

THE WORD OF TRUTH

Published Quarterly

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.

Volume 21

MARCH, 1977

Number 1

"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18)

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

THE TIMELESSNESS OF WATCHFULNESS

"What I say unto one, I say unto all, WATCH."

. . . Mark 13:37

My heart is heavy because of the times; because of the dulness of many to the times, and because of the continual need to "stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance." We are so prone to forget—but the prophets of God must not fail to stir us up! "I will not be negligent", declared Peter (II Pet. 1:12). "I will therefore put you in remembrance", wrote Jude! "Remember Lot's wife", challenged our Lord and Savior (Luke 17:32). Their interest was stimulated by their insight into the nature of men and the times, as well as by the "inspiration of the Almighty" which giveth understanding. Let us reflect for a moment upon the situation as it is; conditions as they are in this present evil world. Firstly, fail not to remember that we are in the enemy's territory. "The whole world lieth in wickedness," as it is written (I Jno. 5:19). The entire globe is festering with the leprosy of sin and transgression; there is a rebellion against the Monarch of creation—a rebellion in which we all were participants before we were convinced of sin, righteousness, and judgement to come (Jno. 16:8-11). *We do not live in a vacuum*; there are contrary forces all about us. True, they are not superior forces, but if we do not live in a full awareness of them, they shall prove to be effectual forces in their quest to keep us coming "short of the glory of God". Satan is possessed of great wrath, because he knows that the time is short (Rev. 12:12). While many professed believers remain unaware of the brevity of time, Satan is acutely aware of it. It is with great shame that we admit that many that have sided with the Lord (at least apparently so) are less wise in this matter than their arch-foe Satan. While we do not seek to exalt Satan, we are to live in a state where we are not ignorant of his devices, nor, indeed, of his malicious intent to devour the saints. While the shortness of time constrains him to be filled with more and increasing wrath, the awareness of the fleetness of time is to fill us with zeal and eagerness to enter into our rest.

Secondly, let us never forget that we are engaged in a death struggle with principalities, powers, spiritual wickedness in high places, and the rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. 6:12). *Our foes are not flesh and blood*: that is too menial a foe for the sons of God! Further, we are not in a political combat—one nation against another. We are battling the principalities that rule nations; demonic and angelic powers that manipulate men, ruling from stations higher and more wicked that can be occupied by mere mortals! One of these principalities detained a *mighty angel of God* for twenty one days (Dan. 10:13ff). These are mighty foes which call for strength by the Spirit in the inner man (Eph. 3:16). No battle for

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The Word of Truth

Published quarterly by The Church at 78th and Independence, Merrillville, Indiana.

Author and Editor: Given O. Blakely

Circulation Managers: Mr. and Mrs. Al Stoner

Publication Office: 78th and Independence St., Merrillville, Indiana. (Send no correspondence to this address.)

Business Office: 7903 Hendricks Pl.
Merrillville, Ind. 46410

Address all correspondence to 10701 W. 124th Ave.
Cedar Lake, Ind. 46303

Sent Free upon request to all interested parties.
SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

The Timelessness of Watchfulness

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the uninformed is this! Too, this warfare calls for alertness, diligence, perserverance, and watchfulness. While we may cease to fight, these principalities do not. They are incessantly active, never slothful or belated in their efforts against us.

Thirdly, we must be aware that while the fashion of this world passeth away (I Cor. 7:31), it possesses an incontrovertible influence over our natures. All that is in the world, the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" are very present threats to the children of God (I Jno. 2:17). We are commanded to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (I Jno. 2:15). The reason for this admonition completely disappears if the world does not really seek to lure us into its web of condemnation, and if the eminent danger of being lured is not present God's people must learn to hate the world — and that is something that must be learned. It is not as automatic as some would have us suppose. **Our disdain for the world will be in the precise proportion of our love for the Lord;** and that love is measured by our keeping of His commandments: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous" (I Jno. 5:3). To be more precise, therefore, **our love for the world diminishes and wanes to the measure that we begin to keep the commandments of the Lord.** If we do little keeping of the commandments, then the love of the world shall envelop our souls, capture our affection, and prostitute our desires and ambitions. Be not ignorant of this!

Fourthly, the vestiges of our Adamic nature remain in us. We are still possessed of the old nature, the old man, which cleaves to us until the day we die. All of the potential capacities of sin are there. They are to be mortified or slain — and that would not be possible if they were not positive entities within us; "Mortify, therefore, your members that are upon the earth . . ." (Col. 3:5). We are to "deny ungodliness" (Tit. 2:12) and "worldly lusts" (I Pet. 2:11). Again, if they did not constitute a formidable influence in our lives, these admonitions would be pointless and vain! But they are within us; those that are honest know it. Those that are truly godly engage in militant and

violent warfare against the influence of these vile lusts. They forbid their expression as much as in them lies, and detest and loathe their malignancy. They live, in other words, in view of the corruption that is within their flesh, and gauge their lives, their warfare, their thought lives, and their ambitions with the consideration of this decided handicap. We cannot, alas, give ourselves fully to the matter of putting on graces — we must also engage in putting off vices. Sad, but true (Eph. 4:20-25).

Fifthly, our day finds us surrounded by an alarming increase in immorality and other various forms of indulgence in the vices of the flesh. Each day brings a new low in popular corruption. We can scarcely turn our heads until wicked men have found some novel way of expressing their sinful passions. Like Habakkuk, we speak of the "burden" which we "see" (Hab. 1:1), and cry out to the Lord; "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear? even cry out unto Thee of violence . . . spoiling and violence are before me . . . the law is slacked, and judgement doth never go forth . . ." (Hab. 1:2-3). The weight that this knowledge often brings upon us often appears more than we can bear; and yet we cleave tenaciously to that blessed promise that He will "not suffer us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear" (I Cor. 10:13). How we praise the Lord for that promise! Yet, we remember the words of the Lord; "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:12). We know that as the world's standards descend to new depths, the church's standards too often also descend. We lament this fact, and wish it were not so; but, alas, it is true! Because it takes less effort to appear godly today does not mean that less effort is to be expended — and yet many believe this to be the case. The world is so wicked, that a merely cultured man may appear righteous — but do not be deceived! God's standard of uprightness is still the same; it consists of loving righteousness and eschewing or hating evil. It makes little difference how wicked the world may be, the man of God hates evil — all evil; and loves righteousness — all righteousness! Rather than extreme wickedness causing the light of the righteous to dim, it is to serve as an occasion for that light to shine "brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." The Apostle witnessed that it is amidst a wicked and perverse nation that the saints begin to shine as lights (Phil. 2:15).

Sixthly, lukewarmness has enveloped the professed church. Rather than being noted for its fervency toward the Lord, it is noted for its social interests, its political involvements, and a general decline in its emphasis upon the Word of the Lord. Many have fallen prey to this tidal wave of lukewarmness. They are neither for nor against the Lord; not fervently serving the Lord or the world. A state of indifference and unmoveableness has pervaded many a religious circle. Casualness and a spirit of slumber has fallen upon multitudes of hearts. We recall the words of the Lord to the church of Laodicea; "I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth" (Rev. 3:15-16). The lukewarm cannot be moved; they have become insensitive — calloused — and their conscience is "seared as with a hot

iron." They have become insulated to spirituality, and are thus completely unaware of their precarious position. They linger on the very brink of damnation, and know it not. They stumble as in the night thinking that they are in the light. Indeed, the light that is in them is darkness, and they are unable to assess that dilemma as the Lord commanded them to do (Luke 11:35).

Seventhly, there is a deluge of false prophets in the world; a herd of locusts from the bottomless pit; a flood of deceptive waters spewed out of the very mouth of that old dragon Satan. It is designed to wash the church from her hiding place, where she is secretly nourished by the Lord (Rev. 12:15-17). Our Lord said, "Beware of false prophets" (Matt. 7:15), and never has there been a day with such a diversity of false prophets. We have everything from charismatic catholics to Indian Gurus; supposed apostles from Korea who have come to save our world, and those that are building cities designed as a refuge for the faithful during the great tribulation. We have a resurrection of Eastern meditativism, and the vaunting of Oriental mysticism and pseudo wisdom. There are cults that follow Satan and shed the blood of the innocent in the name of religion. Hardly a month passes but that a mass murder is committed in answer to some secret command from a false deity. We have specialists in family affairs, specialists in business affairs; specialists in books; specialists in financial matters; specialists in bus ministries; specialists in congregational expansion, and specialists in structural erection. But where are the specialists in godliness; the proclaimers of the Word of the Living God that can delineate the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. All of our contemporary specialists with very few exceptions, are

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The Minuteness of Prophecy Concerning The Future

