

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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

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"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

WHAT ABOUT PURGATORY?

Several centuries ago, Martin Luther took up a contention with the Roman Church touching the subject of indulgences and the validity of the concept of Purgatory. While that contention has somewhat eased in its external manifestation, it is still a very present reality. The Roman church has certainly not dropped its contemptible doctrine of Purgatory, but very zealously maintains it. Recently, in a copy of LIGUORIAN, a "Redemptorist Parish Service Publication" of Catholicism, one L. G. Miller took up a defence of Purgatory. I found this, quite frankly, somewhat of a surprise, but was interested in his approach to the whole subject. It revealed a very basic and fundamental ignorance concerning the redemption that is in Christ Jesus "with eternal glory".

A Pseudo Defense of Purgatory

Mr. Miller concedes that the somewhat primeval concept of a "pitiful scene of souls in purgatorial fires, some deeply immersed, some on the point of ascending above the flames to the blessed relief of heaven" was in the "nature of pious speculation" albeit, we question the "piousness" of such a "speculation". It would more fittingly be termed a "vain imagination" which militates against the knowledge of God (II Cor. 10:5). However, he calls "Purgatory" a "central truth", and declares that there are "several elements" which "make it eminently reasonable". With weighty words he begins to weave a web of delusion which has enveloped many a heart and soul.

"Purgatory is built upon the reality of human responsibility," Mr. Miller writes. "Everyone of us must make a choice between right and wrong, between good and evil. We are not often faced with accountability for our actions in this life, but we will be held accountable for them in the life to come. There, as St. Paul noted, everyone will be judged according to his deeds." That, in Mr. Miller's mind, is the first "eminently reasonable" explanation validating Purgatory; namely, that we are not thoroughly held accountable for our transgressions in this life, and that human responsibility demands an accounting for them. Of course, to make Purgatory an integral part of that accountability is the very point that we question. But, permit me to further unveil some of Mr. Miller's remarks. "It is a matter of common sense, also, that some sins are more serious than others. An unkind word spoken in a moment of impatience is not the kind of act that merits the punishment of hell, as compared with, for instance, an act of deliberate, cold-blooded murder. Yet, the small sins we commit must, in their way, be atoned as well as the larger ones. It is Christ who saves us, but He asks us to share in a small way; in Paul's daring phrase, we can "fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. . . ." But what if we fall short in this? Since nothing in any way defiled can enter heaven, it stands to reason that there must be some kind of process whereby the soul is purified of its selfishness and

(Please turn to page 2)

In This Issue . . .

The Brokenhearted - page 3

The Joyful Sound - by Richard Ebler - page 6

What About The Living Bible? - page 7

Bad Nomenclature - page 8

Health and Healing - page 14

The Word of Truth

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What About Purgatory?

(From page 1)

its accumulated store of bitterness and apathy in serving and loving God. For want of a better name, let us call this process "purgatory."

Plunging into the pool of human wisdom and analysis, Mr. Miller further comments on the reasonableness of Purgatory. He states that prayer is a way by which we grow more mature, whereby we "gradually open up the channel of communication to the hidden God." However, he states, "most of us, alas, remain in varying degrees blind and deaf. We miss so many opportunities to break through our blindness and deafness, and, as a result, when we come to die, we can see our way into the next world only dimly; we stutter and stumble when we try to speak. How is our blindness and our deafness to be cured? Perhaps by the painful process comparable to the kind of surgery we would have to have to cure physical blindness and deafness in this life. We do not have any official descriptions of what this process will be like, but as good a name as any for it is purgatory."

The above words were taken from THE LIGUORIAN, November, 1975, Vol. 63, No. 11, an official representation of the Roman Catholic Church, being published monthly by "The Redemptive Fathers."

An Answer To This Logic

Firstly, it ought to be said that this particular defense of Purgatory is both scholarly and in strict comportment with the wisdom and logic of this world. But, then, that is the strongest point against it. The truth of God cannot be approached with the wisdom of this world, for God hath counted "foolish" the wisdom of this world, having thoroughly repudiated it (I Cor. 1:20). We are not to attempt to communicate eternal verities in words which "man's wisdom teacheth" (I Cor. 2:13). "Eminently reasonable" is certainly not a sufficient reason to embrace any dogma, for reason is not pre-eminent! **Revelation is always superior to reason, and where there is a conflict between the two, revelation must be received without any hesitation.**

The misapprehension of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ did not die for some sins, or for large sins, or for small sins. He died for ALL sin! "Christ died for our sins" (I Cor. 15:3); "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Gal. 3:13); "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6); "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7); "Having made peace through the blood of His cross . . ." (Col. 1:20); "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight" (Col. 1:21-22); "Who . . . when He had BY HIMSELF purged our sins . . ." (Heb. 1:3); ". . . but now ONCE in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9:26); "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ ONCE for ALL" (Heb. 10:10); "Now where remission of these is, there is NO MORE OFFERING FOR SIN" (Heb. 10:18); "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from ALL SIN" (I Jno. 1:7); "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. . . ." (Rev. 1:5).

Now it is clear that Christ died for sin ONCE; that He will die no more, and that no other offering is acceptable for the remission of sins. **No place in all of Holy Writ is there the slightest hint that God ever did ask men to suffer in order to pay for their sins; in order to placate His wrath.** He did institute animal sacrifices—lambs, rams, bullocks, even turtle doves! But these did not remit sins (Heb. 10:4); they did not satisfy the wrath of God or, indeed, cleanse the conscience of men! One single sacrifice has accomplished what millenniums of mortal effort failed to accomplish! Christ Jesus put away sin from the face of God; from the heart of God; He satisfied the wrath and anger of God against sin. **Now forgiveness is not a matter of suffering, but a matter of believing. Persuasion, not payment is the issue!** No amount of agony can make up for a deficiency in faith! either in this world or the one to come. It is faith in the blood, not the placation of a half-satisfied God that saves. We are either "complete" in Jesus (Col. 2:10), or we are not. Either our acceptance of His sacrifice rids us of the guilt and contamination of sin or it does not. Either we are new creatures (II Cor. 5:17), accepted (Eph. 1:7), and cleansed (I Jno. 1:7-9), or we are not! There can be no confusion at this point; no fancy rhetoric or appeals to the faulty logic of men. Christ's suffering was complete; it was thorough! It is said of our heavenly Father that "He shall see the travail of His (Christ's) soul, and be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11). The doctrine of Purgatory clearly denies this; it says that God was NOT satisfied with Christ's sufferings, that He also requires suffering from you for satisfaction. The Lord rebukes strongly those who hold such damnable heresies! **The wresting of the Scripture** is also evident in Mr. Miller's illusion to Colossians 1:24. Here is how the text

(Please turn to page 11)

THE BROKENHEARTED

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed Me to . . . heal the brokenhearted. . . ."

—Luke 4:18

It was truly a revelatory Sabbath day when Jesus Christ returned from that well known wilderness temptation "in the power of the Spirit" (Lk. 4:14). When He first returned He "taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all," as He assumed, as it were, the reins of the Kingdom. From town to town He went, teaching and preaching, finally arriving in Nazareth, "where He had been brought up" (Lk. 4:16). Unlike many of His professed followers, it was His "custom" to meet in the house of the Lord at the appointed time, and thus "He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day." There, amidst the chosen people of God, and freshly anointed with the Holy Ghost and power (Acts 10:38) He did the very thing that one of His Apostles admonished young Timothy to do, in that He gave "attendance to reading" the Scriptures (I Tim. 4:13). In honor of the word of His Father, He "stood up for to read," thus showing the pre-eminence of the Word of God, which God has "magnified above all His Name" (Psa. 138:2). "There was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias," as though by Divine providence, and in order to the opening up of His glorious ministry among the sons of men. He opened the book, and deliberately "sought acceptable words" (Eccl. 12:10) for the occasion—and they were found, as it is recorded; "He FOUND the place where it is written" (Lk. 4:17). Here were words not merely noted for their beauty—although they were beautiful; they were words not only characterized by inspiration—although they were inspired; they were words not only appropriate for the occasion—although they were most certainly that; but these were words of Truth; words that particularly applied to the ministry of the Son of God! They provided a vehicle, as it were, for the transmittal of the purpose of Christ's presence to the minds of the hungry and the thirsty! They served to dispel any false notions that might have been entertained by some in regards to the reign of the Messiah. Here was a container into which the expression of Christ's ministry might be poured, and from which longing hearts could satisfactorily drink. With a voice that surely emanated with Divine energy and life He read; "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to **heal the broken hearted**, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Here was the message of the King of Israel; a message that scribes and pharisees had no doubt failed to associate with a reigning Monarch. The Lord of lords and King of kings is declared to be beneficent, considerate, compassionate—**drawn toward the afflicted**. Until this time, rulers and rich men had oppressed the poor and the afflicted—but here is the message of one that would look upon them not merely

with pity and concern, but that would "visit them in their affliction." Anyone that has ever mourned over sin, or thirsted for righteousness and for God "as in a dry and a thirsty land where no water is" (Psa. 63:1; 143:6) at once becomes aware of what good news this is; in fact, this is "Gospel!"

