending much time around the Lake on which they were at this moment embarked, and he had seen the sick healed, the people with leprosy cleansed, the demon-possessed made free, the blind given sight, in all these things the effect of healing power flowing out from Jesus to restore some one or other afflicted sufferer to health. He had seen the widow's son rise from his bier (coffin) and live again: he had seen the daughter of Jairus heed Jesus' call to return from the land of the shades. But now he had witnessed something belonging to a very different sphere; he had watched Jesus create food apparently out of nothing. Five thousand people there had been, there on the grassy plain between Bethsaida and the sea; the day was far spent, they had listened to Jesus for hours, hunger was asserting itself, and there was nothing to give them, nothing but five small loaves and two fishes. But with those in his hands Jesus had stood there handing loaf after loaf and fish after fish to each of his disciples until all that five thousand had received a sufficiency. What wonderful power from Heaven is this, Simon asked himself as he ploughed his oar through the water. If Jesus was indeed the king of Israel,

the One that should come and Simon had no doubts at all on that score what marvellous events must await them in that future day when Jesus should assert His authority and commence His reign? With powers like that there was no limit to what could be achieved. And what of his followers? They were surely invincible; with His power exerted on their behalf there was no enemy, of man or of Nature, that could stand against them, his reverie was abruptly broken as a gust of wind stronger than ever momentarily halted the boat's labouring progress.

Simon cast a professional glance at the heaving sea. The storm was getting fiercer, and they were not making much headway. They had left the eastern shore at "even" 6 p.m.—and now it was nearly the fourth watch 3 a.m. Eight or nine hours in "toiling and rowing" and they had only made a little over three miles (twenty-five or thirty furlongs. John 6:19) Another four miles to go; as he looked at the tumultuous billows and felt the raging wind Simon began to wonder whether they were going to make it. He had flattered himself that he knew all the tricks and foibles of this unpredictable lake, on the waters of which he had gained his living for so many years, but never had he experienced a tempest like this. For the first time that night his heart began to fail him. Had Jesus been there with them things would have been all right; somehow or other, Simon knew, He would have dealt with the situation. But Jesus was not with them; the result of his miraculous feeding of the five thousand had been that the people wanted to take Him, against His will, to make Him a king (John 6:15) and that He would not have. So, He had gone into solitude on the mountain, to pray and reflect, telling His disciples He would meet them again on the other side of the lake. Now they were in this predicament, in terror for their lives, and Jesus knew nothing of it and was too far away to help anyway.

A terrified cry from one of the others, and Peter spun round. Following the other's pointing hand, he looked across the foam-crested waves and his heart gave a sudden lurch. Out there, a few yards from the boat, was a shadowy figure, the form of a man, walking on the water. "It is a spirit" (Matt. 14:26) someone cried out; "we are all lost men." The rowing stopped; they gazed with apprehension at the apparition, moving so easily and effortlessly upon the troubled waters. As they gazed, there came a voice, a familiar voice, low and clear, yet plainly to be heard above the howling of the gale; "*Take heart, it is I; have no fear.*" (Matt. 14:27 RSV)

Reaction was swift. "It is the Lord," cried Simon. Everything was going to be all right; Jesus was with them again. But almost immediately a tiny

seed of doubt implanted itself in his head. Could Jesus really walk on the water? Could this be a demon impersonating the Master and luring them on to destruction. Impulsive as ever, he put the matter to the test. "*Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water*" (Matt. 14:28 RSV) came the invitation "*Come.*" Without more ado Simon leaped over the side of the boat into the sea; in the exaltation of that moment his faith was complete. To his joy he found that he too could walk on the water and boldly he set out to cross the few yards that separated him from his Lord. But ere he reached him a great swelling wave, higher than the rest, rose before him and blotted out the waiting Figure from his sight. Now he was aware only of lofty waves and racing water, the dark sky above and unutterable depths below, and the horror of his situation dawned upon him. At that his faith failed and he found himself submerged, swimming desperately to keep himself afloat. In sharp anguish he cried out "*Lord, save me.*" (v.30)

A well-known hand reached out and caught him, raising him out of the water: a well-known voice in his ears "*O man of little faith, why did you doubt?*" (v.31 RSV) So, Simon came hand-in-hand with Jesus to the safety of the boat. And the storm ceased, and there was a great calm.

It is a wonderful story, and full of significance to the Christian. There are times in every life when the storm-waves mount high to the heavens with their overpowering threats and the gale-winds seem as though they would sweep away all in which we trust. Something like Luke's and Paul's experience on the voyage to Rome when the ship ran into a great storm becomes our position also: "*When neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.*" (Acts 27:20) But Paul and Luke were saved, and Simon Peter was saved, and so are we, if we hold on tightly to the hand of Jesus. "*They that trust in the LORD shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.*" (Psa. 125:1) Sometimes it is not so much that our faith fails as that the pressure of well-nigh intolerable circumstances almost overcomes our powers of endurance and we tend to cry out as did the Psalmist "*Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Is his mercy clean gone for ever?*" (Psa. 77:9,8) It is then that we need to remember that Christ is near us, just on the other side of the big wave, and His hand can reach right through that wave to hold ours and guide us through the storm into the calm that will follow.

This incident was an essential element in the training of Simon. It was not enough that he should realise Jesus' mastery over the elements of Nature; he had already seen something of that on the earlier occasion when,

crossing the lake, they had been hit by a wind-squall whilst Jesus was asleep in the boat; on that occasion He had rebuked the wind and the sea and a great calm resulted. (Matt. 8:24-27; Mark 4:37-41; Luke 8:23-25) The disciples had been greatly impressed, but this time there was something more, the lesson of the Lord's care for his own and the certainty that He is always at hand to save. He "*will not suffer you to be tested beyond what you are able to bear, but with every test will direct the issue, that you might be able to endure.*" (1 Cor 10:13\*) That was a greater thing and a more important thing than the stilling of a stormy wind and a tempestuous sea.