Modern charismatics (and that is their own ascribed appellation, not ours) do not bat one hundred percent in their prophecies — that is a generally accepted statement. True, they have invented all sorts of explanations for their something-less-than-faultless prophecies — but that does not change the fact that their words cannot be relied on as thoroughly precise. They might tell you that your unbelief altered the prophecy, or that Satan inhibited it, or that their apprehension of the time-table was a bit faulty: some apparently plausible explanation will be given if the prophecy fails of fulfillment. Perhaps it was a general prophecy, and they thought that it was a specific one; or maybe they applied the word of knowledge to the wrong thing. On one occasion with which I am personally familiar, a self-proclaimed prophet announced that a sister in the Lord had been healed of an infirmity that she had. However, when she was operated on, they found her case to be the worst they had ever seen. Quickly the "prophet" explained that we would find that there was in fact some other infirmity of which she had been healed later on. It would have been far better to say, "I have lied and done this great evil in the sight of the Lord."! Now, the Scriptures do have something to say about the words of a

prophet being fulfilled when he speaks of the future. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, **THAT IS THE THING WHICH THE LORD HATH NOT SPOKEN**, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Duet. 18:22). There are no exceptions to this rule! If what is prophesied does not come to pass, then the purported prophet has spoken presumptuously, or out of pride and self-esteem. An attitude of self-confidence and a carnally venturesome spirit has dictated the action. The humble appearance of the "prophet", or the apparent weight of the saying, or the personality with which he has spoken are all beside the point. The proof of the prophecy, so to speak, is in the fulfillment! The individual may be a personal friend, a leading person in a given religious movement, apparently honest and humble: but if what he says will come to pass does not come to pass, he has spoken presumptuously, and is thereby constituted a "false prophet". It is not a matter of emphasizing wrongly, or of interpreting wrongly, or of misapplying times and seasons — it is a matter of self-assertion in contradistinction to being moved by the Lord of glory! The Apostle Peter spoke of such men as "presumptuous and self-willed" (II Pet. 2:10), and the Psalmist sought to be kept back from "presumptuous sins" (Psa. 19:13). It is no small sin that constrains one to speak lies in the name of the Lord — particularly when they are confidently thought to be the words of God. It, rather, evidences a heart that is in alienation from God, and a walk that is maintained at a distance from God. It is nothing short of phenomenal that those who boast of a close walk with the Lord, and insight into the counsels of God are often so dense, so insensitive, that they cannot discern between their own carnal and sinful intuitions, and the inspiration of the Almighty! "From such, turn away"! (II Tim. 3:5). Either the prophet that speaks of the future has a completely accurate proclamation, and a one hundred percent fulfillment, or he is a false prophet. It is just that simple!

But, there are frequently deceivers that come in the prophet's garb, predicting things to come, and offering signs and wonders that do come to pass. What is to be our reaction to such as these? Firstly, we will observe from Scripture, that **the final test is not whether or not the saying comes to pass!** If it does not come to pass, no further test is necessary — he is false, and that is all there is to it! But if the sign or wonder **does** come to pass, then further tests are required — we do not take him to be a prophet simply because what he said came to pass; "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all of your heart, and with all of your soul" (Duet. 13:1-3). **What is the message of the prophet? That is a crucial issue!** If he has no message, then there is no point to his prophecy! What God

does he bid us to follow? The one that was manifested by the Lord Jesus Christ and preached by the Apostles, or a traditional god that has his origin in the minds of finite men? Are we called upon, for instance, to follow a god that winks at sin, or one that does not elect His own people, or one that is helpless without the aid of men, or one that never works in a manner transcendent to nature? What kind of Gospel is preached by that prophet? What kind of Savior is held forth? What kind of demands does his god place upon men? You see, **the point is not what the prophet did, or what the prophet said, but the point is the god of the prophet — what god constrained him to do these things, to say these things!** The God of heaven does infinitely more than tantalize the curiosity of men, or bring them to a certain height of excitement by means of little novelties and intellectual dainties! And yet, much of the “sign” religion of our day is simply nothing more than a religious circus or carnival!

Concerning minuteness, think how particular our Lord is in the fulfilling of His own prophecies. “That it might be fulfilled” — how often is that phrase written over the workings of the Lord! **“That it might be fulfilled . . . Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a son . . .”** (Matt. 1:21); **“That it might be fulfilled** which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Out of Egypt have I called My Son . . .” (Matt. 2:15); **“Then was fulfilled** that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning . . .” (Matt. 2:17-18); **“That it might be fulfilled** which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene” (Matt. 2:23); **“That it might be fulfilled** which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses” (Matt. 8:17); **“That it might be fulfilled** which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 13:35). These are only a few of literally scores of Scriptures which highlight the particular and specific minuteness of fulfilled prophecy (Matt. 12:17; 21:4; 27:35; Jno. 12:38; 15:25; 17:12; 18:9; 18:32; 19:24, 28, 36). The point here is this: rather than being general in prophecy concerning the future, the Lord God of heaven makes a point of fulfilling every meticulous detail. No stone is left unturned, no word void of fulfillment. **Satan, in the last day, will not be able to fasten on a single syllable that has not been absolutely and unquestionably fulfilled by the Lord of glory.** No word that God has or shall speak shall fall to the ground. His prophecies are not fulfilled in measures; like eighty percent, or ninety percent, or even ninety-nine percent. Not only is every prophecy fulfilled, but every facet of every prophecy, and every word or every facet of every prophecy! When we think of foretelling the future, we must learn to think of it in these terms, for that it how it is declared in Scripture.

I should be inclined to believe that if everyone within the charismatic camp were persuaded of this truth tonight, tomorrow their prophecies would diminish. But, in the meantime, we want

them to know that we shall deliberately weigh every jot and every tittle of their prophecies. If they do not come to pass we will announce them as false prophets and deceivers. If they do come to pass, then we shall weigh their message, and lay it along side of the Apostle’s doctrine. We simply will not take them for granted any more than we expect them to take us for granted. Quite candidly, we think it ill-advised to class them with the likes of Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Peter, and Paul. They simply are not in the same league! However, if they were of God — really of God — they would be in the same league!

Warnings About False Prophets

False prophets can be likable! They can appear humble and submissive to God! But that does not change the fact that they are false prophets. The Scriptures speak of those “prophets that prophesy in My Name, and I sent them not” (Jer. 14:15).

The technical accuracy of their speech, or the pleasantness of their appearance, is not at all the point. The point is, **did God send them?** If He did, then they shall speak unto edification, exhortation, and comfort; i.e., the result of their ministry will be the strengthening of the people of God, the urging of the saints and constraining of them towards genuine spirituality and acceptance with God, and the lifting up of weak hands to do the work of the Lord. **“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothings, but inwardly are ravening wolves”** (Matt. 7:15), declared our Lord. Again, **“Take heed that no man deceive you”**, asserted our Savior (Matt. 24:4) — and **that warning emphasizes not only the proneness of us mortals to be deceived, but also the lack of apparentness in false prophets.** “False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect” (Mk. 13:22).

The Apostles also spoke of false prophets: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **LET HIM BE ACCURSED**” (Gal. 1:8). They spoke of those that “corrupted” the Word of God (II Cor. 2:17), and those that preached Christ out of “envy and strife” (Phil. 1:15). They warned us about those that would deceive us with “enticing words” (Col. 2:4), who would with “feigned words make merchandise of you” (II Pet. 2:3), and “wrest” the Scriptures “unto their own destruction” (II Pet. 3:16). Remember that we are told that some would speak with “**great swelling words of vanity**”, and “**allure through the lusts of the flesh**” (II Pet. 2:18). Such as these “serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by **good words and fair speeches** deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom. 16:18).

While it may appear that we are a bit hard on these false prophets, or that we should be a little more “understanding” and lenient, it ought to be understood that we consider our salvation too critical of a matter to be casual about these things. We bid our readers to also be concerned about what they hear, particularly when it is uttered in the Name of the Lord. There is little danger in being too cautious in our day. Weigh the words of the purported prophets. Lay them along side of the Scriptures; test them. If they prove true, accept them, if not, reject them!

JESUS IS ON DAVID'S THRONE . . . NOW!

It is true that Satan and his wicked hosts are aware that Jesus is **presently** reigning in great power, for He is doing it at their expense, as it is written, ". . . blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; and **having spoiled** principalities and powers, **He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it** (His cross)" (Col. 2:12-15). It was in the cross that Jesus accomplished His great defeat of the Evil One, as it is witnessed; ". . . that **THROUGH DEATH** He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the Devil" (Heb. 2:13-14). **The "show" was made to the heavenly hierarchies and spiritual beings — not merely to the earth.** Christ's glorious triumph was not so much a spectacle to the world, as it was to the heavens, for it is before these that the Father demonstrated His magnanimous wisdom and prudence and power (Eph. 3:10-11). **The cross is the place and the means of God's triumph over His enemies;** "Which He wrought in Christ **WHEN HE RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD** and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:20). This is why we preach the cross; not only because here man's redemption was wrought, but because that redemption was wrought in the defeat of the evil one, as well as in the satisfaction of the Father in heaven.

THE FOE

The rulers of this world are spiritual hosts — evil spirits under the rule of the great under-ruler, Satan, as it is written; "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against **spiritual** wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). **Those that can dethrone these spiritual hosts will rule in their stead.** Thus it was in the day of Daniel, as the angel communicated to him; ". . . but the Prince of Persia (a spiritual ruler) withstood me one and twenty days . . . and now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I am gone forth, lo **THE PRINCE OF GRECIA SHALL COME**" (Dan. 10:13-20). In this text, the great conflict of the spiritual hosts is pictured. The "Prince of Persia" was a "ruler of the darkness of this world" who had been set, by Satan, over the nation of Persia. As this spiritual personage ruled, the Nation of Persia ruled, and was a dominate power. However, in the days of Daniel, the angel Michael engaged in battle against this spiritual ruler, casting him down from his high and lofty place. Immediately after this the "Prince of Grecia" came forth, who ruled over Grecia, and thus gave that nation the prominence. **This is how power is shifted from one nation to another — it is through spiritual conflicts in the high places; by means of the overthrow of powerful and unseen spiritual hosts.**

THE LORD CHRIST

Now, with this in the background, you may begin to see more of the dynamic content of the text in Colossians 2:15. Here Jesus is pictured as overthrowing all the spiritually wicked powers,

making a show of them openly, and thus ending their free dominion. **They now operate under the direct control of Jesus Christ, who is unequivocally pronounced the "Head of all things to the church"** (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18) i.e., He has been given to the Church as one who actively rules over all dominion and principality and power. It is for this reason alone that we are assured that "nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," and why we are called "**more than conquerors** through Him that loved us" (Rom. 8:33-39). It is with us as it was with Job the patriarch — **Satan cannot touch us in any form unless he is given authority from the Lord God of heaven and earth.** Our Father "rules among the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth," and has "given all power in heaven and in earth" unto the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18). Now, as has been stated, he who rules the spiritual hosts, rules **all**, for it is not flesh and blood that rules the world, but unseen spiritual-beings.