Here was a local boy, if you please—one that had been raised in Nazareth, whose custom it was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and Who was known, apparently, for the reading of the Scriptures. Why did He select this passage? What was unique about it? Deliberately the Lord "closes the book" and hands it back "again to the minister." He then sits down—a posture in Scripture associated with instruction and teaching (Mt. 26:20; Lk. 5:3; Jno. 8:2). This instructs us in the true character of Christ's teaching—it **was the teaching of a Reigning Monarch that sits upon a throne**. Wherever the Lord sat to teach became a throne from which immutable instruction flowed. "The eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon Him," the Scriptures declare. Even as a lad Jesus had confounded the doctors of the temple with His understanding and answers (Lk. 2:46-47); what would He do now that He was "of age"? Would He probe into some secret meaning of the text? Would He declare the need of such a ministry as that which Isaiah proclaimed? Would He tell of one to come that would fit this warming description? Perhaps He might even delineate the "poor," the "brokenhearted," the "captives," and the "blind" and "bruised," attaching some spiritual significance to them. But as He began to open His mouth, we find that His exposition is absolutely unique—as unique as His own Person. No other individual could say of this text what He said! "**This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears!**" That is, beginning this day the poor shall no longer be neglected; the brokenhearted shall no more seek in vain for balm; the captives shall no longer live with a diminished hope; the blind shall grope no more in darkness; the bruised shall not be without "molifying ointment!" This is the unique ministry of the Son of God, Savior, Messiah, King of glory! **He gives something to those which have nothing**—"the gospel to the poor." He brings medicine for the heart—"heal the brokenhearted." He opens the prison doors, releasing its captives, "deliverance to the captives." He sheds light in dark places so that those without sight may behold the glory of God—"recovering of sight to the blind." He strengthens and causes to stand up, those that have been battered down by sin and life—"set at liberty them that are bruised." What a glorious Savior, indeed, is here proclaimed. To the destitute and afflicted a Champion arises that takes their responsibility upon Himself. Praise the Lord for Him!

"To Heal The Brokenhearted"

Particularly I want to fasten your attention upon the ministry of our Lord and Savior to the "brokenhearted." Here we have a congregation of people represented that are normally despised by men. There is nothing beautiful about a broken heart—about a heart that has been crushed

beneath the weight of conviction; a heart upon which the "hammer" of the word has fallen (Jer. 23:29). The "brokenhearted" are those that have seen themselves in the all-illuminating light of the Lord God of heaven and earth, and, like Saul of Tarsus, they have been smitten to the ground. They see their lives as something that has been "consumed" and eaten by locusts (Joel 2:25), and as "vanity" (Eccl. 2:11). They can find no good in themselves, but confess that "in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). They have found that the wages of life which they have earned—however great they be—have only been put into a "bag with holes" (Hag. 1:6). The wells of confidence have dried up within them, and their pride like the walls of Jericho have fallen under the mighty shout of the Law! Their comeliness is turned into corruption (Dan. 10:8), and like the lover of the Song of Solomon, they cry "I am black" (S. of Sol. 1:6). How heavy they are; they have nothing to offer their Maker but filthy rags—and they sense such a need to offer Him something! They search in vain to find some good thing; some benefit that they have rendered to the Lord; some token of good within their beings. But it is like searching for the joy of harvest after the smitting of the mildew! Spiritual blight has taken hold of the heart, and beneath the load of self-awareness the heart rends and breaks, spilling confidence and assurance into the dust of earth. And what of such people? Is there hope for them? Can they recover themselves? Is there a message that can mend the heart, restore confidence, grant hope? Praise God: there is! There is! That heart can be healed—that is why Jesus Christ came! There is no healing quite like that of a broken heart! Limbs may be restored, eyes may be opened, withered hands may be made whole: but all of this is of little comfort if the heart is not mended. Is it not written; A broken spirit drieth the bones" (Prov. 17:22).

"The Principle of Brokenness Seen In The Law"

The Lord God has taught His people concerning the principle of brokenness—it is seen in the law of the sin offering. "But the earthen vessel in which it is sodden SHALL BE BROKEN. . . ." (Lev. 6:25-28). The "burnt offering" was to be "killed before the Lord." The "priest that offereth it shall eat it," thereby identifying himself with **the need** for cleansing and reconciliation. After it was slain, the sacrifice was to be washed and salted, the fat and the inwards being burned upon the altar. The rest of the carcass belonged to the officating priest, and that is the portion that was to be eaten. It could only, however, be eaten within the precincts of the tabernacle itself, and not even if the priest was under ceremonial defilement. The flesh, on all occasions, was sodden (or boiled). If an earthen vessel was used for the preparation of the meat, it was to be BROKEN. **Something holy within an earthen vessel called for the breaking of that vessel!** This indicates that heaven and earth cannot ultimately mix. It means that the inferior nature must be broken. It means that **when something holy comes, it brings a curse to that which is not holy!** But this was not the only reason for breaking a vessel.

Under the law of defilement, a "vessel of

earth" that had been "touched" by him which "hath an issue" SHALL BE BROKEN" (Lev. 15:1-12). Here the Lord teaches us that **defilement calls for brokenness**; that defilement renders unworthy of remaining unbruised, unbroken, unharmed!

What we have established at this point is this: that we can expect brokenness to result from defilement and from that which is holy contacting that which is not holy.

God Breaks Men

It seems necessary to establish this truth—that God breaks men, bringing them to a state where their utter helplessness is seen, and seen clearly! The Lord God brings men to a point where they see that they simply do not have what it takes! Brokenness, in this respect, speaks of an awareness of the insufficiency of self; of the destruction of pride, that enemy of the soul; and of the shaking and toppling of that monster of self-confidence! The broken heart, the bruised spirit, the battered soul—these come from God in the ultimate sense! They speak of the time when men confront circumstances, the Living God, truth, Christ, the Holy Spirit, or the people of God, and are battered down, broken—caused to sense that they are nothing, have nothing, can do nothing, see nothing, and hear nothing. It is not a pleasant state—this one of spiritual destitution—but it is necessary if one is to be ministered to by the Lord Jesus Christ. He did come to "heal the brokenhearted!" This is not a state which we covet, to be sure, and yet it is one that has the promise of God upon it. It was the state to which David was reduced when Nathan the prophet confronted him with his sin against Bethsheba and Uriah the Hittite (II Sam. 12:1ff). It is how Saul of Tarsus felt on the road to Damascus when he was confronted with the very One Whom he was persecuting (Acts 9:1ff). There his life of futility flashed before him, as in an instant, and he saw clearly that he had been aligned against the Lord of lords and King of kings! What a day of illumination that was—what a time of brokenness. "What wilt thou have me to do"—who knows what agony of heart were in those words as Saul realized under the mighty hand of God that he had been fighting the One that came to save him! This must also have been the sort of feeling that Thomas experienced in the upper room when he was faced with the Christ of Whom he so coldly spoke of to the disciples (Jno. 20:26ff).

Men of God through the centuries have written of God's breaking power: "I was at ease, but **He hath broken me asunder**: He hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces . . ." (Job. 16:12); "**Thou hast sore broken us** in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death" (Psa. 44:19); "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that **the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice**" (Psa. 51:8); ". . . **He hath destroyed and broken her bars**. . ." (Lam. 2:9); "My flesh and my skin hath He made old; **He hath broken my bones**" (Lam. 3:4); **He hath also broken my teeth** with gravel stones . . ." (Lam. 3:16). Now, some may object, saying that they do not appreciate such language, such morbid thoughts of God breaking men! But men are wild by nature, and they need to be tamed like that wild man in the land of the Gergesenes! Their

spirits are haughty, lifted up, and proud. They need to be abased in order that the Lord's Christ may minister to them. This happens when we are confronted with our sin; when we are brought face to face with our need of a Savior; when our wayward path is brought squarely before our eyes. Then there is a wrung out heart, tear filled eyes, and a wearied spirit. Now, what of this condition—how does God view it? Must we permit the devil to beat us over the head with this lamentable condition? Such a state is, admittedly, despised of men. There is certainly nothing lovely about it, nothing pleasant in it. Here is where the glorious Gospel is announced; where the matter of healing the brokenhearted is brought to our ears and hearts.