AOH

## THE ONE LOAF

*1 Corinthians 10:17*

THE twilight hour, when all the world doth dream, I stand amid  
 The ripening grain, that ripples, like the bosom of a lake  
 Beneath the evening breeze. I pluck, and idly hold within  
 My hand, one golden ear, the while in swift succession pass  
 Strange visions of the olden time: I see a threshing-floor,—  
 The wheat by wooden flail bereft of chaff and shining husk.  
 The scene is changed: I see a woman grinding at a mill,—  
 Between the upper and the nether stones the grain is crushed  
 Until no semblance of its former state remains, but each  
 Is merged into one common whole,—a coarse and homely meal.  
 Another picture,—mixed with water and with salt, a loaf,  
 Or flattened cake, is formed and laid upon the glowing coals.

And as I gaze my thoughts are lifted to a higher plane;  
 I see "the members of His body," like the golden grain,  
 Denuded of their glittering robes of earthly pride and fame;  
 The upper and the nether stones of life's vicissitudes  
 Are slowly, surely, grinding rich and poor, the high, the low,  
 Into one common-union,—heart and mind, and zeal and love;  
 With purifying salt, life-giving water of the Word,  
 The mass is being drawn and held and moulded in "one loaf."

Ah, then, beloved, when we drink of that memorial cup,  
 And eat the symbol of His flesh, let us partake with *joy*,  
 Nor *marvel* if we need that strange, transforming power of *fire*,  
 Ere we are counted worthy to be like our Lord and Head,  
 And "broken" that a hungry, fainting, dying world be fed!

*Poems of Dawn*  
*G.W. Seibert*

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## SUSANNA AND MANY OTHERS

Among those who followed Jesus, certain women “ministered unto him of their substance,” and of these Luke names Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and then adds “and many others.” (Luke 8:2,3) Mary Magdalene figures very prominently, in the closing scenes of our Lord’s life. It is clear that she did not lose sight of him from the time that he was brought forth to be crucified until he was placed in the tomb. She remained by the cross till the body of Jesus was taken down, and watched where he was laid to rest. Then to close the events of that solemn day, Matthew relates, “There was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre” (Matt. 27:61), as though they were the last to leave the sacred resting-place as darkness descended upon it.

Yet Mary Magdalene was among the foremost to be at the tomb on Sunday morning at daybreak, and she was the first to whom Jesus revealed himself. She was greatly distressed because she had found the tomb empty, but it was a mistaken grief. There would have been real cause for sorrow, not only for her but for us all, if the body had been still there and Jesus had not risen from the dead. Her alarm was needless and arose from a complete misunderstanding, but it did prove the reality and depth of her love. Her presence at the tomb showed that her heartfelt devotion was also practical, and it was for this reason that she became the first to set eyes on her risen Lord. It was not to a broken-hearted mother, not to John the disciple that Jesus loved, nor to bitterly penitent Peter, that Jesus showed himself, but the devoted and distressed Mary Magdalene became the first of the witnesses to the resurrection chosen before by God.

Joanna was the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, the manager of Herod’s income and expenditure, therefore a man of wealth and importance. It is thought possible that Chuza was the nobleman, or member of the royal household at Capernaum, who came to Jesus and anxiously pleaded with him to go to his dying son. In response, without seeing his son, Jesus healed him from a distance, and we read as a result that the nobleman believed with all his house. If this was indeed Chuza, then Joanna’s ministration would have been the result of overflowing gratitude for the restoration of her son’s life and the reason for the earnestness of her faith, which endured to the end, for she was a companion of Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre.

Once only is Susanna named as a follower of Jesus, and we know nothing whatever about her otherwise. Still less do we know about the unnamed

“many other women” who followed Jesus, and who are also referred to in Matt. 27:55; Mark 15:40,41 and Luke 23:49,55; 24:10. Does this mean then that they are of no account? By no means. We find that Scripture records very little of the personal history of most of the apostles. With some there are but a few scattered notices of them in the Gospels, and then we hear no more of what they did or how they died. We read of the call of Matthew, the writer of the Gospel, but of his history nothing further is recorded in the inspired writings. Others are merely named in the lists of the apostles, but of their life and of their labours the New Testament gives us no information. This does not mean, however, that they were not used by God, nor that they are relegated to an inferior position. They are all included in that foundation of the apostles and prophets, upon which the Church is built, and their names are shown in the twelve foundations of the wall of the holy Jerusalem which descends out of heaven from God.

Most of us will remain among the “many other” unnamed ones, who follow the Lord wherever he goes. We know this however that great as the throng may be that will be gathered around the throne, we shall not be overlooked nor undervalued by the Lord. We may be sure that among all those who followed him from Galilee, Jesus did not disregard one single person. He would not allow any to commandeer him and shut others out, as so often happens in our imperfect relations with each other. However insignificant we may be among the many who constitute the faithful and chosen in that future kingdom, our Saviour will have direct fellowship with each and every one of us. He will be able to take in all who belong to him, in glorious loving unity, when we enter into the joy of our Lord. If we are part of him now, we shall surely be then, in that special place that he has gone to prepare for us, before he returns to receive us to himself.

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*And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Rev. 21:14)*

*There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome. (Mark 15:40)*

*And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. (Luke 23:49,55)*

## ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

*On the priesthood of all believers*

The sheer wonder of New Testament Christianity is that in its simplicity it is sublime. The words “*Ye are...a royal priesthood*” (1 Peter 2:9) were addressed to a very ordinary people, who by reason of their relationship to the King-Priest were constituted a royal priesthood. Every Christian a priest with the inestimable privilege of direct access into the Divine Presence, is a fundamental New Testament principle. It clearly teaches the priesthood of all believers. Alas, ritualistic Christendom has drifted—tragically drifted—from this apostolic position.

It may help us if we consider for a moment how we first came to read of the priest in the Old Testament. When man rebelled against God, the personal intimacy which he had enjoyed with God came to an abrupt conclusion, and so there arose the necessity of finding some means for the re-establishment of communion with God. Since access into the Divine Presence became possible only by way of sacrifice, the sacrifice demanded a priesthood.

In patriarchal times the head of each family was the household priest. For example Abraham, Isaac and Jacob built altars and offered sacrifices to Jehovah. After the flood Noah offered representatively on behalf of those who were saved in the Ark. Job offered sacrifices for his sons. So, the story continued until the priesthood became a most elaborate system. At last we see the priestly class quite distinct from the remainder of Israel: its members alone could draw near to God, and no other Israelite had such a privileged position. But when our Lord, the great High Priest who offered himself as a sacrifice for sin, came, all such distinctions were removed: “*the veil of the temple was torn in two*” (Matt. 27:51 NKJV): the former order had passed away. Now all believers have an equal right and privilege to draw near to God.