CHRIST'S EXALTATION

It is unfortunate, if not providential, that many, because of their inability to see Christ ruling externally, have supposed that He is not yet upon the Throne of David, but that He is waiting in abeyance until some future day when He shall assume the throne in a physical and seen sense. Such a view is fraught with carnality, and brings great reproach upon the cross. **If the overthrow of the dominions was made at the cross, those who look for a future overthrow do great disservice to the cross, if they understand not that any opposition presently perceived is under the All-powerful hand of Christ; not out of control, but wisely ordered and maintained according to His own inscrutable wisdom.** Surely none but a fool would suppose that Christ could have the uncontested rule over Satan's hosts, and still not be on the Throne! **Satan does not recognize the authority of an unenthroned being — yet He does perceive and bow to Christ's authority, for He knows that He is truly the king.** Even during Christ's earthly ministry, the Devil gave full obedience to Him. Is it not written that when the temptation of Jesus was ended, Satan left (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-12)? He could not stay against the will of Jesus Christ, who was, in the first place, "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil." The demons came out of people at Christ's command, and asked Him leave to enter swine, even asking at times if He had come to destroy them before the appointed time (Matt. 8:31; 8:29). It is certainly a token of spiritual ignorance that any man would suppose Christ's rule only partial simply because everything did not externally manifest itself to carnal eyes as being in subjection to Him. No! Jesus rules, in the highest and loftiest sense of the word, and **His rule is absolutely uncontested in the spirit-world;** all bow and do obedience to Him, whether willingly or unwillingly. As it is written, ". . . Jesus Christ, who is **GONE INTO HEAVEN,** and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers **BEING MADE SUBJECT TO HIM**" (I Pet. 3:21-22). You could sooner substantiate that Jesus did not ascend into heaven, than that the principalities **everywhere** are not

subject to Him. "He ascended," is the word of the Holy Spirit, with this right and authority in possession, having defeated utterly, and once and for all, all the opponents of God within the very sphere of their evil activity! If what we have said is not true, than the church is at the mercy of demons and spiritual rulers which are (in a grapple between us and them alone) quite capable of detaining us from entering into heaven. If one of these strong evil rulers of the spiritual world could detain an angel, mightier in strength than we mortals, for twenty-one days, what may they do to us, who are as the dust of the earth and frail. Well do I understand how Armenianism has such sway in the religious world and professed Christendom. If the **common** view of Christ's reign is accepted, we are thrust upon the strength of man, and feebly sweat and toil until the day Jesus is set upon David's Throne. But, for those who have seen the truth of Christ's **present** rule, the doctrines of election, keeping, drawing to Jesus, and Sovereignty, hold great comfort. We have abundant reason to believe these doctrines, for we have truly seen the Lord **high and lifted up**, with the earth His footstool, and all the spiritual hosts as His subordinates. **It appears clear to me that the great cause for the division in the evangelical world between the free-willers and the free-grace advocates, is basically this truth and the measure of insight into it — "The Lord reigneth."**

CHRIST'S ENTHRONEMENT PROCLAIMED

Now, we are not at all content to let this matter rest here, for the Word of God teaches quite clearly, to the spiritual mind, the truth of Christ's present occupation of David's Throne. Well are we aware of the unsettling effect that this announcement has upon myriads of people who have for years been taught a sort of spiritual garbage. Why will not religious men hear the truth, and cease from holding their traditional views, for which they have neither substantiation nor good cause to believe? Is it not the truth which liberates and makes free (John 8:32-36)? **Tradition binds men to institutions and to men rather than to the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Liberator of His people?** We will hold forth the word of truth, that we have a King who rules over all, sitting at the right hand of the majesty on high, and having all under His subjection, excepting the Father Himself, who hath put all rule under Him (I Cor. 15:27).

It was the Apostle Peter who first preached the Kingship of Jesus with power. On that great day of Pentecost, when the Lord began pouring forth His Spirit, Peter unveiled much of the prophecies concerning Christ. "Men and brethren, let me speak unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ TO SIT ON HIS THRONE; He SEEING THIS BEFORE, spake of the RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, that His soul was not left in hell (Hades), neither His flesh did see corruption" (Acts 2:29-31). Peter, being

full of the Holy Ghost, has seen into the 16th Psalm, and is giving it **true** meaning to the people before him. The fact that so many are today at **variance with Peter on this subject is sufficient indication that they have not been given insight into this or other Scripture.** David had spoken this Psalm with the promise of God in his eye — the promise that God would raise up someone to sit upon his throne, and rule the people "with equity." David, according to the Spirit-filled Peter, spoke of **the resurrection of Christ** in association with the setting of Him upon his throne. Is it not a point of interest that the setting of Christ upon David's throne is spoken of today in association with His Second Coming? From whence has this doctrine arisen — certainly not from the Apostles, for it cannot be found anywhere in all of the Scriptures! Pure tradition has conceived and perpetrated this doctrine to the confusion of the people. David spake of "the resurrection of Christ" when he saw Jesus upon his throne — and ought not we to do the same? Is it because men are fearful of throwing their tradition overboard in favor of the truth that they refuse to so speak of Christ's resurrection, or is it simply because they are ignorant of the matter. We do not know, but we joyfully take our side by Peter, and declare Christ's resurrection as that which put us in mind of His rule. It was in view of this that Peter declared, "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that **this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, hath God made both LORD and Christ**" (Acts 2: 36). The terms "Lord" and "Christ" are not incidental descriptions. They have been selected out of the prophets! "Lord" is the word that David used of Christ Jesus in anticipation of his spiritual rule upon his throne. "Christ" is the name given to Jesus to signify His Divine selection by the Father for David's Throne. The resurrection and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God at once fulfilled these prophecies of God's setting His Chosen One upon the throne of David. **The first act of His Kingship was the conferment of the Holy Ghost upon His people;** "Wherefore, being by the right hand of the God EXALTED, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). Now, it may seem a small matter to some that this great work was done, but when it is remembered that between heaven and earth operates "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:1-3), and that this is the sphere of his dominion, it will at once be seen that **the bestowment of the Holy Spirit involved the overthrow of great seats of wicked authority and power;** for they would surely have restrained the reception of this gift, were it within their power to do so. **However, Satan and his hosts were subordinate to Christ, and as such could do nothing against His desires, but only submit to let the blessing pass through their territory that it might rest, so to speak, upon the hearts and lives of the redeemed. The conferment of the Holy Spirit upon believers is itself a token of Christ's undisputed reign over all at this present moment — from the "Throne of David."** The prophecies of Jesus sitting upon the Throne of David are many, and we commend to you a study, **in the Spirit,** of them all, of which these are but a few: II Sam. 3:10; I Kgs.

2:4; 8:25; 9:5; II Chron. 6:16; Jer. 33:17; Isa. 9:7; Jer. 13:13; 36:30; Luke 1:32.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THRONE

The "Throne of David" signifies the nature of Christ's rule; that it was going to be extensive, to the uttermost part of the whole creation in heaven and earth. Until the day of Christ, "death reigned," and Satan had the race of man in his snare, having brought them to the regions of death, and spreading the net of delusion over them all. As it is written, he "deceiveth the WHOLE world" (Rev. 12:9). Jesus came to "destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb 2:14-15). Even as David extended the borders of Israel's dominion to the full measure of the promise, so the Lord Jesus Christ exercises His dominion in all corners of the earth, overthrowing in all places principalities and powers, and ruling with a rod of iron. There was a time when the Lord manifested Himself only to the Israelites according to the flesh, and thus did not make manifest His rule in all portions of the earth. Supposing that he could use this to his own advantage, Satan blinded great segments of the world, obscuring to the Gentiles the glory of the Lord. But, when Jesus Christ was given the reins to the kingdom, He at once demonstrated the truth that "God is no respecter of persons," bringing sheep into the fold from "every nation, their enemies, as was prophesied by Zecharias, strating that He was truly Ruler of all.

David's Throne was a place where dispensation was made (I Chron. 24:3; II Chron. 23:18), and it is in this sense that Jesus is said to sit upon David's Throne. Not only did David bring the entire promised land under his dominion, but he distributed the spoils and gifts to his people. So it is with our Lord Jesus. He was "raised up" to sit upon David's Throne, as was seen in the resurrection, according to the inspired interpretation of Peter. **Then He "shed forth" the things that were that day witnessed, in confirmation of the truth of His reign.** So far as the prophets were concerned, they spoke of Jesus under the term "David," making mention of His glorious reign. It is interesting, as well as highly edifying, to meditate upon their usage of this most holy term. Ezekiel uses the term abundantly in his book ("my Servant David" — 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25, etc.). The Holy Spirit moved him to write, "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my Servant David; He shall feed them, and He shall be their shepherd" (Ezek. 34:23). Even the people of old, who witnessed Jesus Christ in the flesh, related the prophetic term "David" to His ministry of salvation and provision for His people (Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 20:30, 31; Mark 10:47, 48). It is for His people that He reigns supremely, suppressing all of their enemies, as was prophesied by Zecharias, "That He would grant unto us, that we might serve Him without fear" (Luke 1:74). Many of that day interpreted this to mean that the suppressors of their physical liberties were to be destroyed, and thus, not seeing in Jesus of Nazareth the fulfillment of their imaginations, they rejected Him, even though He came to them (John 1:11). Is it not true that many have made the same error today? They, as Paul declared, "suppose that gain is god-

liness (I Tim. 6:5), and thus miss the real benefit of a ruling and reigning Christ.