The Gospel To The Brokenhearted

While men may shun the brokenhearted, the Scriptures truthfully declare; "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Psa. 34:18). Can you believe that? This condition of brokenheartedness calls for Him as none other. We are left destitute, bereft of personal strength and vitality. In such a condition as that, what sweeter words than these, that "the Lord is nigh unto such as be of a broken heart!" Ah, it is as the balm of Gilead! At the time when we feel the furthest from God, He is actually the nearest! It is when we feel the most distant that He is within the grasp of our faith! When hearts are brought low and we feel so impure, so defiled, so sinful, that surely the Lord will have nothing to do with us—it is then that He is NEAR! "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted"; "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3-4). Now, we have spoken of being broken because of sin—but there is also a brokenness that comes from beholding the iniquity and transgression of others. Jesus' heart was broken when He wept over Jerusalem, (Matt. 23:37ff). Jeremiah's heart was "broken because of the prophets" (Jer. 23:9-19). Holy men of God have spent tear-filled nights because of the weight of care that has enveloped their soul by an awareness of prevailing iniquity about them. The apostle Paul spoke of the "care" which came upon him "daily"—even the "care of all the churches" (II Cor. 11:28). Our Lord's ministry to the brokenhearted extends to such as this also. Those that "sigh and that cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst" of God's professed people (Ezek. 9:4), in view of this truth, have an especially bright prospect for intimate fellowship with the Lord. Thus we see that **that which causes many to draw back from true spirituality is actually the means of appropriating that precious fellowship of the Lord for which the renewed heart longs.** Those broken hearts have promise of healing from the Lord of glory! There is a reward for contriteness over personal sin, or in brokenness over an awareness of the transgressions about us. Reader, what of your state? Have you been smitten with a sense of your own guilt? There is healing for even your heart! Are you heavy because of the imperfections of your children? your spouse? your church? There is healing for that brokenheartedness! Our Lord Jesus came to heal the broken-

hearted. Blessed truth, especially when you are included in that sacred number!

Sacrificing A Broken Heart To The Lord

The Lord calls upon men to offer sacrifices to Him. There are sacrifices of praise (Heb. 13:15; Jer. 17:26), and the "living sacrifice" of our bodies (Rom. 12:1-2). People of God are to be involved in the offering up of "spiritual sacrifices" to the Living God (I Pet. 2:5). There is the administration of grace and mercy to the needy, which constitutes a sacrifice to our God (Heb. 13:16). There is also the "sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Amos 4:5) which rises from the hearts of those that have "heard the joyful sound." But there is another sacrifice, perhaps not as pleasant at times, but which is of great worth to our Heavenly Father; it is the sacrifice of a broken spirit; "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; and broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Psa. 51:17). There are times when this text is as precious a morsel as this heart of mine can receive; when it absolutely transcends all other messages. O, to see this truth of offering to God your broken spirit, your bruised heart, your grieving spirit! Is that not a precious morsel from heaven, dear reader? Can you not see the high worth of the bitter herbs of contriteness and brokenness? Men may despise a broken heart, God does not! It represents the flesh being mortified, crucified, presented as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. No good is seen in one's person; no pride is to be found there; no defense can be made of self; no justification can be searched out for what has been done; no glory can be mustered up; no strength can be confessed! This is the flesh brought to a knowledgeable end of its pseudo-strength. **PRESENT THAT SACRIFICE TO GOD! PRESENT IT TO HIM! OFFER IT TO HIM!** Do not withhold it. Do not carry it about in your bosom until it festers and rots in despair and degradation! This is God's sacrifice! Do not rob Him of it! Lay your broken heart before Him, present it to Him! You may despise it; your friends may despise it; those about you may despise it—but God will NOT despise it. It is written—immortalized in Sacred Writ—"A broken and a contrite heart, O God, **Thou wilt not despise!**" Catch that with your faith; drink it into your soul: "**HE WILL NOT!**" "**HE WILL NOT!**" Doubt not the word of the Lord—"HE WILL NOT!" If ever there was a message of precious import to those brought to Jesus by the schoolmaster of the Law (Gal. 3:24), it is this! If ever there was a balm in Gilead for those that find great sorrow of heart because of abounding iniquity, it is this message. Truly, Jesus Christ came to "heal the brokenhearted!"

Those Coming To Jesus May Expect To Be Broken

This is something that happens to those whose paths are providentially crossed with the King of glory; they are broken—either in this life, or in the one to come. As it is written; "And whosoever shall fall upon his Stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matt. 21:44; Luke 20:18). "**SHALL BE BROKEN**"—like the earthen vessel mentioned in the beginning of this short treatise. The Holy Son of God coming in contact with these earthly

(Please turn to page 6)

THE JOYFUL SOUND

By Bro. Richard Ebler

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. . . ." (Psa. 89:15).

In the religious practices of the ancient Israelites there were several occasions when a joyful sound was heard. This text could be an allusion to any one of them.

The first joyful sound that comes to mind is the blowing of the two silver trumpets which announced the calling of a holy convocation. "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Num. 10:1-3).

This was doubtless a joyful sound to those devout Jews of old who enjoyed a holy assembly in order to hear the words of God from the lips of Moses.

A second joyful sound that was familiar to the Hebrew people was the sounding of the trumpet of the jubile. "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his family" (Lev. 25:9, 10).

In this year of jubile there was a reversion of all landed property (Lev. 25:10-34; Lev. 27:16-24) wherein all that had been sold through poverty and not yet redeemed would revert to the original owner. Likewise all persons who were obliged to sell themselves into servitude through poverty were to go free in the year of jubile. One can see why it was called the "year of liberty" (Ezekiel 46:17).

A third joyful sound familiar to God's people of old was the tinkling of the bells and pomegranates which the high priest wore at the lower hem of his robe. This was heard by the people when the priest went in to the tabernacle to minister as their intercessor. "And beneath upon the hem of it thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof: and bells of gold between them round about: A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not" (Ex. 28:33-35). Certainly this was a joyful sound to the people when they heard thus that their intercessor was busy in their behalf.

All of these joyful sounds were good in their day, but the greatest joyful sound to us in our own time is the joyful sound of the gospel, the glad tidings, i.e., the good news that Jesus Christ has willingly laid down his life on the cross for our sins. We who have had our spiritual eyes

(Please turn to page 13)

The Brokenhearted

(From page 5)

vessels demands a breaking—it is the Law! The treasure of God contained in these earthly vessels necessitates breaking—it cannot be avoided, it is the Law! Those that embrace the Savior will never again feel sufficient of themselves—never again! Their strength will run from them as from a leaky vessel. They will be made to realize their absolute dependency upon the Lord, and their complete and total fall through Adam. Strength will become weakness, and weakness will become strength. Beholding their face properly, they will not be able to go away and straightway forget what manner of men they are. They will see themselves as undeserving, unworthy, and contemptible. Yet, the Lord will make them to be worthy, give them a new heart, and thoroughly retrieve them from the fall! That is healing the brokenhearted.

The Lord Jesus is the Stone which will bring the breaking of every man. You may be broken by falling upon the Stone; i.e. abandoning yourself to Him; trusting implicitly in His Grace and mercy. You may also refuse to do this, and choose to trust in self. If such is the case, then that Stone will grind you into dust, rushing over you in drowning destruction until you are forever cast from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power. I cannot help but recall that stone of which Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of old. It was hewn out of a mountain without hands. As it began to roll it became larger, stronger, more lethal. Finally it struck the combined kingdoms of men and ground them into powder, itself ultimately becoming a mountain that filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:44ff). Like that Stone, our Lord owes neither His origin nor His effectiveness to man . . . "without hands." No man contributes to His ministry, His power, His greatness, His beginning, nor the fulfillment of His purpose! Those that see Him as He is and throw themselves upon His mercy shall, indeed, be broken, but they shall also become an integral part of that Rock! They shall experience that joining to the Lord which shall constitute them "one spirit" (I Cor. 6:17). They shall "reign with Him" (II Tim. 2:12), and be "joint heirs with" Him (Rom. 8:17). To be "broken", then, is not a curse, but is indeed a blessing. But if men refuse to throw themselves upon the Lord, forfeiting all claims to merit and worthiness, then the Lord Jesus shall rule them eternally expendable, and they shall be but chaff that serves the temporary purpose of maturing the grain. Not a breaking, but a grinding, shall be their portion. Not merely a severing of their nature, but the binding of their persons to darkness—that is their portion.

Well, dear reader, where do you stand? If you have never been broken, then you must ask yourself the question, "Have I ever really confronted the Lord of glory"? And if you are broken, then you must decide whether or not you will offer that broken and contrite heart to the Savior. He will not despise it, in fact, He will heal it. Blessed Gospel, glorious truth! Surely the Lord's children are the most benefited of all, because for them even apparent curses are turned into blessings; "He hath sent Me to . . . heal the broken hearted."! Amen!

WHAT ABOUT "THE LIVING BIBLE"?

During recent years, the religious world has been flooded with a series of new "translations" of the Bible. Interestingly enough, this has taken place during a scholastic explosion, when men are purported to have attained unto a new level of intellectuality; when children are said to be smarter, and a general wave of knowledge declared to have swept across the world. While our public schools are introducing texts books more profound, the church is working at making the Bible more simple. With a new interest in learning, and an apparent disgust with elementary things, the religious world maintains that the Bible in the traditional King James Version is just too complicated to understand; that it must be reduced into the language of the people. Thus has one Kenneth Taylor taken upon himself to bring to us a new simplified version of the Scriptures; a paraphrased version, if you please. The purpose of this somewhat questionable contribution to the masses is to admittedly make the Bible "easy to be understood." As we have often written concerning the fallacy of this concept, we will only take the time here to illustrate the great plainness of speech that has been employed by Mr. Taylor in his Bible. These texts speak for themselves, little more is required to be said.