New Testament Christianity recognises no special distinctive priesthood—all Christians are alike priests. Observe that in 1 Peter 2:9 Christian believers are spoken of together, and together they make up one indivisible priesthood. A distinctive sacerdotal (priestly) class, in contrast to the rest of the believers, is not only unknown to the New Testament, but contradictory to its whole spirit. When the apostles founded churches, they never linked them up with any priestly conceptions such as had obtained in the Old Testament. We never read of priests and people, but of bishops (elders), deacons and saints. So that when a man claims for

himself that he is a priest, beyond and above the sense in which all Christians are so, we must reject his pretensions.

We must be careful to distinguish between the priestly privileges which are the right of all believers, and the calling of those qualified to be shepherds and teachers of the Christian assembly. Their distinction is one of gift rather than privilege.

It is vital that we should lay hold of the thought that *all* Christian believers are constituted a priesthood. Peter was not addressing a privileged class when he said “Ye are a royal priesthood;” when we are in Christ, we have our priestly functions to fulfil. This royal priesthood is not made up of those who could plead any merit in themselves or declare any derivation of grace from men by apostolic succession and the like. It is composed of all those who have been united to the great High Priest. This is not some outward and visible order but is of a much nobler fashion.

The priests of Aaron’s line were priests by birth and so are we—by a high spiritual birth which brings the priesthood with it. Were they anointed? At their consecration blood was sprinkled on ear, hand and foot. (Lev. 8:24) We assume our spiritual priesthood by the anointing of the Spirit of God, which dwells in us.

Have we not the listening ear which waits to respond to his voice? Have not hands and feet come under the same binding act of consecration? That is why we sing—

*“Take my hands, and let them move  
At the impulse of thy love:  
Take my feet, and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for thee.”* (Frances Ridley Havergal)

For us there are no priests save those who are in Christ, and of *all* who are in him we say, indeed the New Testament says, that they are priests. To us all is given the right of access into the presence of God. “*For through him we...have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*” (Eph. 2:18) “*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*” (Heb. 4:16) “*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus...let us draw near...*” (Heb. 10:19,22)

This, then, is what we understand by the doctrine of the priesthood of believers.

Now it will follow that in our thinking we develop this truth of profound significance and thus come to see what our priesthood means to us personally, and how it enables us to function in the interests of others. To us personally, our priesthood should mean worship, confession and sacrifice.

Worship! To worship God aright, it is not essential to have altars, candles, images and vestments. “The heart of worship is worship (or adoration) in the heart.” All the ritualistic trappings of men are a sign of spiritual retrogression. As men drifted spiritually, they increasingly came to rely upon externals. Said our Lord, “*the true worshippers...worship the Father in spirit and in truth.*” (John 4:23)

We worship God as priests whenever in our hearts we think magnificently about God. This we may do when far removed from any earthly temple. But how much do we know of genuine spiritual worship, that adoring contemplation which causes us to cry out “My God, how wonderful thou art”?

Confession! It is significant that though the apostles had received a unique Divine commission, they never heard confessions as such and never pronounced absolution. The confession of our sins is essentially a personal matter. The promise is given, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” (1 John 1:9) Let there be with any son of Adam’s race a sincere confession with the resolve to amend his ways; to him there is given pardon full and free. We have no need of a priest; we are members of the priesthood.

We sometimes hear evangelists speak of a lack of sense of sin in the world today. That is not the real problem. The problem is within the Believers. Is it not because of our own inadequate conception of the holiness of God that we do not perceive the exceeding sinfulness of sin? We may rejoice in the fact that we do not need a priest to act in our interests, but do we fulfil our own priestly functions for ourselves? There will never come a time in the life of any one of us when we shall not need so to do.

Sacrifice! That is a priestly function—to offer up sacrifices. “*Ye also, as lively (living) stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*” (1 Peter 2:5) These are spiritual sacrifices as opposed to the literal. We bring no

oxen, sheep, goats, and so on. He became the perfect sacrifice “to put away sin.” (Heb. 9:26) We offer up spiritual sacrifices.

We offer the sacrifice of ourselves. *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”* (Rom. 12:1) The word “present” in this verse is a technical word for a priest’s action. And is there not a very real sense in which this is exemplified in the New Testament practice of Baptism? It declares that our lives should be lived as a continual offering to God, with a continual denial of self.

We offer the sacrifice of praise. *“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”* (Heb. 13:15) The singing of a hymn of praise is a solemn and significant act: it is a priestly offering. How can our lips be mute and our attitude careless and indifferent during the singing of a hymn to God’s praise? Needless to say, the sacrifice is invested with deeper significance when the singer is being beaten about by the contrary winds of life.

We offer the sacrifice of all good works as a priesthood. *“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”* (Heb. 13:16) Let us consider then how our priesthood enables us to function in the interests of others, as Intercessors, as Messengers and as Benefactors from God.

Intercessors! There is the privilege of not only praying for ourselves, but the responsibility of praying for others. The priests of old were set apart to speak with God on behalf of the rest of the congregation. Now, the word comes to the royal priesthood, *“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.”* (1 Tim. 2:1)

We must pray for the Church of Christ, members of which we ourselves are, both with regard to its life and its witness; surely there will also be a special concentration of priestly intercessory prayer for any who have slipped from their earliest steadfastness. If we are in line with New Testament teaching, we shall pray too for all who are in positions of authority in national and civic life. (1 Tim. 2:1-2) In fact, the scope for the priestly exercise of intercession would seem to be almost boundless. If this be so now, how much more will it be true during the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ, when the privilege will be ours of using our priestly office

so as to assist all families of the earth attain their right relationship with their God?