We will not fail to mention that Jesus is in the process of bringing all of His enemies to His feet; not that they are more powerful than He, or that they are waging such great warfare that it requires much time — that is a thorough misconception. Jesus could fell the world at one blow, instantaneously — resistance or not. **The All-powerful One cannot be resisted by those possessing no power, who are as the grass of the field. Jesus is waiting, expecting, until such times as all the sheep have been brought in. Because this is the means that best glorifies the grace of the Father (Eph. 1:6), the providences of the Lord appear slow, but we must ever remember that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8). With the Lord time is no element, it is His "eternal purpose" (Eph. 1:11) that is of the greatest preeminence. Because God's ways seem mysterious and uninterpretable to man is no reason to invent new and strange doctrines which are designed to make palpable to the undestanding the workings of the Lord!** Because Jesus does not appear to carnal minds a King is by no means indication that He is not. Because men cannot explain to the satisfaction of the curious and sinfully inquisitive human mind the fact that Jesus is presently upon the Throne of David, is a completely unjust reason for thinking that He is not! Peter preached the truth concerning the matter; that Jesus being raised from the dead and ascended into glory was a manifestation of Him being set upon David's Throne. Whether this can be received by men or not has no bearing whatsoever upon the case — **this is the way that it is, and we believe and worship altogether such a One as this!** It is true that Jesus shall be fuller manifested as King in God's own time, but this has no bearing upon His Kingship now, or upon the occupation of the Throne of David. Just as David, in his reign, subjugated one by one the opponents of the Lord in the promised land, so it is with the Lord Jesus Christ — He is subduing His enemies, according to the will of God, one by one, until all shall become His footstool and glory and honor are thus brought to the Father who "worketh all in all."

The Second Psalm is a glorious declaration of the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ over all of His adversaries. It shows the futility of the efforts of man, and the glorious purpose of the Lord being wrought out very minutely, even though being accomplished by the very enemies of the Lord — unbeknown to them; "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. **YET HAVE I SET MY KING UPON MY HOLY HILL . . .**" (Psa. 2:1-6). **The fact that the Holy-Spirit-filled-church recognized this as a declaration of the ascended and glorified Christ (Acts 4:25-30) is reason enough for us to receive it in the same fashion.** The disciples of old prayed to the Father to work in the behalf of the King which He had set upon His holy hill. "Well," say some,

“But Jesus shall reign in the physical city of Jerusalem and rule from a literal throne, as it is written.” But, oh sophist that thou art, **the physical Jerusalem is not the true Jerusalem, but is only a figure of it.** “**The Jerusalem WHICH IS ABOVE is the MOTHER of us all**” (Gal. 4:26). The “Jerusalem that now is” is spoken of in quite a different vein, as is seen in verse 25 of that same chapter. **The heavenly Jerusalem is the spiritual place of God’s presence; the gathering place of all of the redeemed. It is the higher regions of the spirit-world where The Throne of God is, and where Jesus is seen in His glory. It is from this place that Jesus reigns, not from an earthly location. To fuse a glorified Christ into an unregenerate world is not possible, for Christ cannot be united to Belial, nor can righteousness be mingled with unrighteousness.** Jesus has spent His last hours in this sin-festered world, and He shall do it no more. The next time He shall come in “power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30; Luke 21:27), and the very heavens and earth, not being able to abide His presence shall “flee away, and there shall be found no place for them (Rev. 20:11). Who is this “that darkeneth counsel by words” in teaching people that Jesus, glorified, risen, and exalted high above “every Name” that is named, could possibly abide in this earth — or even in the regions of it — without it being consumed by that same glory? **Let such an one acknowledge his ignorance of the Lord and of His glory, and abandon his “vain conversation, received by the tradition of his fathers.”** No apostle taught a physical and earthly reign of Christ, and those that do so now do greatly err. They declared Him as ruling from heaven, sending forth blessings upon His people, and overthrowing evil and wicked powers as one that “ruleth on high.” We who have been redeemed have verily been “translated into the KINGDOM of God’s dear Son” (Col. 1:13), and **we rather detest any doctrine that would have us believe we have a throneless Christ: or One that does not at this moment occupy the Throne of David which was promised Him!** Speaking of our Christ (and let all put aside their tradition and receive the Word of the Lord), and apostles wrote, “He is Lord of ALL” (Acts 10:36); “Christ came, who is OVER ALL!” (Rom. 9:5): “To this end Christ both died and arose and revived, THAT HE MIGHT BE LORD BOTH OF THE DEAD AND THE LIVING” (Rom. 14:9): “Which He (God) wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, FAR ABOVE ALL PRINCIPALITY, AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND EVERY NAME THAT IS NAMED, NOT ONLY IN THIS WORD, BUT ALSO THAT WHICH IS TO COME: and hath put ALL things UNDER HIS FEET, and gave Him to be HEAD OVER ALL THINGS TO THE CHURCH” (Eph. 1:20-22: “Who (Jesus) is the blessed and ONLY POTENTATE, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (I Tim. 6:15); “Who is gone into heaven, angels and authorities and powers BEING MADE SUBJECT TO HIM” (I Pet. 3:22), etc. Now, you who cannot conceive of a Christ that is presently reigning upon David’s Throne — **what is there left yet to rule? Who are the enemies which he does not yet rule? “Well,” answers the sophist, “Why do not all men bow the knee to Christ? Why**

are there myriads of people who yet curse Him, and why are not all men believers, if so be that Jesus is reigning now upon David’s throne?” And so we answer you — did all of David’s enemies entertain a love for him, even though they did pay tribute to him? Did all servants worship and adore those whom they served? Because a man curses an unseen Christ, shall he curse him when confronted face to face with Him? **Is the rule of Christ manifested alone by external submission, or because the Lord declared,** “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, and He turneth it whithersoever He willeth.” **Does the fact that we are clay and He is the potter have no bearing on the case? Does the fact that He “upholds all things by the Word of His power,” and that “He giveth eternal life to as many as have been given unto Him bear no weight upon your stubborn conscience? If Jesus does not rule men, how can He rule demons, who are our opponents (Eph. 6:12)? Do you not realize the outcome of your damnable doctrine; it leaves the church of the Lord at the mercy of higher powers than men; powers that are mighty in strength above any human imagination? If this is the type of Christ that you seek to serve, then you may serve Him, and stand or fall by that one; but we shall serve a Christ who is truly “all in all”, and unto whom all submit when confronted with Him in truth. He is Supreme in every sense of the word, and we mitigate it not in any sense!**

HIS RULE TO BE MANIFESTED

Now, we are swift to point out that the Scriptures speak of that day when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ” (Rev. 11:15). To the believer, this speaks of the time when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as “the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14). This shall be the reign of the Gospel, when the “veil” shall be lifted by the Sovereign Hand from the eyes of His people (II Cor. 3:16), and “all Israel shall be saved” (Rom. 11:26). This shall be wrought by the power of the Gospel, which is the only revealed means of accomplishing salvation (Rom. 1:16). God shall work in a mighty way, moving by His inscrutable wisdom, “unto the praise of the glory of His grace.” Even as He filled the world with the Gospel in the first days of the church (Rom. 1:8), so shall He do it again. Jesus shall release, from the Throne, such power and spiritual glory as shall bring into the fold “such as should be saved” in that day. **He shall use no other power than is at His disposal at this present day.** The fact that Jesus holds some of His power for the appointed time ought not to cause the saints to think Him less powerful. It is truly a King that may use His power according to His own pleasure, **totally unrestrained by the wills of demons, angels or men.** All serve Him, knowledgeably or unknowingly. When Jesus arose from the dead, He was unequivocally given “all power in heaven and earth” (Matt. 28:18). **The primary purpose of this delegated power was to insure the preservation and development of the church.** This is the significance of the Throne of David. He has been given as “Head over ALL THINGS to the church” (Eph. 1:22). **His primary purpose for ruling is not the subjugation of His enemies. We trust that to all believers it is clear, even from the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus, that His enemies were, in a sense of the word, al-**

ways subject to Him. If this were not the case, how would it be possible for Him to cast out devils (Luke 11:20) which themselves were the rulers of men. If the strongman of the house be bound, are not the subjects of the strongman's house easily taken? **Christ's subjugation of His enemies speaks of the time when all things shall come to an end; when the "mystery shall be finished" (Rev. 10:7); when the heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up and melt with fervent heat.** It speaks of the time when there shall be no more open rebellion against the Lord. This is a providential work—that is, the subjugation of Christ's enemies. It is not that His enemies are stronger than He. If that were the case, how miserable indeed would be the "great salvation" of which we love to speak! Nor is it because His enemies are so strong that there must needs ensue a great struggle until the Lord Jesus finally overcomes them at length. God forbid that such blasphemous and heterogenous notions should be entertained by the saints of the Most High! There is an **appointed** day when the Father of Heaven shall show what manner of Man Jesus Christ really is — a King supreme, the Potentate Most High; "**Which in His own times He will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords**" (I Tim. 6:15). **He is a King in concealment to the world now; but a reigning ruling one, nevertheless.** His enemies shall be placed under His feet when all the universe witnesses the Superiority of God's Holy Son, as He returns in glory, every one beholding Him, and they that pierced Him mourning and wailing because of Him (Rev. 1:7). This great day shall be experienced in a first-fruits sense when the world is filled with His knowledge, and the pure and undefiled religion of the Lord dominates over wicked powers; when the rebelliousness of men shall not make an open show as it does today, but shall be bound up with its prince; the everlasting Gospel being spread and causing men to "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks"; a time of peace and tranquility rather than wars and rumors of wars. But this is only an introduction to the great open display of Christ's power when "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11).