I Samuel 20:30: KING JAMES VERSION: "Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness?"

THE LIVING BIBLE: "Saul boiled with rage. 'You son of a bitch! he yelled at him. 'Do you think I don't know that you want this son of a nobody to be king in your place, shaming yourself and your mother?'"

I Kings 18:27: KING JAMES VERSION: "And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be wakened."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "About noontime, Elijah began mocking them. 'You'll have to shout louder than that', he scoffed, 'to catch the attention of your god! Perhaps he is talking to someone, or is sitting on the toilet, or maybe he is away on a trip, or is asleep and needs to be wakened.'"

II Kings 21:6b: KING JAMES VERSION: ". . . he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger."

THE LIVING BIBLE: ". . . So the Lord was very angry, for Manasseh was an evil man, in God's OPINION."

Zechariah 9:9: KING JAMES VERSION: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, AND HAVING SALVATION; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon the foal of an ass."

THE LIVING BIBLE: Rejoice greatly, O my people! Shout with joy! For look—your King is coming! He is the Righteous One, the Victor! Yet He is lowly, riding on a donkey's colt." (Note: "and having salvation" is omitted).

Mark 9:29: KING JAMES VERSION: "And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "Jesus replied, Cases like this require prayer."

Matthew 20:16: KING JAMES VERSION: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "And so it is, that the last shall be first, and the first last." (Note: The last segment of this verse is completely eliminated).

Matthew 21:44: KING JAMES VERSION: "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "All who stumble on this rock of truth shall be broken."

John 9:34: KING JAMES VERSION: "They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast Him out."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "You illegitimate bastard, you! they shouted. Are you trying to teach us? And they threw him out."

Acts 26:28: KING JAMES VERSION: "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "Agrippa interrupted him. With trivial proofs like these, you expect me to become a Christian?"

Romans 14:23: KING JAMES VERSION: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

THE LIVING BIBLE: "But anyone who believes that something he wants to do is wrong shouldn't do it. He sins if he does, for he thinks it is wrong, and so for him it is wrong. Anything that is done apart from what he feels is right is sin."

I do find it difficult to appreciate such mundane language—especially when it is supposed to be representative of the Mind of the Lord Himself. It appears to me that it is a tragic error to suppose that holy thoughts can be properly transmitted in such earthly language. Plainness of speech does not refer to the practice of adopting the language of the unregenerate. It was uniformly the practice of prophets, our Lord Jesus, and the Apostles, to employ the language of Moses and the Prophets to transmit the truth. It was the responsibility of the hearers to "search the Scriptures" to see whether the things were so or not. Can you imagine searching the Scriptures to support the expressions of Mr. Taylor? Or better yet, reading these texts in a Sunday School class of children?

The Holy Spirit witnesses that the communication of the mind of God is performed by utilizing "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:13). Can you imagine the Holy Ghost teaching the words which have been quoted from the mis-

(Please turn to page 12)

BAD NOMENCLATURE

"The days are evil," declares the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:16); not "evil" because of a particular segment of time, but because of Satan's increased activity and men's ready response to it. One of the evidences of "evil days" is the vocabulary which men adopt. In a very deliberate manner, the Living God has used men moved by the Holy Ghost to develop a vocabulary which will shape the conscience of His creatures properly. When that vocabulary is changed or altered, infinitely more is changed than mere words—the whole structure of society is altered, the perception of right and wrong becomes dim, and the conscience becomes seared.

Now, our time is particularly marked by degeneracy in the area of nomenclature, or, in this case, proper vocabulary. **The specific transgression in this matter is that the professed church has permitted the world to identify with her own words what the Lord has already identified with inspired words.** Whatever has already been defined by the Lord does not require further definement—particularly the kind which tones down and mitigates holy concepts. By way of illustrating the very eminent danger in this area, a few examples of bad nomenclature are provided below. I trust that our readers will perceive with clarity the work of the Devil here, and set themselves to wage a relentless war against this sort of subtle attack against the Lord and His Christ.

1. The Scriptures speak of "drunkards" (I Cor. 6:10), the world speaks of "alcoholics." From the world's term flows the concept that drunkenness is a "disease," and that it is to be treated as diseases are treated. The Lord, however, identifies drunkenness as sin, and commands that drunkards cease from drunkenness! **Drunkenness is not a snare, it is deliberate ignorance of the counsel of the Lord, the testimony of the conscience, and the rebellion of the body against the introduction of a foreign and obnoxious element into the mortal system.**
2. The Word of God speaks of "strange flesh" (Jude 7), "leaving the natural use of the woman and burning in their lust toward one another; and men with men working that which is **unseemly**" (Rom. 1:29). The world speaks of "homosexuals" and "bi-sexuals." Once again, the perversion of language has brought about a perversion of concept which urges tolerance of the "sodomite" (Deut. 23:17). We are apprized by worldly men that freedom ought to be allowed for such perverted individuals, and that they are unable to help themselves—that this is the way that they were "made." Such statements evidence a thorough departure from the Lord of heaven and earth. They are not to be confronted with any form of sympathy from believers. Those that are guilty of sodomy stand as gross sinners before the Lord—sinners that have ignored nature and given way deliberately to the influence of the Evil One. They are never to be considered a segment of the church, are not to be admitted under any conditions, and are to be told forthrightly that hell shall surely be their portion unless they

repent and amend their ways if, indeed, this is possible. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed with a heavenly holocaust for this precise sin, and we are not to permit the world to water down the enormity of it with their language.

3. The Holy Spirit witnesses of "man"; the world has adopted the term "human being." The world's term has been ascribed in view of its postulation that man is the highest order of the animal kingdom; and it blends perfectly with the commonly accepted, yet false, theory of evolution. The Scriptural appellation of "man", on the other hand, is designed to teach us that he is the offspring of God; that he has fallen short of the glory of God; and that God has with "the man Christ Jesus" restored him to a right standing with His Maker (I Cor. 15:45; I Tim. 2:5; Tit. 3:4).
4. The Scriptures declare that there is "one faith" (Eph. 4:5); the world speaks of many "faiths." Often religious gatherings are accompanied with an invitation to people of "all faiths." One may also ask another, "Of what faith are you?" To hear these expressions one is led to believe that there are actually several valid persuasions concerning man and his approach unto God. However, the Lord concisely sets forth the unique singularity of man's approach unto God. Contrary to men's concept, there are not many approaches, many roads, but "ONE": "ONE Lord," "ONE faith," "ONE baptism," "ONE God and Father Who is above all, and through all, and in you all," "ONE body," "ONE Spirit," "ONE hope of your calling" (Eph. 4:4-6). Believers are described as "ONE bread" (I Cor. 10:17). The Father will finally gather "INTO ONE all things in heaven and on earth" (Eph. 1:10). Satan has, however, unleashed this conceptual attack against the saints of the Most High God, seeking to break down their strength, which lies in their oneness. When it comes to diversity the Lord speaks plainly; "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines" (Heb. 13:9).
5. God refers to sin as "iniquity and transgression" (Ex. 34:17; Num. 14:18), and emphasizes the deliberateness of it; it is rebellion—deliberate rebellion—against the Monarch of creation. Men have, however, chosen to call it sickness instead of transgression or iniquity, as though man was a helpless victim. Murderers, rapists, those that take narcotics, etc., are said to be "sick" and in need of help; while the Lord declares them sinners in need of repentance. Sin is not sickness, it is death (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13).
6. The Word of the Lord says that "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (I Tim. 5:6). The world, on the other hand speaks of "living it up." If one thing is evident, it is this; that we are living in the midst of a pleasure-mad world. Men are in an insatiable quest for pleasure, entertainment, and other forms of apparent enjoyable diversion. The highest paid people in the world are entertainers. The biggest tragedy that can happen in some homes is that the television set is rendered inoperable. Now, it is not that pleasure

is evil, or that enjoyable diversion is wrong God forbid. The life of faith is difficult enough without anyone foisting off on us such a concept as that. The point of Scripture is that this is not to be the **source** of life; this is not the **mainstay** of our existence; our **emphasis** is not to be placed here. "She that LIVETH in (or by means of) pleasure is dead while she liveth." For instance, who has not noted that the only way to perk up some church audiences is to tell a joke, and appeal to their idol of pleasure. Let us learn to have proper values and proper emphases. It is the truth that "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth!"