Messengers! We have no right to forgive sin, but it is ours to proclaim the gospel of pardon. We are to awaken others to a deeper sense of their responsibility to God, and to the doing of his Will. In Old Testament times the priests had the keeping of the silver trumpets. They were to arouse the people. It was theirs to sound the trumpet on the new moon, to proclaim Sabbath and jubilee. They gave the alarm of war. In the wilderness the trumpets summoned the tribes to march or bid them halt according as the Lord commanded. So, we are to proclaim the message Jesus committed to his disciples, and so to us. (Mark 16:15-16) Yet while proclaiming this message now, we must not forget that *“strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”* (Matt. 7:14)

Benefactors from God! The people of Israel were blessed after the priest had been in the presence of God, and the New Testament teaches that the royal priesthood is to go forth into the world as benefactors from God. That is to be our function and ministry in every place. *“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”* (Gal. 6:10)

We may think of God’s priests as working in the office, in the factory, the shop, the school, or wherever they may be. They live in the presence of God and go forth to bless all whose lives they touch.

May the thought ever be with us that we are not only a royal priesthood when we meet together in our place of worship. We carry our temple with us since the body itself has become a temple of the Holy Spirit, and we are arrayed in priestly garments as we do his Will.

What dignity God has placed upon us! Are we of the royal priesthood? Then let us ever *“walk worthy of the vocation wherewith [we] are called.”* (Eph. 4:1)

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*Take my moments and my days;  
Let them flow in constant praise;  
Take my intellect and use  
Every pow’r as Thou shalt choose.*

*Frances Ridley Havergal*

## “MINE EYE SEETH THEE”

*“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.” (Job 42:5)*

The climax to the drama which is the Book of Job comes at this verse. All the arguments and debates, all the wisdom and knowledge, displayed by Job’s three philosopher friends, had contributed nothing to his understanding of God. It was experience, the effect of all that life brought him of good and evil, prosperity and suffering, happiness and heartbreak, which enabled him at last to see God. His bitter comment upon the philosophy of suffering as expounded by the three *“I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all”* (Job 16:2) is matched only by the scornful, peremptory demand of the Almighty *“Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?”* (Job 38:2) Job started out in life believing in God and the overruling benevolence of God: what he got in return was an overwhelming succession of disasters which led him at last passionately to exclaim *“O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave.”* (Job 14:13) But at the end he was able to say what perhaps very few men in any age have been able to say; *“Now mine eye seeth thee.”* His belief held firm because he knew—and the whole tenor of the Book of Job reveals this as its outstanding thesis—that God is working to a purpose which involves progress and development through discipline and endurance, a purpose of a nature which transcends the events and time-span of this earthly life, so that whatever may be the apparent evidence to the contrary it is true of God with respect to every man that *“He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”* (Job 23:10)

There are so many today who look at their Christian background in the light of what they know of modern science and the wisdom of this world, find the two apparently irreconcilable, and jettison their faith in consequence. Because God cannot be defined in terms of the measurements used to define things of daily experience they decide God does not exist. Because they have never heard in modern times of One coming from another world to live among men and women for a spell and return whence they came, they declare such a happening is impossible. Because the existence of such other world, asserted in the Christian Scriptures, cannot be demonstrated by telescope, radio, or mathematical calculation they refuse to believe in the possibility. This in an age when every incredible wonder becomes commonplace within a few years of its invention or discovery. Of all ages in the world’s history this present one with all its discoveries from the formerly unknown should surely be the

one in which people could be expected the most readily to admit not only the possibility but even the probability of a sphere of life and power still unperceived by any means the human has at their command.

The position is more tragic when the man who thus announces his loss of faith is one who to that point has stood before his fellows as a minister of the Gospel. There have been a number of such cases in recent times. The fact that the stand is usually an honest and sincere one does not minimise its tragedy. "*We do not know what God is; Jesus was a good man but only a man: Resurrection? Impossible!*" Contrast the calm confidence of the Apostle Paul at the end of a long life of arduous experience. "*I know whom I have believed and am persuaded;*" (2 Tim. 1:12) that of the ancient patriarch "*Now mine eye seeth thee.*" Is there not a real likelihood that such assurance is positive knowledge due to an actual attunement with that other world, that such men and women may have bridged the gap which no manmade detecting instrument and no philosophical investigation can ever bridge?

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### GETHSEMANE

GETHSEMANE! The Garden's lonely shade the world's  
Redeemer sought that night. He went alone to pray  
For grace and strength to drink the last drop in His Cup.  
*Great souls crave solitude in sorrow's hour.* Not e'en  
His well-beloved three might share the sacredness  
Of that deep woe,—He bade them *tarry*, while He went  
A little farther on, and fell upon His face.

Gethsemane! A solitary place, apart,  
No *mortal* feet may press in sympathy that dark,  
Encrimsoned earth. No human hand the fevered brow  
May cool, no other heart can share its agony,  
No voice but God's may break the solemn silence there,—  
A place where every soul must drink *alone* the Cup  
The Father's hand hath poured, and given to His child.

Gethsemane! A desert place, alone, apart?  
Ah, no! The anguished heart doth never cry in vain  
To Him who marks the smallest sparrow when it falls,  
For He shall send His Angel with the message, "Fear  
Thou not, for I am with thee! *I will ne'er forsake,  
Nor let thee fail!* My right hand shall uphold, My love,  
My power shall *keep thee, even to the bitter end!*"

*Poems of Dawn  
Gertude Seibert*

## THOUGHT ON 1 CORINTHIANS 15:14

*“If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:14 RSV)*

Later, in the same chapter St. Paul says *“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”* (v.19) To have followed the star all our days and find at the end that it sets in eternal night; the very thought is unendurable. Some in high positions tell us that this is all there is in it; there never was a resurrection and no mighty Divine power waiting behind the Veil for the moment when it is time to begin the rescue of the world from the impasse it has created for itself. St. Paul knew better; triumphantly he says (v.20 RSV) *“but in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”* His resurrection is the guarantee of ours—all. *“As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”* (v.22) We may not know—we do not know—with clear perception just what does lie beyond the curtain of death but that the future does hold life, life abundant, life free from the disabilities and injustices and sorrows of the present, we do know and in that confidence we can go in the assurance that, as he said (v.54) *“death is swallowed up in victory.”*

AOH

*He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly;*

*He that despiseth the gain of oppressions,*

*that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes,*

*That stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood,*

*and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;*

*He shall dwell on high:*

*his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks:*

*Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.*

*Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty:*

*they shall behold the land that is very far off.*

(Isaiah 33:15-17)

## PARADISE ON EARTH

### *Earth's Coming Glory*

#### 8. Food for the Nations

The subject of food supply has become a burning question in recent years as the world population is expected to grow to 10 billion by 2050. The present commercial system, based on greed and selfishness, has produced a condition of things in which those who cannot pay cannot eat; some nations produce more than they can consume and so they destroy the excess while others cannot produce enough to avoid starvation. Humanity seems unable to solve the problem, but God can, and God will. The first step towards this end will be taken when He does away with the world monetary system and the use of money, and substitutes a condition of society in which all will willingly play their parts in the production of the food that is required and each take from the common store that which they need. In a world where there is mutual trust and universal unselfishness there will be no need for money.