We confess that we worship a ruling, reigning Christ; who possesses **all** the rule of heaven and earth; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to Him. **He shall never have any more power than He does at this present moment, which power is devoted to the care and sustenance of His brethren.** We anticipate the unveiling and manifestation of that power before the eyes of all flesh; and when it comes to pass, we shall confess before God and men that this is the same Jesus, ruling with the same sceptre, that we presently worship, adore, love, and fellowship. If this is not the Christ that you worship, then discard your current one, and come to the true Christ; He alone is able to "save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him" (Heb. 7:25). And, now, we recommend you to Him as He who has been exalted to the very throne of David **now**, and is declared to be both Lord and Christ. Worship Him in spirit and in truth!

SHOWING THE LORD'S DEATH

By Richard Ebler

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26).

When we take the Lord's Supper we show the Lord's death; but to whom do we show it? The answer is a multi-faceted one. Below are some of the basic branches:

1. First of all, we show it to one another. We who take the Lord's Table every Sunday are constantly stirring up one another's pure minds "by way of remembrance" (II Peter 3:1). We remind each other that this is the main thing. It is the doctrine that needs the most emphasis, because it is the power of God to our own salvation if we keep it in memory and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 1:16; Col. 1:23).

2. Secondly we show it to the world. The whole world has heard the gospel (Col. 1:23; Rom. 1:8), and it has also heard of this simple ordinance which portrays the gospel. It has been kept alive even by Babylon! Christ made it so simple that it has been difficult to completely distort or obliterate. This leaves the world without excuse.

3. Thirdly we show it to angels. The Scripture says that the angels desire to look into these things (I Peter 1:12). Although it would seem at first sight to be absurd that such lofty beings as angels would learn anything from mere mortals, yet the Scripture says that God has so ordained it: "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known **by the church** the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 2:10,11).

This is not surprising once we realize that man was originally made a "little lower than the angels" (Heb. 2:9), and that after falling into sin he experienced redemption whereas the angels did not. Also Christ weds himself to men by His Spirit as they obey the gospel. He does not do this to the angels.

4. Finally we are holding forth this truth to God Himself, in a sense. It is called the **Lord's Supper** which intimates that He spiritually partakes of it in fellowship with us. God likes to remember the death of His Son because it reminds Him of our salvation and of the glorifying of His grace. Even as the rainbow reminded Noah that God was remembering His covenant, so this ordinance reminds us that God remembers His new covenant (Heb. 8:13).

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Two articles found in this issue are available to our readers in tract form: "Jesus Is On David's Throne . . . Now!", and "Seek Ye The Lord."

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10701 West 124th Avenue
Cedar Lake, Indiana 46303

THE LORD'S CONTROL OVER MEN HEARTS

"The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord"

. . . Proverbs 16:1

The Lord God of heaven and earth is great, and greatly to be praised. He is not the small and hampered deity which is promulgated by sectarian men today! He is high; His thoughts are high; His ways are high! Beside Him there is none other. His judgements and His ways are "past finding out", and are "unsearchable." Unlike the gods which men have created in their wicked imaginations, the true and Living God is not hindered by men; He is not dependent upon men; His purposes are not enhanced or diminished by men. Men are creatures, God is the Creator. Men are but clay, the Lord is the Potter. It is truly written; "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, AND THEY THAT DWELL THEREIN" (Psa. 24:1). This is not to say that all men are God's children in the redemptive purpose of God but that they are His by reason of ownership, and that He may do with them what He pleases — He violates no law in so doing. As He Himself has declared, "All souls are Mine" (Ezek. 18:4). "He ruleth by His power forever" (Psa. 66:7), and His "judgements are in all the earth" (Psa. 105:7); i.e., **there is no corner of this circular earth in which God's will is not meticulously, punctiliously, and irresistibly wrought!** This is God's world, and He is this world's Owner, Sustainer, and Governor. In regards to mankind, the Father may authoritatively say without any effectual contestation from mortals; "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with Mine own?" (Matt. 20:15). If He desires to fill "the hungry with good things, and to send the rich empty away", that is His prerogative (Lk. 1:53). If He "forms light", "creates darkness", "makes peace", or "creates evil", what man is there upon earth that shall raise the voice of defiance and say, "What doest thou"? (Isa. 45:7; Job 9:12). But, these things are surely known among the faithful; what further need have we to delineate these truths. We desire, in particular, to fasten upon the truth of the Lord's control over the hearts of men; how that He turns hearts whithersoever He wills. Of course, this is the precise declaration of Scripture; "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov. 21:1).

Why The Lord Manipulates Men's Hearts

The Lord is executing His will in all of the earth; this is His arena, the place where He is executing His will. The world is not primarily a place where men's will is wrought, but where the will of the Lord is done. While it is accomplished differently, as a rule, than it is in heaven (i.e., not willingly and heartily), it is nevertheless done! "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things", declares the Spirit (Rom. 11:36). Perhaps a view incidents recorded in Scripture will serve to establish this truth more than mere explanations or commentaries upon it.

1. Concerning that grievous incident of Joseph's brethren selling him into bondage which led to his eventual confinement in Egypt. It is written; "As for you, ye thought evil against me; BUT GOD MEANT IT UNTO GOOD, to bring

to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (Gen. 50:20). Observe carefully, that the **thought** belonged to Joseph's brethren, but the **purpose** belonged to God. God "MEANT it for good" — that is language that describes purpose, intent, deliberation! This was not something that involved God patching up the blunders of men; it involved, rather, men fulfilling the precise purpose of God. That God's control over men's hearts is here particularly involved, is evident.

2. You will recall the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. After some 430 years, the people of God were brought out with a "high hand" (Ex. 14:8). Great honor and glory were brought unto the Lord God in this deliverance, chiefly because it was in spite of very steadfast resistance and opposition by the Egyptians. Of that situation, the Lord Himself testified; "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that He shall follow after them; and I will be honored upon Pharaoh and upon all his host" (Ex. 14:4). Here the point was not so much the removal of Pharaoh as it was the establishment of the honor and glory of Jehovah God. It was not so much the weakness of Pharaoh that was demonstrated as the strength of God. The aim was not to merely uproot men from the tyranny of Pharaoh, but to establish their hearts and their faith in the Living God. The whole situation of Pharaoh was deliberate; God brought it to pass to make for Himself a great Name — and, indeed, He did. The condition of Pharaoh's heart, it is declared, was the work of God!
3. When Israel was journeying through the wilderness to Canaan, they encountered a variety of peoples, nations, and rulers. Some offered no resistance at all, and others defied the armies of the Lord. One such case of resistance is that of "Sihon king of Heshbon". He is mentioned several times in Scripture, a point being made of his futile and puny obstinance against the people of the Lord (Num. 21:23; Judges 11:20; 29:7; Josh. 9:10; Num. 21:26). Of that resisting king it is written; "Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: FOR THE LORD THY GOD HARDENED HIS SPIRIT, AND MADE HIS HEART OBSTINATE, THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER HIM INTO THY HAND, AS APPEARETH THIS DAY" (Deut. 2:30). The condition of Sihon's heart, then, the obstinance and rebellion which festered there, is traceable to the workings of the Lord. It was the purpose of God that was being fulfilled; a purpose which wonderfully transcends the comprehension of mortal men!
4. There was a time when Abimelech, king of Israel, encountered devious attacks from the men of Shechem who set "liars in wait for him in the top of the mountains." It is written that these men "robbed all that came along that way by them." What moved these men to so react against Israel. It is written that "God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech: THAT THE CRUELTY DONE UNTO THRESCORE AND TEN SONS OF JERUBBAAL MIGHT COME..." (Judges 9:23-25). The treachers inventions of

the hearts of the men of Shechem, then, was traceable back to the will of God. Stand in marvel at our great God, and worship Him!

5. What more could be said of the will of the Lord being wrought in spite of men; a will which involved the turning of men's hearts whithersoever He willed. Did He not "appoint the defeat of the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring evil upon Absalom", that wicked son of king David (II Sam. 17:14). The counsel was wise; the counsel was good; it was sensible and reasonable to follow it; it was irrational not to follow it. But the purpose of God took the precedence over the logic of men, and he turned hearts whithersoever He willed, in order to the execution of His will and purpose. Our God is One that "disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise" (Job 5:12). Truly, He "bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought." He maketh the devices of the people of none effect" (Psa. 33:10). Knowing this, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain (Psa. 76:10). Again it is written; "There are many devices in a man's heart: nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand" (Prov. 19:21). That day Gamaliel, a Pharisee and "doctor of the law" stood before a seething crowd, his assessment of the finality of the will of God was altogether correct, even though his own perception of the matter might not have been as keen as it appeared. He said; "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" (Acts 5:38-39).

The Lord not only has "His way in the whirlwind and in the storm" (Nah. 1:3), He also has His way in the affairs of men; in history as a whole, and in the smallest detail of societal achievements or failures. O, we sons of men need to learn this truth! We place far too much emphasis upon the power of men, the purpose of men, the will of men! Too often we work and pray as though all depended upon men, forgetting that man at his best state is "altogether vanity", and even his glory is akin to that lowly flower of the grass which eventually "falleth away" (Psa. 39:5; Isa. 40:6; II Pet. 1:24). This is God's world, not man's world! Man wills, purposes, strives, plans and plots — but when all is said and done, the will of the Lord is done, specifically and particularly. It makes no difference whether he is bringing a single man into bondage (as with Joseph), and a nation of men out of bondage (as with Israel); the will of the Lord is done. God has His way in overthrowing man's purpose, or in the establishment of good and holy purposes. A man, a nation, a world — all are but clay of sorted sizes to be molded and formed by the Lord God of heaven and earth!