7. The Scriptures speak of the "soul," and declares that the Word of God is able to divide asunder between the "soul and the spirit" (which is the superior part of men (Heb. 4:12). The world, on the other hand, speaks of the "psyche," calling it the basic part of man. Psychology is the study of man from this perspective, and is to be disregarded by the godly as a valid view of God's creation.
8. The Spirit of God warns and teaches us of "fornication" (Rom. 1:29; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5; I Thess 4:3), declaring it to be zealously and meticulously avoided by all men. It is the intimacy of men and women outside of the marital bond and is so heinous that it will ostracize one from the God of heaven (I Cor. 6:9). The world speaks of "sexual freedom" and is so foolish as to think because this has become a common practice it is all right. But God has not changed His Law or His Holy Mind on the matter. The sin—one of the grossest mentioned in Scripture—has found its way into the very ministry itself, and into the church of God. Myriads of young people **IN THE CHURCH** are married out of necessity, thereby evidencing plainly their involvement in the grievous sin of fornication. Often it is the practice of the professing church to passively turn its head and excuse such indulgences. But yet it is plainly declared that unless such sin is accompanied by plain and public repentance and renunciation, such individuals are not welcome in the house of God (I Cor. 5:9-10). Let us not permit the world to mold our thinking.
9. God speaks of "flesh" and the "old man" as that segment of our nature which is fallen, and from which we must "flee," renouncing its influence (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9; Rom. 8:1). The world, however, speaks of "human nature," easily excusing intolerable acts by saying, "Well, that is just human nature."

These are but a few of the many areas of thinking Satan has sought (and continues to seek) to corrupt. His despotical design is to reduce the persuasion of the enormity of sin—and all of this activity is directed in such a way as to make it appear that the understanding is being enlarged. He boldly foists upon men the notion that indulgence in sin is to be pitied, and (if indeed it be recognized as wrong or improper at all) it is owing to some deficiency in the personality—caused, no doubt, by the deprivations of home or society in general. Thus do many young renegades trace their sinful and indulgent characteristics to the bad area where they lived—where food was

not plentiful, or money was scarce, or some other "social evil." Of course, the point that they overlook is that these conditions should make men more godly, and drive them to the Living God rather than into the caldron of transgression.

These purported deficiencies can be corrected in due time, sinners surmise through the means of worldly consultation, which necessarily comes at a very high price. Thus men speak of criminal "rehabilitation" instead of punishment, "probation" instead of restitution, "mental illness" instead of guilt, "temporary insanity" instead of "soon angry," and "prison reform" instead of payment for sin.

The Word of God, however, lays the responsibility for sin squarely upon the sinner. It makes no excusable allowances for transgression, demanding such things as restitution, death, etc. Sinners are to repent and quit their wicked ways. They are not to be made comfortable in their transgression by being led to imagine that they are merely "ill," or that they have been victims of some sort of social injustice. Sinners are not victims of oppression, they are themselves the oppressors! They oppress the righteous with their evil ways, inhibit and hold back the truth, and promote the despising of the Lord. Those that come under the worldly description of "addicts," for instance, have willingly yielded themselves to sin—they have brought themselves into bondage. Their release is two-fold in its requirement: (1. "Sin not". (2. "repent and acknowledge the truth! Bad nomenclature obscures these Divine requirements, and the effects of such an obscurement are so abundantly evident that nothing further is required to be said.

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HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT

1. That Jesus is never pictured as having "healed" a drunkard or an addict.
2. That Jesus didn't choose a woman apostle.
3. That no apostle ever addressed a church on the subject of "soul-winning."
4. That Romans 10:9-10, commonly associated with alien sinners receiving salvation is actually addressed to saints.
5. That consistently the return of the Lord is associated with the termination of all things in Scripture.
6. That "specialized service" is connected with gifts granted by the Holy Spirit, and not with "training."
7. That spiritual gifts are expressly said to be for the benefit of the church, and not for the influence of the world.
8. That the apostles do not present physical illness as a critical matter.
9. That Jesus nor the Apostles were ever involved in combating social injustices.
10. That Jesus upheld Caesar in his official capacity ("render under Caesar the things that are Caesar's").
11. That Jesus did not select an apostle from the saducees, who officially denied both the angels and the resurrection.
12. That our Lord Jesus traced inability to unbelief.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FROM ONE OF OUR SISTERS IN CHRIST

"The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy" (Psa. 145:8). The Lord told Moses, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Then Moses replied to the Lord, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." I like to bring this verse before the Lord, for I care not to go anywhere or do anything without the Lord's presence with me. I know that I can not stand alone nor do I care to stand alone; in myself I do not have the strength that is required to see me through whatever my circumstance may be. **There is no safe place if God's presence be not with us!** Though our days may be filled with troubles, perplexities, vexations, and heartaches, there is one thing of which we can be sure, and that is this: the Lord's presence shall go with us! In Psalms 18:1-3 it says, "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is **my** Rock, and **my** Fortress, and **my** Deliverer; **my** God, **my** Strength, in whom I will trust, **my** Buckler, and the Horn of **my** salvation, and **my** High Tower. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies." "If God be for us, who (or what) can be against us." There is never a situation that we cannot go through. The Lord has said, "I will **never** leave thee nor forsake thee." I have taken hold of that scripture many, many times, and I intend to hold on to it until I leave this body. I have heard different ones say (and I have been guilty of this very thing); "I couldn't possibly go through what so and so has or is going through." What we are actually saying is, "God, you are not able, and you do not have the power to keep me." In the first place, the Lord doesn't intend for you or me to walk in another's path. Our paths may cross, and we may have similar experiences but I believe a better thing for us to say would be; "Lord, whithersoever Thou chooseth to send me, keep me that I fall not nor fail Thee, because in my own strength I shall falter and fail."

I love the Scripture that says, "It is the LORD; **let Him do what seemeth Him good.**"! God knows our frame through and through. He knows exactly what we can and what we cannot do! "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able." There hath no temptation taken you but such as is COMMON to man; but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will **with** the temptation make a way of escape, **that ye may be able to bear it**" (I Cor. 10:13). We can't expect the Lord to supply grace for something we are not being tempted with, because it is not needed. Whatever our situation may be, He will faithfully supply the grace that is necessary to see us through. It is quite possible for us to fall; especially if we try doing anything in our own strength, when we look away from the Lord. But He dwells in us and supplies all our need; He will keep and sustain us. This I know to be true. **It is true; it is true; it is true!**

There are many brethren that have gone on before us and many that will come after us which shall testify to the same truth. Whether or not we come through a situation believing that the

presence of the Lord is with us does not change the fact of His presence. We may have times when we fail God; but God will never fail us. He is always there; our place is to believe this, and to put our trust in the Lord, no matter what comes our way. "The just **shall** live by faith" "for without faith it is impossible to please Him (God)". We are told in Matthew 28:20; "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." The Scriptures testify that God dwells with us and in us. One such Scripture is found in II Corinthians 6:16; "For ye are the temple of the Living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." It makes no difference what our situation, circumstance, or earthly dwelling may be; wherever the child of God dwells, the presence of God is found. If we see Him not, if we do not feel His presence, it is our faith that is weak. Who is like unto our God? Who else would choose to walk among such unworthy, loathsome creatures as we; worthy in ourselves only of the wrath and condemnation of the Almighty! The Lord God omnipotent, the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, the God of gods, and Lord of lords: Who is a God like unto Him Who "preserveth all them that love Him; but all the wicked will He destroy", "Who is rich in mercy," "Who is gracious and full of compassion," "Who loved us while we were yet sinners" with an everlasting love, sending forth His only begotten Son into the world of darkness, that we through Him might believe and be saved! Who is a God like our God? There is none—there is no God like our God!

We become very tired at times of hearing all the critics of God and His Word. The Lord has given me some words concerning these critics:

Critics, critics everywhere, in a ceaseless quest of unbelief to disprove God's authenticity. Onward they come, onward they go; first they are here, then they are there, Now you see them, now you don't; changing, as the days pass on.

One thing stands out to me very clear, Where are all the critics that have come throughout all the years. Why the grave hath swallowed them up, you see; death hath won the victory. But God on His Throne shall ever be, His words shall stand throughout all eternity.

So rave on, O critics of God's authenticity. But remember this one thing; hell's doors are waiting for thee. Amen, and so let it be!

Sister Beverly Brunner
Oakley, Illinois

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THE PLAGUE OF THE HEART

"What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the PLAGUE OF HIS OWN HEART, and spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear Thou in heaven . . . and forgive. . . ." I Kgs. 8:38-39

There are a number of reasons for praying—all of them valid and precious under given circumstances. Prayers of thanksgiving when blessed and benefited of the Lord; prayers of supplication for all saints everywhere; during periods of

(Please turn to page 13)

What About Purgatory?

(From page 2)

reads; "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church." Now, our champion of Purgatory has asserted that this refers to the principle of Purgatory; that God has designed that Christ's death did not thoroughly remove our sins, but that an element of suffering has been left behind in which the penalty for and removal of some of our contamination will be accomplished! What a perverted Gospel the great harlot presents! The Apostle does not affirm that he is suffering for his sins, but for the church: "for His body's sake, which is the church." He did not fill up these sufferings for his own salvation, but particularly called them "my sufferings for you"! **This refers to the reaction of the world to faith, not to the suffering of saints for sin.** The life of Christ brings upon believers the retaliation and opposition of the world as it did in Jesus—except that it is my "measure." That is what is denoted by the phrase "fill up that which is behind." **Our Lord Jesus exhausted the wrath of God,** but not the wrath of Satan and his children. We may expect the Lord to be satisfied with Christ's death, but not the world. While the Father has "accepted us," the world has not, and we do greatly err in thinking that they will. But to view the suffering instigated by them as meritorious before God is blasphemy of the greatest sort. It reproaches the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, and sets forth God the Father as something less than pleased with His Son's vicarious offering. If such were the case, certainly Jesus would not have been received up into heaven, set down at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, and now making effectual intercession for those who at one time were alienated! The truth of the matter is that **nothing stands between the believer and God.** Our anchor is cast within the veil, our faith and our hope is there, and we have boldness and access with confidence into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. That certainly does not sound like a situation which necessitates my suffering in order to qualify me for heaven.