The prophet Isaiah foresaw this happy state of affairs when he declaimed (55:1) *“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”* This is the spirit that will pervade the world; people happily playing their part in the world’s work, and sharing with their fellows the results of their labours. The abundance of those days and the luxuriance of earth’s productivity was foreseen by some of the other keen-sighted men of old, such as Amos (9:13) *“The days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt”* (this latter an allusion to the rippling effect of wind sweeping over luxuriant close-packed corn covering the hillsides). Again, 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.

That is all very well, says someone, but the experts tell us that with the expected increase of world population during the next half-century there is not going to be enough land to grow the food they will need. There will be fratricidal wars to secure what can be produced just for the victors. If you are going to resurrect all the past dead where on earth—literally as well as metaphorically—are you going to grow their food?

The experts, as is often the case with experts, are somewhat behind the times. Recent years have seen some startling discoveries in the power of earth's natural forces to produce foodstuffs at a rate and in quantities so far superior to what has in the past been regarded as normal that there is no longer need for uncertainty as to the power and intention of the Lord, through the medium of Nature, adequately to feed all the living creatures He has brought or will bring into being on this planet. Of that more anon. Now we have another questioner.

All right, he says. You will grow more wheat than you ever have before. You will breed more cattle and keep more sheep, and catch more fish, than you ever have before. Your Millennium will have more slaughterhouses, and more battery hen establishments, and bigger fishing fleets, than ever this world has had before. So, your eternal life for humanity is going to depend on the continuity of violent death for many of the lower creatures, and when God said that in that coming day "*nothing will hurt or destroy.*" (Isa. 11:9 NLT), He meant us to understand that the animal creation would have to be excluded—even although He had arranged for the wolf to dwell with the lamb, the leopard to lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion, the cow and the bear to feed together, and the lion eat straw like the ox. (Isa. 11:6-7) The animals are to be safe from each other, but not from humans. What have you to say to that?

This one is admittedly a poser. There are, of course, a small proportion of vegetarians in every community but in the main practically most rely on flesh products for daily sustenance and known history does not seem to yield any evidence that the position has been different in the historic past. But the fact that people today only know a world in which animal flesh is the staple diet does not necessarily require that it was always so in the unknown past nor that it will be so in the unknown future. A little consideration of basic facts is indicated. The best place to start is where the Bible starts, at the appearance of man upon earth.

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. 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 humans and animals here is between plants fully ripe and in seed, “*eseb zara zera*” and fresh young herbage suitable for animals, “*yereq eseb;*” and there is no mention of a meat diet.

Two thousand years later there is a difference. Immediately after the Flood the Lord told the survivors “*every creature that lives and moves shall be food for you; I give you them all, as once I gave you all green plants.*” (Gen. 9:3 NEB) In no plainer terms could the change from a vegetarian diet to a flesh diet be expressed. The question obviously comes up for answer, why?

There is a possibility that the Lord regularised a custom that had grown up before the Flood. The two apocryphal books that deal with events before the Flood, the book of Enoch and the Book of Jubilees, both declare that there was general lawlessness, men and animals devouring each other’s flesh. This rests only on Jewish legend but there is usually a sub-stratum of truth underlying legend. More significant perhaps is the statement in Gen. 4:20 that Jabal, last descendant of the line of Cain and close up to the time of the Flood, was the first man to breed cattle. It could be argued that Abel at the beginning kept his sheep for the sake of their wool, but Jabal could hardly have kept cattle for purposes other than food. Remembering that Lamech (Gen. 5:28-29) at about the same time bemoaned the unproductivity of the cultivated land, it might well be that people began to turn to a flesh diet on account of inability to obtain the food they needed from the ground—they experienced a severe shortage of protein.

If this reasoning be correct, 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. One might be led then to enquire if possibilities inherent to current human achievement could lend substance to such expectation.

First of all, how much land is there available for food-growing? The total land surface of the earth amounts to about sixty million square miles\* of

\* Nasa Earthdata says more than 57m square miles and Wikipedia 58m.

which only five square million or less is at present used for growing food and up to another fifteen\* million for pasturing cattle which ultimately become food. But since a bullock must eat 10lb of grass to produce 1lb of protein, and soya beans can produce protein twelve times as fast as a bullock, it would seem that some of that pastureland could be better used for growing soya beans. Then there are the vast deserts occupying more than ten per cent of the land surface which under Millennial conditions will be irrigated and made fertile. *“The wilderness and the solitary (uninhabited) place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose...in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.”* (Isa. 35:1-7 RV) If only twenty million square miles, one-third of the land surface, were used for food production on this scale there would be enough to feed so many more than the highest possible estimate of the number of human beings who have lived that the calculation becomes farcical. In previous decades the author commented on the calculated, then current and emerging agricultural practices, which predicated the earth could produce thirty times as much dry organic matter for consumption by the human race there would seem to be little risk of starvation when the resurrection takes place, even if, as has been calculated, earth’s population is as much as five or six times as much as now. (1980s) Predictions now suggest the world population is likely to be 10 billion by 2050, not accounting for the resurrection.

This ignores what new discoveries appear in the field of intensive food production. The author recognised new discoveries appeared in the field of intensive food production. Progress had been made and in spheres not normally expected. With the unimaginable advances since then professors in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century are intensely researching ways to feed the expected 10 billion population using multi-faceted approaches which look at the very things the author had commented on of plant based diets, agricultural methods and the environmental impacts of previous and in some places current intensive practices that are reported to be damaging the earth’s ecosystem.