God's Purposes Are Divers, Not Singular

As the Living God works with the hearts of men, His will and purposes take different forms. He not only opens men's eyes (or understanding), for instance, but also closes them! It is said of the Lord that He "poured out the spirit of deep sleep" upon Israel (Isa. 29:10-12), and that He did not give them a heart to perceive (Duet. 29:4). He can, and often does, shut the eyes that they cannot see,

and the heart that they may not understand (Isa. 44:18). On the other hand, the power that darkness held over us was broken by God Himself, who delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of His Dear Son (Col. 1:13). Is it not also written that the Lord sends strong delusion to those that did not receive the love of the truth, in order that they might believe a lie and be damned (II Thess. 2:11-12). A glorious truth is this, for it constrains the redeemed to ascribe salvation to God, and to God alone!

See how the Father works through Christ Jesus the Lord; He "grants repentance" unto life (Acts 11:17-18), or, as it is said elsewhere, "If peradventure God will GIVE THEM REPENTANCE to the acknowledging of the truth" (II Tim. 2:26). He also "opens the door of faith" (Acts 14:27), a spiritual way of describing the imparture of faith to men's hearts. The diversity of God's purpose is also seen in this statement of our Lord Jesus Christ; "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Luke 10:21). Only God is capable of such holy extremities; hiding — revealing! Who is able to fathom such things? The holiness of God is surely perceived here to be higher than that of men — men who all too often have sat in judgement against the Living God. Let none doubt it, that even the "wicked" have been created by God "for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4): once against showing the absolute preminence of God's will!

An awareness of this will compel the heart of faith to say; "God performeth all things for me" (Psalms 57:2). Again, the Lord "chooses delusions" as well as blessings (Isa. 66:4), and even put things into kings' hearts in order that His purposes might be executed (Ezra 7:27).

God Can And Does Stir Men's Hearts

Because the hearts of men are in the hand of the Lord, He can stir them at will. He need not ask anyone or seek the consent of men. How often is this declared. He stirred up the heart of Pul, king of Assyria (I Chron. 5:26), and of Tilgath-pilneser (I Chron. 5:26). He even "raised up the spirits" of some to go and rebuild Jerusalem when the Babylonian captivity drew to a close (Ezra 1:5). He raised up the spirit of the Medes against Babylon (Jer. 51:11). He also stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel to do a work in the house of the Lord (Hag. 1:14). Because the ways of Solomon did not please the Lord, He stirred up the spirit of Hadad against Solomon (I Kgs. 11:14). Later, the Lord also stirred up Rezon against Solomon (I Kgs. 11:23). The God of our fathers also stirred up the Philistines against Jehoram (II Chron. 21:16). He even stirred up the spirit of that heathen king of Persia, Cyrus, to make a decree that a house be built for God in Jerusalem (II Chron. 36:22).

The Lord has even been known to stir up the enemies of His people to take them captive. It is said that He "sold Israel into the hands of Jaban" (Judges 4:2), and that He also "sold Israel into the hand of Chushanrishathaim" (Judges 3:8). Once He "strengthened Eglon, king of Moab, against Israel" (Judges 3:12). Another time, He "stirred up an adversary to Solomon" (I Kgs.

11:14, 23). The Lord once made David "understand in writing by His hand upon him, even all the works of this pattern (of the temple)" — I Chron. 28:19).

Our God can put a lying spirit in the mouth of prophets (II Chron. 18:19-22), a word into the mouth of Balaam the prophet (Num. 23:5), or words into the mouth of an ass (Num. 22:23-34). If men are disagreeable, He can make them agreeable; if they are agreeable, He can make them disagreeable. If His work needs to be done, He can stir men's hearts to do it. He is never frustrated, never unseated from His Throne in any sense, or in any degree! Men pose no problem or difficulty for Him!

What Use Can We Make Of This Knowledge?

The Lord God is Sovereign — that is the truth! He does cast the whole matter into the lap, so to speak; and yet the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord (Prov. 16:33). He does "take the wise in their own craftiness: and the counsel of the forward is carried headlong" (Job 5:13). He is the Judge, and He does set one up, and put down another (Psa. 75:7). But these things are not written only to provide us with some intellectual dainties designed to vaunt the knowledge of man. They are not given to us in order that factions and sects may be formed and fortified. These things are, rather, written to acquaint us with the Living God, and to enable us to cast our care upon Him, and to trust in Him.

Knowing these things, we have nothing to fear from man. Let us once and for all rid ourselves of the fear of man which bringeth a snare (Prov. 29:25). As it is written; "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as the grass" (Isa. 51:12).

The fear of man may take many forms. There is, firstly, the religious form; "These words spake his parents, because **they feared the Jews:** for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue" (Jno. 9:22). O, the multitudes that have fallen prey to that delusion! How many have failed to openly acknowledge what they know to be the truth, simply because they have feared the reaction of their peers and associates? But the perception of the true God will remove this fear; it will loose the shackles of such tyranny! Praise the Lord. There are also those that fear evil men in society. Students at school many times fail to side with the Lord because they fear their fellow student's reaction. Those in the business world fail to stand up for principles of right because they fear the retaliation of their co-workers. Alas, this truth of God's control over the hearts of men is so little known! Do you not know, dear reader, that "when a man's ways please the Lord He **maketh** even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7). If God frustrated the purposes of Herod to slay His only begotten Son; and if He thwarted Pharaoh's attempt to slay little children, included Moses; if He did not permit Sennacherib's purpose to flourish, and appointed the overthrow of Absalom — what have you to fear, child of the King? Is He not abundantly able to fortify you with the bulwarks and walls of salvation?

THE LAST ERROR

By Brother Richard Ehler

"... so the last error shall be worse than the first" (Matt 27:64).

These words were spoken by Christ's enemies, the religious leaders of the day. Christ had just been crucified at their own initiative and now they had come to Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first" (Matt 27:63, 64).

Here we get an interesting and edifying view of the gospel from the standpoint of the enemy!

The first error (from the enemy's viewpoint) was the supposed error of the people that Jesus was indeed the Messiah that he claimed to be. Although there was usually a division among the people because of him, there were still multitudes that believed in him. This number was large enough that the Pharisees often left him alone because they feared the people.

The second error is the so-called error that the Pharisees feared would spread among the people if and when the disciples would steal away the body and the people would believe that he was risen from the dead. This would only help to validate the claims of Jesus.

From the point of view of the Pharisees, it was bad enough for the people to believe that Jesus was the Son of God; it would be even worse for the people to believe that He was the Son of God **risen from the dead!** A Messiah in a mortal body was bad enough; but a Messiah in a risen body was more dangerous than ever to their cause!

What was worst from Satan's viewpoint is best from our viewpoint. If this was the worst possible thing for Satan, then it is the best possible thing for us. Jesus is not only the Son of God who died for us, he is the Son of God who rose from the dead. This gives us assurance that if he lives, we shall live also!

Our prayers can be wonderfully affected by this knowledge. If the Lord controls the hearts of men, many of our prayers may be uttered in a posture of confidence. While there are prayers which are matters of letting our requests be made known unto God (Phil. 4:6-7), there are other prayers which become extremely weighty when fortified with this spiritual understanding. For instance, our Savior directed His followers to "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that **He would send forth laborers into His harvest**" (Luke 10:2). He can stir men's hearts to preach the Gospel just as surely as He stirred the hearts of Zerubbabel and Joshua to build the house of the Lord. He can, too, cause men's hearts to respond to that Gospel as surely as He opened the door of faith to the Gentiles in that early period of the church. God has not changed; His power has not changed! And, may we not pray that the Word of God will "have free course, and be glorified" (II Thess. 3:1). The Lord can command light to shine into darkened hearts
(Please turn to page 16)

"SEEK YE THE LORD"

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near" —Isa. 55:6

Seeking is an adventuresome occupation, particularly when there is a true object to be sought. To seek for something that is non-existent is wearisome indeed, and we soon become heavy laden in such vanity. If I should search for a freshly cultured pearl in a swine's snout, I should soon despair, for that is not the place of their development. **True seeking postulates the existence of an object to be sought**, and we should be fools indeed to engage in an ardent probing for something that we were not persuaded was substantial. Experiencially we have been brought to the realization that, though in present obscurity, there actually exists something worthy of diligent search. Its location may be held in question, but it has been confirmed to us through sensual observation that the commodity for which we seek actually does exist; it but remains to locate it. Thus do earthlings engage in the most tedious searches and quests for gold, oil, silver, precious stones, and relics. Without, however, the persuasion of the presence of a given object, none would foolishly engage in a search for it. **Men are led to search for objects through means of their conviction and persuasion; precious twins of a most compelling nature.**