The final purging will not be one of the soul, but rather of the body. The imperfections of true believers is owing to their "vile body," not inward impurities. It is ever true of those that have called upon the Name of the Lord that with their "mind, they serve the law of God," and "with their flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:25). This uncontrollable variance between the inner and the outer man constitutes a most wretched state—but it is one from which we shall ultimately be rescued "through Christ Jesus our Lord." It is nothing less than deliverance "from the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24-25). Mr. Miller has failed to see this truth, and has thus thought of the soul or spirit of man as requiring additional cleansing after death. Alas, that a strong argument may be addressed to the intellect of unredeemed men on this point is not denied—but the saints of the Lord remain unconvinced, regardless of the high sounding words that may be employed.

They, rather, look forward to the "adoption, to wit the redemption of the body" (Rom. 8:23). The sanctification wholly of "spirit, soul, and body" is what awaits the Lord's children (I Thess. 5:23). What our Roman Catholic sophist imagines Purgatory to do, the Scriptures declare the resurrection will do. **The "Resurrection of the just" will accomplish the completeness of those that have been "predestinated to be conformed to the Image of His Son"** (Rom. 8:29-31). No amount of Purgatorial suffering can accomplish that, because the source of vexation for the trusting one is this tabernacle of clay. His spirit has been redeemed, joined to the Lord; he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and has been made a partaker of the Divine Nature. His source of difficulty is the "old man," not the new man! After death, those that have fled for refuge to Jesus shall be left with only the "new man"—praise the Lord! What need has that new man to suffer; The believer will, in the resurrection, be once and for all delivered from the Esau of the "old man," and shall thus have been delivered from all forms and needs of suffering. Foolish enterprize, to hold forth suffering for the liberated and unencumbered soul. We find such a thought repugnant; thoroughly repugnant!

A carnal understanding of sin is also evidenced in Mr. Miller's vain attempt to validate the concept of Purgatory. Proving that he truly "occupies the room of the unlearned," Mr. Miller speaks of "some sins that are most serious than others." He appeals to common sense to undergird his flagging argument—quite unapostolic, to say the least. He speaks of "small sins." But is such a concept set forth by the Living God. It is not the magnitude of wrong found by a human analysis of sin that officially classifies it as great or small. Our writer speaks of "a thoughtless or unkind word" in comparison to "cold-blooded murder," and at once summons up our carnal reasoning. But our Lord Jesus speaks quite differently; ". . . whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement; and whosoever shall say unto his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in the danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:21). Our Lord, then, did not speak of "an unkind word spoken in a moment of impatience" as a trite matter, unworthy of comparison with murder. In fact, John the Beloved affirmed that hatred was on an equal par with murder (I Jno. 3:15). The point here is that **sin is not measured by degrees of harm which it accomplishes. Sin is sin because of its NATURE.** Sin is contrary to the nature of the Living God. It represents that which is absolutely irreconcilable with God's Person. What the sin is simply is not the point; sin is transgression; sin is unrighteousness (I Jno. 3:4; 5:17). Remember that under the Law of Moses the child that cursed his parents was killed just as surely as the one that shed the blood of another (Ex. 21:17; Deut. 17:6). O reader, that is an important truth to learn, that **sin is the assertion of a contrary character!** Those that have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, however, have been "reconciled to God"; God imputes not their tres-

(Please turn to page 12)

Pungent Points

If "to obey is better than sacrifice," then to disobey God is a sin of infinitely greater magnitude than men's minds are apt to think.

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The Scriptures begin with the postulation that "God is." Time is not devoted to proving the existence of God because evidence of His Being is so abundant that it requires a fool to deny it. The burden and responsibility of proof lies with those that deny God. They are obligated to prove that the resounding voice of creation speaks of chance and spontaneity.

* * *

"The faith" is not a denominational or philosophical concept. It speaks of a gift from God which enables cognizance of the eternal order. Accurate concepts of faith are not formed by observing our peers, or by going to dictionaries and lexicons. While that might well benefit the intellect, it leaves the heart un nourished. The Word of God provides us with numerous examples of the effectuality of faith. Faith constrained, Abel to offer an acceptable sacrifice, Enoch to be translated without seeing death, Abraham to leave kindred and country for an unknown land, Moses to choose suffering with God's people over all the treasures of Egypt, and Sarah to bear a child contrary to biological laws. The validity of our faith must be measured by its harmony and com portment with examples such as these.

* * *

It is generally conceded among serious fol lowers of the Lord Jesus Christ that a signifi cant number of preachers, teachers, and workers in organized religion have not been called of God, constrained by the Spirit, or born again.

* * *

It is a mistake to go to the psychologist to learn about man and the inner workings of his heart and mind. This is tantamount to idolatry. Should not inquiry be made of man's "Maker" (Isa. 22:11; 45:11; 51:13; Hosea 8:14)? Such a flagrant ignorment of God is not to be lightly considered.

* * *

The Roman Catholics, referring to their count less images, assert that they are not worshipping them when they kneel before them (genuflection). But this is not true! Kneeling before something or someone—just the physical act—is considered "worship" quite frequently in Scripture (Ex. 32:8; I Chron. 29:20; Dan. 2:46; 3:7; Matt. 2:11; 18:26; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9). The command of God is: "Thou shalt not BOW DOWN to . . . images" (Ex. 20:5; Deut. 5:9; Ex. 23:24; Lev. 26:1). All of the Roman Catholic tradition in the world can not negate that word! If you have images in your house before which you "bow down," cease the practice at once, and break the images. The wrath of God is against you.

* * *

Laboring for a reward is comely in the King dom of God. The labor which we are called upon to exert is strenuous, and often tedious. Because of this, the Lord adds pleasant incentives by setting frequent promises of eternal reward be fore us (I Cor. 3:8, 14; 9:17; Col. 2:18; 3:24; I Tim. 5:8; Heb. 2:2; 10:35; 11:26; Mt. 6:4, 6, 18; 16:27). The law of sowing is set along side the

What About Purgatory?

(From page 11)

passes unto them (II Cor. 5:15-19). Their natures have been refined by grade, the Divine Image being stamped upon them. They are no longer contrary to God, but having been joined to the Lord are "one spirit" with Him (I Cor. 6:17). Having been born of God, they cannot commit sin (I Jno. 5:18), i.e., the new nature which they have received is incapable of being contrary to God. To be sure, they still possess that old nature which remains unchanged, but they lawfully disown that, declaring it to be "not I, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:17, 20). Glorious truth is that; praise the Lord! How we rejoice in Christ Jesus over his truth, and repudiate and thrust from us the devilish doctrine of Purgatory. We have learned to love the Lord by grace—because He "first loved us." We have also learned to hate sin and every evil way, whether in ourselves or in another. We long for the day of deliverance from these vile bodies—not the day of a purging of some remnant of sin retained within our spirits. They have been cleansed by the blood of Christ already.

We concur with Mr. Miller that the saints often do "stutter and stumble," but that is not due to any imperfection in the redemption of Christ or the regeneration of the Spirit of God. That is due to the inability of our bodies to ade quately contain or express this heavenly treasure. We find the answer to this to be the resurrection ultimately, and death immediately.

What About "The Living Bible"?

(From page 7)

named "Living Bible"?

It is the truth that **our minds must be purged of earthly language in order to the appreciation of Holy Writ.** We must learn to think in spiritual nomenclature; i.e., in the language that was structured by the Living God through Moses and the prophets. **The point is to raise men, not lower the Scriptures;** to elevate the thinking of fallen men, not to topple the lofty language of inspired Scripture. Simplicity is not the need of the hour! The thinking of our day tends to be too shallow as it is; to contribute to that shallowness by making Scripture vulgar and common is a course evidentially void of wisdom and understanding. We cannot help but suspect the motives of one offering such a Bible to the world—if, indeed, it may be called a "Bible" at all! We recommend, rather, that it be termed, "Taylor's Trauma," or "Kenneth's Knap." Perhaps, "A Dead Book" would also sufficiently alert readers to its contents, or a warning something like this impressed upon every cover; "Warning, carnal and worldly language which can corrupt the mind of the reader is em ployed in this tasteless volume."

The paper in the Living Bible might be used for fire-starting, or for lining cake pans, or some other utilitarian use. But one thing is certain, it ought not to be equivocated with the Word of the Living God, for that, it is not!

law of reaping (Gal. 6:8), and the experience of weeping along side that of "joy" which "cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5). Those that ask us to labor without an acute awareness of coming rewards therefore, do greatly err!