But it need not be thought that the sustenance of humankind will necessitate resort to such highly intensive methods of food production. The earth is fully able to bring forth a sufficiency of food in a perfectly orderly and leisurely manner in the way ordained by the Lord at the first. The source of all life and growth is the sun and if in his wisdom the Lord saw that the first men could produce sufficient for their needs by a reasonable amount of daily labour, it follows that the same procedure in the future Age will produce the same results. The declaration in Gen. 2:15

is that God put the first man into the garden He had already prepared “*to dress it and to keep it*” where “dress” is *abad*, to till, serve, work, and “keep” is *shamar*, to watch, observe, take heed. Man was to till the ground and supervise the growth of the plant creation, God would do the rest. In real life the growing plant absorbs carbon dioxide and water vapour into its leaves from the surrounding air. Energy from the sun—sunlight—falls upon the leaves, combines with those elements to form carbohydrates, fats, oils and proteins, by the addition of mineral elements synthesised from the sunlight itself; this is called photosynthesis. The plant then exhales water vapour and oxygen (this latter for people to breathe, the only source from which humanity obtains it) and in the outcome the plant with its fruit or seed has acquired 75% of its weight from the air and water, and 25% from the sunlight transmuted into solid matter. Humans exhale carbon dioxide to go back into the plants and the sunlight does the rest. Truly did the Psalmist sing “*He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; and wine that maketh glad the heart of man...and bread which strengtheneth man’s heart.*” (Psa. 104:14-15) Most certainly the earth will yield its increase, and there will be plenty for all.

AOH



According to the UN (United Nations) it is estimated a third of all food produced ends up rotting in the bins of consumers and retailers, or spoiling due to poor transportation and harvesting practices.

In 2025 according to the Houses of Commons Library 4% of individuals in the UK used a food bank which is an increase from the previous year.

According to ourworlddata.org from 1961 to 2022 the world population has grown by 2.6 fold and world cereal production by 3.5 fold.

16% of the agricultural land is used to provide 83% of the global calorie supply.

38% of habitable land is covered by forests and 13% by shrub

## THE SADDUCEES AND THE RESURRECTION

A consideration of Luke 20:27-40

*“Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.” (Luke 20:33)*

The Sadducees, who were the materialist philosophers of Jesus' day, did not believe in a resurrection to a future life and had no use for Jesus' teaching of a coming Messianic Kingdom in which *“all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.”* (John 5:28-29) They despised the simple faith of women like Martha who knew that her dead brother Lazarus would *“rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”* (John 11:24) They thought they had found a weak point in the argument, to put Jesus in a quandary. So, they came to him with their conundrum.

The question was based on the old Mosaic law which sought to prevent any family inheritance passing to another line in consequence of there being no male heir in the particular family. Moses had provided that in the event of a man dying without leaving a son to inherit his estate, his widow was not free to remarry whom she pleased, neither was she at liberty to remain single. It was the obligation and duty of the dead man's nearest brother to take the widow as his wife. The firstborn son of that union was then to be accounted, from the legal standpoint, not the son of his true father, but the son of the dead man, and that firstborn became heir to the dead man's property, taking his family name and behaving in all ways as if he were in reality his son. By means of this custom it was hoped to keep every family inheritance in the line of the family to which it had originally belonged. Whether the custom was ever carried out in its fulness or whether it was even really practicable in later times when Israel grew into a great nation is not material to the point now at issue. The Sadducees thought it sufficient that here is something which cannot possibly fit into this fantastic teaching about men and women being resurrected from the dead to live on earth again.

Thus it was that Jesus listened patiently whilst they unfolded their story. There were seven brothers, good Israelites all and zealous for the laws of their fathers. The eldest was married but unfortunately he died without leaving an heir. The second son, obedient to the Law, married the widow with the intention of raising up seed to his brother. Most regrettably, he died also, without having achieved his object. The third brother was no less zealous in his devotion to the Law, and without delay he married the already twice widowed woman. His good intentions were cut short by his

own untimely demise and the unfortunate wife was passed on in turn to brothers four, five, six and seven, all of whom died in turn without son or heir. It is perhaps not surprising to learn that after this series of matrimonial disasters, the woman died also, leaving seven inheritances without owners.

Incidentally the story as framed by these Sadducees is a bitter commentary on the contempt in which women were held in the days of the First Advent. These men saw nothing distasteful in the idea of this unfortunate wife being passed on from man to man seven times repeated. The point of their question would have been equally well made had there been only two husbands involved, but they had to make it seven. The woman in the story was viewed merely as a means of producing the desired heir to the inheritance and apart from that received no consideration at all. It is important to bear that fact in mind when considering this incident.

With sly malice therefore the fateful question was brought into the open. The seven men and the woman have all been raised from the dead and stand upon earth again, alive and virile. *“Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife does she become? For all seven had her as wife!”* (v.33 NKJV)

It is only when one considers for a moment the nature of the Mosaic laws regarding marriage that one realises just how diabolically clever was that question. It was not merely a matter of deciding which of the seven was the legal husband of the woman. The laws of Deut. 24:4 forbade any woman to return to her first husband after having been married to a second; to do so was *“an abomination before the LORD.”* On that showing it would be necessary in the resurrection for this woman to remain the wife of the seventh husband. But the laws of Lev. 18 branded as criminal any man who stood in husbandly relationship to his brother’s wife during the brother’s lifetime; and with the first brother now alive again and present before them there could be no doubt that his was the first legal marriage and therefore all the other six brothers were lawbreakers and also an *“abomination to the Lord.”* To whichever brother the Lord awarded the wife, therefore, He would be recommending the breaking of one or another of the Mosaic laws on the subject and making one or more of the persons in the story into transgressors. To those legalistic minds there was no way out of the impasse; there could be no such thing as a resurrection without compelling someone or other to break the laws of Moses.

In addition to that already sufficiently condemning fact, there was also the

question of the inheritances. With the seven brothers all back on earth, to whom would each property belong? The wife would have become the legal custodian of all seven estates after the death of the seventh brother, and until the birth of her first son, the son which was never born, for the Sadducees took care that in the story she died childless. But suppose in this new resurrected life she did bear a son to whichever husband secured the award of her as wife? Under the Law that son would become heir of all seven inheritances, whilst the seven original owners were standing by, morally if not legally each still entitled to his own property. There must have been a certain amount of rubbing of hands together as these learned men waited for Jesus to unravel this legal tangle.