In no area is the subject of seeking as vital, however, as in that of man's acquaintance with Jehovah God. Here is a sphere that calls for the utmost diligence and perseverance. **God being Infinite and beyond all human comprehension** (to say nothing of His inaccessibility to the "mind of the flesh" (Col. 2:18), and the "natural man" (I Cor. 2:14), and the "will of the flesh" (John 1:13) **offers the greatest and most enthralling Subject to be sought!** Though His ways are "past finding out" (Rom. 11:33), yet there are offered to men, through grace, occasional glimpses of the glory of God, which are sufficient to draw him to heaven, while conforming him to the "Divine Nature" (II Pet. 1:4; II Cor. 3:18). Often does the question arise in our minds, "Why do not men seek the Lord with more diligence?" They seek for earthly treasures and fame with such incessant activity that they soon succumb physically because of the strain. Why? Simply because they are persuaded of these treasures, and they are not persuaded of God! They have not been convicted in their heart of His reality! Our Lord Himself asserts; "He that cometh to Him (God) must believe that **HE IS**, and that He is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6); i.e., **before any individual may approach unto the Living God, our Heavenly Father (seek Him), he must FIRST be persuaded of His reality, His existence in the Spirit.** There are two ways in which this verse may be taken; neither violate the intent of the passage, and both are in conformity with the general intent of Scripture, First, the stipulative or restrictive sense; and second, the lawful and legal viewpoint. By stipulation or restrictive, I mean that **no man will have an inclination to seek the Lord until he is FIRST persuaded of Him.** Only this kind of person will even engage in the seeking of which we speak. By lawful or legal, I mean that **God will not PERMIT any but the persuaded ones**

to seek Him; He is displeased with all activity that proceeds from an unconvicted heart! When, therefore, I speak of seeking the Lord, I am presupposing that **you** are persuaded of His existence; that you have come to realize that "**He is**", and are thus both **compelled** and **permitted** of God to draw nigh to Him in an earnest search for His rewarding Presence. If this is not the case with you, then you must first expend your energies in familiarizing yourself with God's revelation of Himself in Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles — the Bible. It is through the means of "hearing" the revelation of God that faith (the persuasion or conviction of spiritual reality) is induced by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 10:17; II Cor. 4:13; Gal. 5:22). **It is quite true that God has placed within man an intuitive knowledge of Himself**, as well as resounding testimony to His "eternal power and Godhead (Divinity)" in the shroud of nature; "For the invisible things of Him from (or in) the creation of the world are clearly seen (to the perceiving eye), being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse; because that, when they know God, they glorified Him not as God . . . and . . . did not like (enjoy) to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1:20-28). **The inward sense of God, however, is so obscured by the evil imagination which is dominate in him "from his youth" (Gen. 8:21), that there must needs be a spiritual preaching of the Word of God to awaken in man the desire to search God out.** Man, by nature, does not seek after the Lord, as it is written; "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:11; Psa. 14:1-3; 53:1-3). It follows, therefore, that **there must be a supernatural work wrought in man whereby he is constrained to seek the Lord with his whole heart.** I trust, by God's grace, that you have personally experienced such an awakening, and that you are "following on to know the Lord" (Hosea 6:3).

God, in His Infinite wisdom, has established the fundamental objective of man. Our entire life on earth is to be taken up with this Divinely appointed objective, and we are considered by the Lord to be outside of our allotted prerogatives when we inordinately pursue any other goal. The apostle Paul was the "vessel" (II Tim. 2:19-21) used of Christ to convey this truth to us: "God . . . hath made of one blood (i.e., from one common man, even Adam) all nations of men for to dwell upon the face of the earth, and hath DETERMINED the times (their allotted times, or life spans) BEFORE APPOINTED, and the BOUNDS of their habitation (i.e., their area of activity), that they should **SEEK THE LORD**, if haply (in the hope that) they might **FEEL AFTER HIM**, and **FIND HIM**, though He be not far from everyone of us (Acts 17:24-27). **MAN IS A CHILD OF APPOINTMENT!** His times are appointed (as in; "my times are in Thy hands" — Psa. 31:15), as well as the vocation, wherein his energies are to be spent. **It is our commission and allotment in this life to seek out the Lord in our particular sphere.** There is no area of your life or your ways in which the Lord is completely divorced from the case; "All things are of God" (I Cor. 11:12, II Cor. 5:18), and "of Him and through Him and to Him are all things" (Rom. 11:36). The reigning Sovereignty

of God is portrayed in the Psalms, chapters 104 and 105 (among many others). Read them for your edification, and see the greatness of your God! I ask you now the question uttered by Jesus Christ Himself; "WHOM SEEKEST THOU?" (John 20:15). Who or what is the object of your craving, your desire, your search of heart and soul?

PREPARATION NECESSARY

The preparation of hearts is necessary to a proper seeking of the Lord. It was said of good king Jehosaphat that he "prepared his heart to seek the Lord" (II Chron. 19:3). The same notable remark is made concerning "many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun (II Chron. 30:19), and of Ezra (Ezra 7:10). In Jehosaphat's heart preparation, he "took away the groves (places erected in honor of idols, and in which idolatry was nourished and upheld) out of the land" (II Chron. 19:3). **He removed the things that called hearts to follow other gods, and spurn the voice of Jehovah God; those things which were placed there out of obeisance to gods which were "no gods" (Gal. 4:8). Oh, and is this not a most proper way to seek the Lord. Let us "put away" from us those things which make for divided interests! Those things which draw us from the conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgement (John 16:7-11). In the words of the Holy Spirit, let us "mortify our members that are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate (unlawful) affection, evil concupiscence (base lusts), and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3:5). Let us all follow the example of King Jehosaphat by removing from our attention and affection, by grace, those things which call for fleshly and unlawful indulgence, and thus prepare our hearts to seek the Lord. The "double minded man", we are taught shall not receive anything from the Lord (James 1:6-8). You cannot search out the Lord with one foot planted firmly on the earth and its offerings! Earth must lose its attraction to you; its grove must be thrown down, and its miserable inadequacy seen before you will ever seek the Lord.**

As for Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, they "did eat the Passover". These men were not even "sanctified" or prepared through legal ordinances (under the Mosaic law), and thus were not actually qualified to partake of that feast (II Chron. 30:17-18) — see Ex. 12:43 also. Yet, king Hezekiah prayed for them thusly: "The good Lord pardon everyone that prepareth his heart to seek God" (II Chron. 30:18-19a). It is recorded that "the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah and healed the people" (verse 20). Now, there is a precious truth: **they sought to indulge in that which reminded and instructed them of the truth of God's mighty deliverance of Israel from the land of Egypt.** His people (Israel) were liberated from the tyranny of Egypt on that fateful night wherein the first-born of all of Egypt were slain by the minister of death. (Exodus 12-14), and these four tribes sought to familiarize themselves with that victory. **Ought not YOU, oh reader, to be found attending to those exercises of soul which focus your attention on the death of the Lord Jesus Christ in your behalf? It is there that the love of God is "perceived" (I John 3:16). It was Christ that "died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3). "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not**

imputing their trespasses unto them." (II Cor. 5:19). **Whatever puts you in remembrance of that, make the object of your undivided attention.** Whether it appears on the surface to be permissible or not, if you want to be instructed of Christ's death in your behalf, and of the triumph that is always in Him (II Cor. 2:14), then do as the four tribes, and seek the Lord in such ordinances. By so doing, your heart shall be stimulated and prepared to "seek the Lord." **Associate yourself with God's people, and with the ordinances given unto them to stir up their "pure minds by way of remembrance" (II Pet. 3:1) — such as, assembling to hear the Word of God; partaking of the Lord's Supper in true memory of Christ's death, prayer, etc.**

Ezra's heart was stirred toward God through means of the Scriptures (Ezra 7:10-12). He desired to learn and teach the Word of God, and so familiarized himself with it. Here is an excellent way to prepare YOUR heart to seek the Lord. The Scriptures are able to "make you wise unto salvation which is in Christ Jesus through faith" (II Tim. 3:15). These are the "record that God hath given of His Son" (I John 5:9-12), and will prepare your heart to desire the Lord. **The Holy Spirit empowering the Word (II Thess. 1:4-5) will impress upon your heart the truths of God's fierce indignation against sin, and of His "great love" (Eph. 2:1-4) as demonstrated in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for your sins.** These truths prepare the soil of the heart for grace, and constrain the recipient to reach out for the Lord. Do you, as those "more noble Bereans" "search the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11). If not, then is it any wonder to you that your heart is not "prepared to seek the Lord"? Prepare, reader; prepare to seek the Lord, whether you are in the household of faith, or yet a "stranger"! This is for you. **PREPARE!**

HOW THE LORD IS TO BE SOUGHT

It is not my purpose to here set forth a precise formula that be employed in the seeking of my God. There are no such formulas in the Kingdom of God! We deal here with **PRINCIPLES** and with **MOTIVATION**; with the **ATTITUDES OF THE HEART** and mind. Our Lord is to be sought "EARLY", as it is written; "EARLY will I seek Thee" (Psa. 63:1). "NOW" is the time to "seek the Lord" — "EARLY"! "Behold NOW is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). You must not postpone seeking the Lord, for such procrastination will incur such indignation from the Lord that He will refuse you when you do seek Him; "They (those that have set at nought His counsel and reproof — Prov. 1:25) shall seek me early, **BUT THEY SHALL NOT FIND ME**" (Prov. 1:28); "Ye shall seek Me, and NOT find Me" (John 7:34); "Ye shall seek Me, and shall **DIE IN YOUR SINS**" (John 8:21). **The Lord urges upon you to seek Him; to strive to acquaint yourself with the Almighty, and thus be at peace (Job 22:21).** This is not limited to those who know Him, and have tasted of His grace: it is for all men. **AT NO POINT DO WE CEASE TO SEEK AFTER THE LORD!** We are to continue our search for the Lord, seeking a larger and more clear perception of Him and His ways. "Ought not a people to seek after their God?" (Isa. 8:19). Is this "EARLY" in your life? — in your seeking?

Not early in calamity, but "EARLY" — as soon as you are so inclined. Oh, quench not the Spirit here. **Upon His leading — as He places in your heart the conviction of a need to seek — seek Him "EARLY" — then!** Is He not speaking to your heart now?