POETIC EXPRESSIONS

by
Bro. Arnay McVay
Port Richey, Fla.

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength
They shall never go hungry, nor be sorrowful at length—

* * *

Despise thou not the chastening of the Lord,
Even if He cuts you with a two-edged sword.
So receive with meekness the engrafted Word,
And you will hear things you have never heard.

* * *

To seek counsel of a novice is not using your mind,
It is like one who cannot see leading one who is blind.

* * *

The arm of the Lord has been revealed everywhere,
But it is His face I would seek, and His heart I would share.

* * *

True, we have put men on the moon,
But moral decay will destroy us soon.

* * *

The Bible and science do not contradict each other,
But its the Bible and man's theory
That have made many leary.

* * *

Beware—For Satan will come as an angel of light,
But in truth, he is the god of the night.
He even tried to tempt our Savior and Lord,
But Jesus cut him down with His two-edged sword.

* * *

If thou believest there is one God, thou doest well,
But the devils also believe, and they are going to hell.

Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead.

So awaken to the truth, and rise from your spiritual bed!

* * *

If you would work like a Christian, and not like a dog,
You wouldn't bark when things go wrong.

* * *

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,
And you thought it was at school, or maybe even a college.

* * *

Satan will lure you to be curious about the mysterious

But God will lead you to be sure about the pure.

* * *

Our God is a spiritual and invisible Being,
But our eyes were created for physical seeing.
So to see the Lord, and know He is real
We must have faith in His Word;
Then His Presence we will feel.

* * *

Brother Arnay McVay is a young believer from Port Richey, Florida, with whom the Lord graciously brought us into contact. I take this opportunity to publicly commend brother Arnay

The Plague of the Heart

(From page 10)

love and fellowship; prayers for strength and succour during those inevitable dry seasons that come upon the saints of the Most High God. There are also times when our hearts are heavy with concern and unrest. Paul referred to this kind of experience when he spoke of that which "cometh upon me daily, **the care** of all the churches" (II Cor. 11:28). A kindred feeling is that which is described in Romans 7:24; "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." It is when the burden of life rests heavy upon the heart, pressing it down, as it were. It is that "haunting sense of want and sadness" that we would cheerfully avoid, if we could; but, alas, none of the redeemed have been able to totally escape it. It is part and parcel of life, however unpleasant it may prove to be. But this situation does move us to pray, if we live and walk by faith—and that is good and wholesome. It is this experience of which the Scripture speaks in our text. The "plague of the heart" is that inward unrest and agitation which constrains one to look away from his own helpless person unto "the hills from whence cometh his help." Ah, blessed benefit of faith; that looks beyond circumstance unto the heavenlies from whence we look for the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ. If there is one great and wonderful ministry that heavy hearts has, it is this; they constrain us to pray! Did not James say; "Is any afflicted, let him pray" (Js. 5:13). James spoke of that same "plague of the heart"; and the remedy remains the same! It is concourse with God; resorting to our High Tower, the secret pavilion of the Lord's presence and power. Have you, dear reader, capitalized upon this remedy?

The Joyful Sound

(From page 6)

opened to the fact of our own utter sinfulness by nature and our desperate need of a Savior are the ones to whom this is a joyful sound indeed. Now we have a spiritual jubile wherein our sin-debt is cancelled and we are set at liberty from bondage to sin itself. We now hear (as it were) the joyful sound of Christ's intercession for us in heaven where he is seated at the right hand of God. We also delight to assemble ourselves under the silver sounds of the gospel trumpet where we can hear the word of God. Thank God for the **better** "joyful sound" of today.

for his faith, and for his insight into the will and purpose of the Lord. Today is a day in which we need strong young men—those that will quit themselves like men, and be stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Brother Arnay is such an one, and so we give thanks for the calling of the Lord that is upon his life, for his faith which has constrained an obvious and effectual separation from the course of this world, and for his unfeigned love of the brethren of our Lord Jesus.

HEALTH AND HEALING

Proper concepts are essential for the attainment of proper thoughts; proper thoughts are necessary for the formation of proper values and assessments; proper values and assessments are imperative for truly godly and spiritual living. It is in view of these three principles that we are obliged to regularly address ourselves to the establishment of foundational truths often left obscured by the traditions of men. We must ever remember that "vain tradition" is so powerful that it can actually nullify worship: as our Lord Jesus Himself said; "In vain do they worship me, teaching for commandments the doctrines of men" (Matt. 15:9). It is with particular interest that the subject of healing and health is approached by this editor. Long have I personally encountered questionable teaching concerning these subjects; teaching of extreme on both sides of the poles of reason. Some have overemphasized the matter of health, bringing questions of consternation and deep trouble of heart to those not blessed with obvious and joyous health. Still others have approached the subject with such coldness of heart as to render helpless those that are stricken with disease, so that they are not constrained to even "call for the elders" of the church, as we are admonished in the Word (James 5:16). It is not my purpose here to strike a middle of the road position, or, indeed, to take up a defence for either side of the question of healing or health. It is, rather, to address our minds to realities of the Scripture which will enable us to make proper assessments; to avail ourselves of the grace that is for the humble, and to become reconciled to the will of God — whatever it may prove to be.

Was Healing In The Atonement?

It is a principle of apparently deep conviction with many devout believers that the healing of the body was an integral part of the atonement; that when the Lord Jesus put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, he also put away sickness. This persuasion is not without some appeal to the Word of God; ". . . the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:3). The question is whether or not this refers to the healing of the mortal body — is that the healing of which Isaiah prophesied? Note with perception the nature of the words that are included in this glorious passage: "griefs", "sorrows", "transgressions", "iniquities", "peace", "iniquity", "transgression". The phrases utilized by the Holy Spirit are designed to direct our thinking and the development of our concepts: "wounded for our transgressions," "bruised for our iniquities", "chastisement of our peace", "laid on Him the iniquity of us all", "for the transgression of my people was He stricken", "my righteous servant shall justify many", "he shall bear their iniquities", "he was numbered with the transgressors", "He bare the sin of many", He "made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:3-12). Now, it appears plain to this writer that it calls for an abandonment of reason to miss the very obvious direction of this witness. **Christ died for sinners, not for the sick!** Nowhere is the death of our Lord

Jesus Christ, or His suffering upon the cross of redemption specifically and clearly said to be for the infirm of body. To begin with, that would represent a segment of men, not all men. All men are not sick in body, but "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Also, sickness does not of itself alienate one from God — sin does (Col. 1:21; Eph. 4:18). It is **alienation** that necessitates intercession, not infirmity of the body! **Sin** calls for "chastening", not illness! It is **sin** that interrupts peace with God, not sickness! Christ's vicarious death dealt with **sin**, not sickness! Now, these are obvious thoughts to be seen in the passage; things that do not require further and more elaborate diagnosis.

What Do The Scriptures Say About Health?

The Word of the Lord does have considerable to say about health. Contrary to many notions, however, health and healing do not always apply, or even primarily, to the body of this flesh. Hear the Word of the Lord: "If my people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My Face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, **AND WILL HEAL THEIR LAND**" (II Chron. 7:14); "O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine anger, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak: O Lord, **heal** me; for my bones are vexed" (Psa. 6:1-2); "I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: **HEAL MY SOUL . . .**" (Psa. 41:4); "Thou hast made the earth to tremble; Thou hast broken it: **HEAL THE BREACHED THEREOF . . .**" (Psa. 60:2); "He sent His Word **AND HEALED THEM . . .**" (Psa. 107:20); "He **HEALETH THE BROKEN IN HEART . . .**" (Psa. 147:3); "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, **AND BE HEALED**" (Isa. 6:10); ". . . the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, **AND HEALETH THE STROKE OF THEIR WOUND**" (Isa. 30:26); "Return, ye backsliding children, **AND I WILL HEAL YOUR BACKSLIDING . . .**" (Jer. 3:22); "They have **healed** the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14; 8:11); "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which REFUSETH TO BE **HEALED? . . .**" (Jer. 15:18); "**WE WOULD HAVE HEALED BABYLON . . .**" (Jer. 51:8, 9); "There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no **HEALING MEDICINES**" (Jer. 30:13). The prophets are abundant with this sort of language (Lam. 2:13; Hosea 5:13; 6:1; 14:4; 7:1; 11:13; Ezek. 30:21; 34:4; 47:8, 9, 11; Mal. 4:2; etc.). The Apostles also use the word in this same sense (Heb. 12:13; I Pet. 2:24; Rev. 13:3, 12).

Surrounded, as it were, with these uses of the words being discussed, it appears passingly strange that one would arbitrarily and consistently ascribe all references to "healing" to the body. Particularly is this true in reference to the passage in Isaiah. There, "stripes" speaks of chastisement — chastisement which was necessary in order to man's realization of peace with God. The stripes

spoke of punishment; of a penalty that had to be paid for sin which had cut man off from the Living God. Peter, in his reference to this passage, said; "Who His own self bare our SINS in His own body on the tree, that we, **BEING DEAD TO SINS**, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye **WERE** healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (I Pet. 2:24-25). Note: the whole matter of being "healed" is associated with Jesus bearing our sins in His body on the tree, and with us returning to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. The reference, "by Whose stripes ye were healed", is adduced as proof that we presently are "dead to sins" — i.e., we have been summarily cut off from them, washed from them, and purified from their guilt. That this is true, Peter continues, is clear because you have actually returned unto the Shepherd of your souls, having been restored to His favor, both legally and experientially.