His was a simple answer, and for all its unexpectedness it was incontrovertible. *“Those deemed worthy to obtain that age, and that resurrection from the Dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; for they can die no more, because they are like angels; and are Sons of God, being Sons of the resurrection.”* (Luke 20:35-36 Diaglott) There was a world of meaning in those few simple words of Jesus, and most of it does not occur to our Western minds until we relate the answer to the question, and the background of the question.

Jesus was not referring to people of the world generally in his reply, and He was not referring to the institution of marriage as such. He was talking about the specific problem raised by these Sadducees, the relation of the Mosaic Law on remarriage of widows to the resurrection and humankind's future in the Millennial Age. The word “marry” in this text is one that refers to the action of a man *taking a woman to be his wife*, and is not used in this form to describe a woman entering marriage. Likewise the word rendered “given in marriage” is one that refers to the *giving of a woman to a man*, as by a relative who thus formally hands her over much as a modern bride's father will “give away” his daughter at the ceremony, or as Ruth the Moabitess was given to Boaz to be his wife that he might raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. Both terms are consistent with the conclusion that Jesus was telling the Sadducees that in the future age men would not take women in marriage for the purpose laid down in the Mosaic Law, neither would women be given in marriage for that purpose, *because men will die no more*, like the angels. Quite obviously in a world where there is no death the question of raising up an heir to a dead man's inheritance will not arise. Likewise, the puzzle of deciding who will be the rightful heir to the inheritances is very simply resolved when it is realised, as Jesus made those men realise, that all men in the Millennial Age are sons or children of God, being children no

longer of Adam by lineal descent, but children of God by virtue of the resurrection. Rights to inheritances which are dependent on lineal descent will no longer have any validity in a world where there is no such thing as lineal descent, and so here again the Sadducees' unspoken question fell to the ground.

In few words, Jesus answered the question, not by setting aside the law of Moses nor yet by nullifying its prohibitions, but by showing that the conditions which brought the Mosaic Law into being will no longer apply. The remarriage of widows to their brothers-in-law for the preservation of inheritances was an arrangement that owed its existence to the fact that death was in the world. Jesus showed that since in the next Age there should be no death the problem will never arise.

The expression applied to those who have been "*accounted worthy to obtain that Age*" to the effect that "*neither can they die any more*" is liable to provoke queries when it is remembered that if any man should give himself over to deliberate and incorrigible sin, in that day, he can and will assuredly die. It seems evident that Jesus is referring to the completed work of the Age, and the fulness of resurrected life which is the portion of those who are adjudged righteous at the end of the Age, when He uses the phrase "*accounted worthy to obtain that Age and that resurrection.*" There is no question of worthiness in the first awakening from the sleep of death at the beginning of the Millennial Age. "*All that are in their graves*" said Jesus, and *all* it must be without reference to worthiness or to unworthiness. In such case it is literally true that those who pass into the Ages of Glory, perfect and righteous, *cannot* die. It will be no more possible for a righteous man to die than for an unrighteous man to live. That is the Divine decree. God made man to live, and all the time that any man in those ages of eternity lives in harmony with righteousness he can do nothing else but live. Eternal life is as much a concomitant (association) of righteousness as is eternal death of sin.

The A.V. text says that such are "equal unto the angels" (v.36) which is manifestly incorrect. Man, even perfect man, is inferior to, and not equal to, the angels. Says the Psalmist "*What is man, that thou art mindful of him?...Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels...thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands.*" (Psa. 8:4-6) The correct rendering of the text is as in the Diaglott—they can die no more because they are *like* angels, in the fact that they are perfect and sinless.

Jesus left quite untouched the wider question of the relationship of the

sexes in the future Age. This text is sometimes taken as basis for the assertion that human beings will be sexless in that Age, neither man nor woman, but combining the qualities of both. There is really no evidence that Jesus intended to convey any such idea. The indications are in fact to the contrary. It is hardly likely that so revolutionary and unnatural a teaching would have come from some of the listening scribes the admiring admission "Master, thou hast well said." (v.39) The question which inspired this glimpse of the future was not answered by saying there would no longer be men and women, but that there would no longer be death, and that disposed of the matter for good. There is also the fact that Jesus told them they ought to have known the answer to the question from the Scriptures: "*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.*" (Matt. 22:29) Behind all the complicated legislation of Moses, which in the future Age is to be swept away, there lay the original Divine institution of marriage inherent in the original Divine ideal for human-kind, and that is certainly not going to be swept away. The first chapter of Genesis gives us the culminating point to which Divine creation had attained prior to the entry of sin. God created man "*in his own image, in the image (likeness) of God created he him; male and female created he them...and God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.*" (Gen. 1:27,31) In the expanded account of man's creation which we have in the second chapter of Genesis the statement is plainly made that it was not good for man to be alone and therefore God ordained a companion for him. That was before sin entered, when there was at the very least the possibility that man might develop his inheritance as God had instructed him without ever yielding to sin. There is no reason for thinking that the dual principle which pervades nearly all Nature and certainly the whole of the higher orders of life, and was extended to man at his creation, is going to be changed, or that perfect humanity at the end of God's creative work is fundamentally any different to perfect humanity at the beginning of that work. Scripture does not discourse in detail on the conditions of human existence after the consummation of the Divine Plan and the final defeat of evil. We can only reason from the general principles of God's creation, but so far as this particular aspect of the subject is concerned we are on fundamentally more secure ground in the first two chapters of Genesis than we would be by taking the narrative of Luke 20 out of its context and applying it to something which was not in question and was not being discussed.