He is to be sought with your "whole heart"; "Blessed are they that seek . . . Him with the whole heart" (Psa. 119:2). **There can be no division in your heart; no partitions erected which enable you to entertain an affection for the "things that are in the world" (I John 2:15-17) while at the same time attempting to seek the Lord.** The whole heart — the whole being — must be engaged in the search! God desires to "sanctify you wholly, body, soul, and spirit" (I Thess. 5:23), and He must be sought as such an One; with the "whole heart". Involved in this is the matter of the **priority of God**; "Seek ye **FIRST** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness . . ." (Matt. 6:33). **With our whole being we are to desire and crave the complete dominion of the Lord over our lives;** a conscious dominion which finds us joyfully walking in the "will of the Lord." Here is that blessed submissiveness, called in Scripture "meekness"; it is that quality of grace which enables one to see the vanity of earth, and seek the Lord with every fibre of his being. The meek are admonished; "See ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth" (Zeph. 2:3); those who are submissive who are willing to receive that "engrafted word" (James 1:21), having been liberated from rebelliousness. Have you so sought the Lord? **Is your whole being engaged in the search?** Have you poured out your heart, seeking the Lord, as did Daniel, in prayer (Dan. 9:3). May He give you grace to so seek; **EARLY and WHOLLY!**

THE REWARDING WORK OF SEEKING

THERE IS NO POINT IN THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE WHERE WE CEASE TO SEEK THE LORD, hence there is no point where we cease to realize the benefits of such a holy activity. Our Lord is described as He that is "the **REWARDER** of them that diligently **SEEK HIM**" (Heb. 11:6); i.e., **those that seek the Lord will be rewarded with the Lord Himself;** He will give **Himself** to them, and dwell and walk in them (II Cor. 6:16). Is there anything more to be desired than this; the "one thing" of which David spoke; to "dwell in the house of the Lord forever, to behold His beauty, and inquire in His temple" (Psa. 27:4).

Our Lord does not forsake those that seek Him; "for Thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them, that seek Thee" (Psa. 9:10); blessed promise! **As long as you continue to seek, therefore, you shall not be forsaken.** That is an immutable promise of the Lord. Lay hold of it in faith! It is for this reason that it is said; "your heart shall live that seek the Lord" (Psa. 69:32). Our God is Life Himself, and **whom He does not forsake is alive — spiritually alive and receptive to Him!** Who are the seekers? Those who are alive, unforsaken by the Lord. Only those are dead who are forsaken of the Lord; over whom the Lord does not place His hand of blessing and grace! The Lord loves those who seek Him as He "whom their soul loveth" (Song of Sol. 3:2), and thus He has promised not to leave or forsake them, but to cause them to live through virtue of their union with Himself (Amos 5:4).

So committed is the Lord to the promise of honoring those who seek Him that He has invested all

power in heaven and earth in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18), and having "sent" Him into the world, slew Him in His wrath, paying the debt of your sin, and giving a **spiritually tangible** proof of His love toward you. This is to urge you to seek Him, and instruct you that He has not urged you in vain; "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain" (Isa. 45:19). No! "Seek and ye shall find . . . everyone that seeketh findeth" (Matt. 7:7; Jer. 29:13). The promise is; "**If thou seek Him, HE WILL BE FOUND OF THEE**" (I Chron. 28:9; II Chron. 15:2). Here, in seeking, then, is solid ground for hope! Such promises are rarely proffered to mortals; buy them up by seeking the Lord Jesus Christ, which was crucified, as did the women of old (Matt. 28:5; Mark 16:6), and the Father who hath sent Him!

In closing, I would say that to those of you that are seeking the Lord; "**LET ALL THOSE THAT SEEK THEE REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN THEE**" (Psa. 70:4). **Here, in the very act of seeking, may be found joy, for here is blessed promise.** And now, whether "in the Lord" or yet without the new birth, "**SEEK YE THE LORD**", and He shall — **HE SHALL** — be found of thee!

"**And YE SHALL SEEK ME, AND FIND ME, WHEN YE SEARCH FOR ME WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART**" — Jer. 29:13.

The Timeliness of Watchfulness

(From page 3)

authorities in this world — yet they come to us in the name of the Lord. We even have the mind-readers, the fortune-tellers, and the monthly-prognosticators.

What Shall We Say To These Things?

We ought not to suppose, therefore, that we are automatically safe! Our safety is in the Lord, not in our imagination. Let us not take for granted that we are safe from delusion, or from being swept away in a tide of lukewarmness. If Ephesus could lose their first love, so can you (Rev. 2:4). If Demas could forsake the work of the Lord having loved more this present world (I Tim. 4:10), what guarantee to you have that you will not do the same? Let us not presume upon the Lord but serve Him fervently, zealously: with the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength!

Secondly, let us not let our guard down or become casual in our relationship to the Lord. Let us put on the "whole armor of God" that having done all, we may be able to stand" (Eph. 6:10ff). Let us "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12), running "the race that is set before us with patience" (Heb. 12:1-2). **This is not the time for feeble knees and weak hands.** Strengthen them; make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way (Heb. 12:13). Do not allow yourself to be drawn into the spirit of this age. Fortify your mind by resolute purpose; "Present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2). Remember that there was a body of people that escaped from Egypt, but did not come into the promised land. As it is written; "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew

this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5). **Do not fear to remember that!** True, it may run counter to your theology, **but remember it?** It may contradict the teachings of your church, **but remember it!** For your own preservation, **remember it!** Because the days are evil, **remember it!** Because of the potential wickedness within your own being, **remember it!** Because your adversary walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, **remember it!** Because the time is short, **remember it!**

Some Things To Consider

Let us not be negligent to remember that Satan is real! He is not a fable, but a very real personality that is seeking whom he may devour. He has thoughts, ambitions, desires, imaginations, and lusts in his arsenal. He can provoke one to question the commandments of the Lord, and to suppose that obedience is a disadvantage instead of a blessing. He can cause one to doubt his acceptance in Christ and to suppose that playing with the world will not bring forth fruit unto death. Let us not underestimate his influence or his power! Remember that the flesh and its inclinations are real. **You do possess a dual nature**, and in you, that is in your flesh, dwelleth no good thing (Romans 7:24-25). You live with very positive handicaps — but they are not insurmountable ones. He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world (I Jno. 4:4). But if you ignore this fact, you will be robbed of the power of it. Therefore, be alert, sensitive.

Some Matters Of Concern

There are some things which form great weights, from time to time, upon my own soul. These things, by the grace of God, are bearable, and they can form a means whereby grace can be appropriated in greater and increased measures. Nevertheless, I feel it is in order to share some of them with our readers — perhaps they will identify, so to speak, with them. These are met to become a basis for realizing the necessity of diligence in the Kingdom of God. They have aided me in making some degree of progress above the menace of mediocrity, and have assisted me in realizing the glorious sufficiency and absolute uniqueness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They are by no means matters which I alone have apprehended. The company of the illuminated is very great, and we bid you to join the number if you are not already so identified.

I fear the **grip of mere traditionalism**. The presence of spiritual life and vitality is necessary to growth, necessary to acceptable worship; necessary to the full assurance of confidence. The fact that something blesses once is by no means a guarantee that it will automatically bless again. There must be that appropriation of faith; that indulgence of the heart in the realm of grace; the

tasting of the honey by the spirit of man!

I draw back from **empty formality**. There is no power in **mere form**; the power comes from the content. It is not that we disdain form — God forbid! But form is meant to be a container for the truth, and where there is no truth, there is no purpose for form! I do not know why this tendency exists in mankind, but it appears evident that it does; I speak of that proclivity toward vain repetition. It is evidenced in such things as singing only a few songs over and over; or in reading only from certain passages of the Scripture. **Empty formality** rears its ugly head in an attempt to constrict the minds and hearts of believers, binding them, as it were, to a state of lifelessness. How we must beware of these things and fortify ourselves against the presence of lifeless formality by drinking from living wells. I personally want no part of reviving a movement that died. Some speak of restoring, or of reforming; but if it did not work once, it will not work again! If it died once, it will die again. Spiritual vitality has always existed where men have been effectually joined to the Lord (I Cor. 6:17). Religion — pure religion — has always waned where this life-connection has been severed. So away with movements, and efforts to resurrect what men thought were good and notable procedures.

The Summons Of Scripture

The people of God are to "take heed" — i.e., to take the kingdom by violence; to extend effort — energetic effort — in the appropriation of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17). Be alert, sensitive, militant, and faithful as you look for the coming of the Lord. **Take heed** not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land (Ex. 34:12); **take heed** that your heart be not deceived (Duet. 11:16); **take heed** that you love the Lord your God (Duet. 4:9); **take heed** not to forget the Lord (Josh. 23:11); **take heed** unto your ways that you sin not with your tongue (Psa. 39:1); **take heed** unto your spirit (Mal. 2:15); **take heed** what you hear (Mark 4:24); let him that thinketh he standeth **take heed** lest he fall (Rom. 11:21; I Cor. 10:12); **take heed** that no root of bitterness arise in your heart, or that an evil heart of unbelief cause you to depart from the living God (Heb. 3:12).

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(II Cor. 4:6ff). There is no restraint with the Lord — none at all! He opened Lydia's heart that she might attend unto the Word spoken (Acts 16:14), and opened the inner eyes of Saul of Tarsus while blinding his outward eyes (Acts 9:1-6). We pray to a God that turns hearts as well as rivers; a God that can "give" repentance and remission of sins (Acts 5:31).

We may also trust the Lord to work wonderfully in our own hearts. We can come to our heavenly Father with great expectation. Our deficiencies are swallowed up of His all sufficiency. We may pray; "Rejoice the soul of thy servant" (Psa. 86:4), or "Quicken me, O Lord, for Thy Name's sake" (Psa. 143:11). If we have enemies, we may pray confidently; "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail" (Psa. 9:19). Open eyes, perceiving hearts, tender spirits, spiritual understanding — these are matters concerning which we may confidently pray to a ruling, reigning God. How about you reader — how do you see these things?