Observe also that the passage in Peter declares that we "**WERE HEALED**", not that we can be, or that we ought to be; or that it is available. To assert that all believers, on the other hand, "**WERE HEALED**" of bodily infirmities borders on insanity. Notable saints have been sick — and that not because of any particular sin in their lives (Phil. 2:26, 27; II Tim. 4:20). To affirm that Jesus Christ was beaten with stripes because men were sick or ailing in their bodies simply does not comport with the Apostolic teaching concerning His sufferings. It would necessitate one being convicted in his heart by the Holy Spirit of being sick, repenting of sickness, etc. Sickness is not declared to be a matter that required atonement — sin did! Is healing in the atonement? Certainly not — **it required no atonement!** Sickness does not alienate men from God; it is sin that does that, and it is sin that was expiated by the atonement of Jesus Christ. To say that we "**WERE HEALED**" by His stripes, is equivalent to saying "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them", or "All things are of God, who **HATH** reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ . . ." (II Cor. 5:18-19). The **finality** of that sacrifice is declared in those words, "By Whose stripes ye **WERE HEALED**"! It is as though he were saying; "Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to **PUT AWAY SIN** by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9:26). This is being "**MADE NIGH** by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). The same truth is elsewhere expressed in these words; ". . . even Jesus, which **DELIVERED** us from the wrath to come" (I Thess. 1:10); "In Whom **WE HAVE REDEMPTION** through His blood . . ." (Eph. 1:6); "Who . . . when He had **BY HIMSELF PURGED OUR SINS** . . ." (Heb. 1:3); "Unto Him that loved us and **WASHED US FROM OUR SINS** in His Own blood . . ." (Rev. 1:5).

By saying "were healed", the Spirit witnesses that the breach between God and man has been removed by the Lord's Christ! The loathsome malady of sin and alienation from God (which is fitly described as being full of "putrifying sores" — Isa. 1:6) has been cured by Christ; the "mollifying ointment"

(Isa. 1:6) has been applied, the broken hearted bound up, and the "whole head" restored to soundness. The message of the Gospel sounds this forth in the ears of men; that they have been reconciled to God; that sin has been "put away" (Heb. 9:26), condemned in the flesh, and made an "end of" (Dan. 9:24). It is man's business to **believe** this, for it can **only** be appropriated by faith. Let there be no uncomely distractions from this Glorious Gospel by applying the atonement to the illness of the body. "**Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God**", and thus there are no eternal provisions made for it — and the atonement of Christ **IS** an eternal provision, not a temporal one.

I am quick to say that this is not to be construed as meaning that there is no such thing as healing. Such a postulation is inexcusable. The point is not whether or not the Lord heals, but whether or not it is **in** the atonement; whether or not it is an integral part of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; whether or not Christ died to make people well; whether or not being sick necessitates the sacrifice of the Lamb of God; whether or not infirmity demands atonement — that is the issue here; and we emphatically deny that any of these interrogations are to be answered in the affirmative. The Lord is merciful, and many of us can personally attest to the particular workings of the Lord in the matter of health — workings that are most extraordinary, transcendent to the natural order, and which can by no means be attributed to anyone or anything but the Living God. But the Lord has not **obligated** Himself to heal our bodies while as yet we are upon the earth! **That is not a part of the new covenant.** He has promised to remember our sins no more (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12), but nowhere has He promised us unequivocally that we will not be sick in this world. We bid those that are ill and appear to be beyond help to "call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord", as is prescribed in Scripture (Js. 5:16), but we refuse to tell such — no matter how comforting it may appear to be — that healing is in the atonement; it simply is **not!**

Did Not Jesus Bare Our Sicknesses?

The Word of the Lord witnesses; "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:17). Now, that does appear to be rather conclusive — but it does not refer to our Lord's death — His vicarious atonement. Matthew specifically ascribes the fulfillment of this prophecy of Isaiah to our Lord's earthly ministry of healing; "When even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:16-17). The reference is to Isaiah 53:4, where it is written; "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem

Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted". The purpose of the passage is at least three-fold: First-ly, to declare that **all of Christ's disadvantages flowed from His identification with men.** Secondly, that in spite of the horrendous experiences that became His lot as a man, the affliction of His Heavenly Father was **added** to Him. Thirdly, that we were impervious to the real intent of His sufferings until illuminated by the Spirit of God. The passage does not teach us that Jesus offered Himself to God as a sweet smelling offering because we were sick, but that **His sorrow, grief, and suffering were incremented by Him dealing with such mundane matters.** Our Lord had "compassion upon the multitudes," and was unable to dismiss them coldly as His disciples sometimes suggested. Too, the indication here is that when one was healed by the Lord Jesus, He took the infirmity upon Himself, and bear it, as it were, in order to deliver the oppressed. Matthew states that **this was the fulfilling of Isaiah's prophecy concerning bearing our sicknesses** — not that His death fulfilled that particular aspect. This, of course, highlights the utter inexcusableness of those healed of our Lord who failed to give thanks. The infirmities of which they were relieved added to the sorrow of our Savior, thus rendering their thankless spirit of the greatest magnitude.

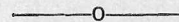
Our Savior is not now in such a case, however. He has been exalted to the right hand of God, all principality and power being subject to Him. He weeps over no more cities; He rests by no well, nor asks for any drink of water. He does not sleep in the back of small vessels, nor does He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. He carries no more sorrows, and is no longer a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". He has been "anointed with the oil of joy above His fellows", having entered into the joy of the Lord. He sits upon a Throne, not upon an ash heap; He is clothed with a white garment of glory, not with sackcloth and ashes. Sitting upon a cloud, with a sharp sickle in His hand, and having finished the grand work of atonement, He but awaits the day of engathering, when all of the sheaves shall be garnered. In His present capacity He often has mercy upon His children, as He did Paul of old, bringing them restored health.

For those that seem confused about this matter, it is better to sit in a pile of potsherds with boils from the crown of your head to the sole of your feet, and do it without sinning with your lips, than it is to sit clothed in purple while beggars lie full of sores at your gate. Lazarus was **not** upbraided for being exremely ill (Luke 16), Timothy was **not** rebuked for having "**oft** infirmities" (I Tim. 5:23), nor Epaphroditus for being "sick

nigh unto death" (Phil. 2:25-27). However, had healing been an integral part of the atonement, rebuke would have been issued, for it would have been in order, being that ill health would have then been an indication of unbelief — that is, if healing were really **in** the atonement; which it most assuredly is not!

Too, if healing is in the atonement, then it is a transgression beyond comprehension to go to a doctor, take any form of medication, have dental work performed, or obtain eye glasses. Shoes with arch supports, hearing aids, sun glasses, health foods, etc. — all these would be nothing more than idolatry. One might as well go to a psychiatrist for the forgiveness of sins as to a doctor, dentist, or optometrist for ailments of the body—if the healing of the body is part of the atonement. If Jesus did die to heal my body, then I am an idolater if I go anywhere else but to Him for health! That would be an incontrovertible allegation were healing accomplished by Christ's death, or by His stripes, or by any part of His atonement.

There is no further need to labor the point, for it surely is obvious to those with the mind of Christ. Brethren, address yourself to the problem of sin; mortify your members that are upon the earth, and continue to wage relentless war against the flesh and the lusts thereof. Christ's death will surely not be in vain so far as you are concerned if you "suffer in the flesh", and thereby "cease from sin."



WHAT IS A GOOD CONSCIENCE?

A "good conscience" is one that is "void of offense toward God and toward man" (Acts 24:16). It is a conscience which testifies boldly to the heart that one has lived "in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God" (II Cor. 1:12). A "good conscience" is one that has been "purged from dead works to serve the Living God" (Heb. 9:14), and a heart that has been "sprinkled of an evil conscience" (Heb. 10:22). A conscience that is "good" is one that endures grief, suffering wrongfully, because of His God (I Pet. 2:9). It is a conscience that stands bold, knowing that one's enemies can say no evil and thus may be ashamed when they falsely accuse one's good conversation in Christ (I Pet. 3:16). A "good conscience" is one that having gladly received the Word, and having been convicted of sins, is joyfully submissive to the ordinance of baptism (I Pet. 3:21). A "good conscience" is not "seared" (I Tim. 4:2) by submission to the deceptive practices of demonic religion; nor is it "defiled" because of spiritual ignorance which constrains involvement in error (I Cor. 8:7). Such a conscience is not "evil" because of a pervading guilt of sin (Heb. 10:22). Here is where the "mystery" of the faith is "held" (I Tim. 1:19); a conscience wherein acceptable service is rendered unto our Heavenly Father through the Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit (II Tim. 1:3). Well, dear reader — how is your conscience?