This incident is a striking example of the folly of men who thought they could prove the fundamental unsoundness of Jesus' teaching. "*You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.*" (Matt. 22:29

NKJV) How often is the same thing repeated in our day! Men criticise and deride the message of the Kingdom because they neither understand nor want to understand its principles. Happy are we if, like Jesus, we can base our message and our faith upon the unassailable “*Word of God which lives and abides forever.*” (1 Pet. 1:23 NKJV)



## “AS A CHILD SHALL ONE DIE”

*A Note on Isa. 65:20*

*“There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.”*

The first two clauses are comparatively easy to understand; there will be no untoward deaths of infants at early ages—the meaning of the expression “an infant of days” being that of one whose life is quickly cut short—neither will there be old men who are, as it were, ready for death but death has not yet claimed them. The present indiscriminate coming of death to all sections of the community will no longer continue; in that day the only cause of death will be wilful and incorrigible sin. The next clause “*for the child shall die an hundred years old*” is more difficult. The word for “babe” is *naar*, which indicates a male of any age from infancy to youthful maturity. Thus, the child Moses in the water (Exod. 2:6) is *naar*; so is Absalom in his prime (2 Sam. 18:29), Joshua when he became Moses’ lieutenant at the Exodus (Exod. 33:11), and the four hundred Amalekite warriors who fled from David on their camels. (1 Sam. 30:17) The same word in its feminine form (*naarah*) is used for “young woman” as for Ruth in Ruth 4:12. Remembering that Job, speaking of the Millennial Day, said of the wasted and aged man “*His flesh shall be fresher than a child’s: he shall return to the days of his youth*” (Job 33:25) we might conclude that this third clause of the verse refers to those who are in the ideal state of human maturity, neither “infant” or “old man,” a state which will be the normal physical condition of people in that day. This still does not explain why such should “die an hundred years old,” i.e. in the full bloom of maturity, and this leads one to suspect a faulty translation due perhaps to some very early corruption in the

Hebrew text. This suspicion is confirmed when one refers to the Septuagint rendering “*Neither shall there be any more a child that dies untimely, or an old man who shall not complete his time: for the youth shall be a hundred years old, and the sinner who dies at a hundred years shall also be accursed.*” This seems to teach more clearly that there will be no untimely deaths in the Millennium, or as we would say, no “natural” deaths, and that an age of a hundred which today is accounted extreme old age and accompanied as a rule by infirmity and weakness, will then be considered as that of a youth. But there will be death to sinners, and the sinner who dies at a hundred years will be cut off for ever.

Further confirmation of this view comes from a book which is thought to have been written about a hundred and twenty years before Christ, the “*Book of Jubilees.*” Written by some pious Jew and based upon the Old Testament Scriptures, it contains one passage which is evidently taken from Isa. 65:20, and since the writer probably had access to a more accurate copy of Isaiah’s prophecy than we possess today his interpretation is valuable. In describing the Millennial reign, he says: “And in those days the children shall begin to study the laws, and to seek the commandments, and return to the path of righteousness. And the days will begin to grow many and increase among the children of men till their days draw nigh to one thousand years...*And there shall be no old man nor one who is not satisfied with his days, for all will be as children and youths. And all their days they shall complete and live in peace and in joy, and there shall be no Satan nor any evil destroyer; for all their days shall be days of blessing and healing.*” (Jub. 23:26-29) Again, there is the picture of youthful perfection for all, and everlasting life for the righteous.

Whether the hundred years for the span of the wicked is intended literally or merely as the symbolic measure of a life that is governed by sin in contrast with the “thousand years” of the righteous is perhaps a debatable point. There may be some link with the words of Solomon “*Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely know I that it shall be well with them that fear God.*” (Eccl. 8:12) It may be that the meaning of this last clause is “the sinner; even though he live a hundred years; even though his life seem to be prolonged beyond the span that today is usual with man, yet he will eventually suffer sin’s penalty and be accursed (cut-off).” God is not mocked: what a man soweth, that shall he reap, and if, under the enlightening influences of that blessed day, a man persists in the way of sin, he will certainly reap sin’s penalty.

**NOTICES**

For those who wish to keep the memorial of our Lord's death at the time nearest the anniversary, it is suggested that **14 Nisan after 6 p.m. Tuesday 31 March 2026** will be the date and time.

**Warrington Class Easter Convention**  
**Saturday 4 April 2026**  
**Crick Village Hall**

**Bible Students Seminar Day**  
**Saturday 2 May 2026**  
 St. Martha's Hall, Park Road, Tring, HP23 6BP dv

**Bible Students Seminar Day**  
**Saturday 11 July 2026**  
 Crick Village Hall,  
 Bucknills Lane, Crick, Nr. Rugby NN6 7SX

**BIBLE STUDENTS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION**  
**4-9 AUGUST 2026**  
**POLAND**

**Bible Students Fellowship Conference 2026**  
 High Leigh Conference Centre,  
 Wednesday 12 - Sunday 16 August 2026  
 Theme: "United in Christ"

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## GETHSEMANE AND CALVARY

In far-off Palestine there is  
A place whose history,  
In Time nor in Eternity,  
Shall e'er forgotten be—  
The Garden of Gethsemane,  
Where we in memory tread  
The soil that Jesus' feet oft pressed;  
And his tears hallowed;  
For when his work on earth was done,  
And he would soon depart,  
And leave this unfriendly world  
Those dearest to his heart,  
He sought with them the solitude  
Of that familiar place,  
And there "exceeding sorrowful,"  
Bowed down with tear-stained face  
In spirit gladly he has done  
His Father's righteous will;  
But had the oft-times weary flesh,  
Failed some jot to fulfil?  
"By one man's disobedience,  
Death passed upon all men."  
Nor could the blood of many beasts  
Cleanse them from inbred sin.  
God had, through Moses' Law, decreed  
A "Corresponding price,"  
Therefore the Offerer must bring  
A perfect sacrifice  
And fear of death—eternal Death—  
Encompassed him that night,  
Oh, would the Cross thus banish him  
Forever from God's sight,  
And leave the lost and dying world,  
Which he had come to save,  
With nevermore a ray of hope  
Of life beyond the grave?  
And in that dark and lonely hour,  
Without one pitying eye,

Thrice from his troubled heart there came  
The same despairing cry,  
"O Father, if 'tis possible,  
Remove this cup from me,  
If not, except I drink of it,  
Shall I, not bow to Thee?"  
Not Calv'ry's bitter pain or shame,  
The "cup" he prayed to shun;  
But endless Death—yet even so,  
"Thy will, not mine, be done."  
And oh, how worthless our lives seem,  
As we behold him there—  
The Son of God, that spotless Lamb,  
In agonizing prayer.

*Poems of the Way  
Margaret H. Black*

