



“Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things;That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad;.....That confirmeth the word of his servant..... that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited;... That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Isa. 44:24-28

3 This entire chapter seems to center around verses 6 & 8. “I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God..... ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.” Our opening text enumerates at least 15 things that God is able to do. The portion begins by describing the LORD as “thy redeemer and he that formed thee...” and closes, proclaiming God as He “that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd...” These things that God can do, are in direct contrast with what the so-called, self proclaimed prophets cannot do. God took them to task in Ch. 41 challenging them to “.... bring them forth, and shew us what shall happen: let them shew the former things,or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods:.....” V. 22,23 He says to them here, “If you are gods, then prove it by foretelling future events which will come to pass as you predicted.” This latter statement is a reference to the fact that God can announce things that will come hereafter, with striking and definitive accuracy, and these prognosticators simply prove that they cannot.

He then proves His point, calling Cyrus by name and affirming that he would free the Jews, seeing to it that the temple was rebuilt. Isaiah’s prophecy, however, was made over a hundred years before it came to pass! God also, through the true prophet Jeremiah, prophesied that Babylon would take Israel

captive for seventy years, after which time they would be freed to go back to Jerusalem. That period of time began in 606 B.C. when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Thus began the times of the Gentiles, which continue to this present time.

God revealed to Daniel that there would be four world empires. The first began with Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon. Medo-Persia followed seventy years later when "...Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old." Dan. 5:31 It happened quickly, even in the same night, that Belshazzar (Nebuchadnezzar's grandson) saw the "handwriting on the wall," which was interpreted by Daniel. This message is still clear today. When God is ready to make a change, it can happen very swiftly. Darius reign also was short lived, because the "Median" portion of the kingdom gave way to Cyrus the Persian. He is the man, whom God declared to be "My shepherd," who would liberate the Jews. Isaiah further prophesied: "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; (of the temple) and the gates shall not be shut;.." Isa. 45:1 All of this did come to pass when Ezra was charged with rebuilding the temple shortly after Cyrus came to power.

4

We would note in this writing that Persia still occupies center stage in our present day prophetic news, but the scene at this present time is far different from that of Cyrus. This former kingdom of Persia, ruled by Cyrus, became known as Iran in 1935, and this regime does, in no wise, have any intention of showing kindness to Israel. We would also note here, that whether these Gentile world powers like it or not, Israel has always been at the center of God's plan. Nebuchadnezzar and each subsequent power, has been confronted with the great question, "What shall we do with Israel?" That same question looms rather large on national agendas today.

The current and continued great threat to the entire world is Iran's nuclear threat. Despite repeated and emphatic assertions that her nuclear intentions are purely for domestic energy purposes, not one nation believes it. Deceit is one of the major characteristics of the end time, and it seems that every nation is becoming a master at it. Trusts are broken, agreements canceled, and lying abounds, as men literally clamor for power and ascendancy over

one another. But regardless of man's intentions, God's Word still stands. Daniel declared that God "...removeth kings, and setteth up kings:.." Ch. 2:21 Hosea records the following words, in direct reference to Israel. "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." Hos. 6:2 Two thousand plus years have transpired since God placed world governments in the hands of the Gentiles. Peter tells us "...that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." II Pet. 3:8 Thus Hosea's prophecy means that the two plus days committed to Gentiles, beginning in 606 B.C., have just about run their course. The "third day" will bring the promised millennial blessings to Israel. It seems that Iran and the rest of the world are completely oblivious to the fact that their time has run out, but just as we see in the three previous world empires, when God is finished with a man or a regime, their intentions come to a complete halt. That time is shortly coming to pass for all the politics of this world.

5 Despite that fact, men continue to pursue their own goals, Iran along with other Arab nations seem determined to destroy Israel. That, according to God's Word, will never happen. The national map continues to change as the feet of "iron and clay," seen in Nebuchadnezzar's dream image, steadily come to fruition. This mixture of iron and clay is a reference to the combination of imperialism and democracy which is being unveiled before our very eyes. The "Arab Spring," which is a series of protests demanding democracy and toppling dictators such as Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, and Yemeni President Ali Abdulla Saleh, started in Tunisia and has spread across the Middle East and N. Africa. Civil uprisings have erupted in Bahrain, and Syria, and major protests have broken out in Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Oman. Minor protests have occurred in Lebanon, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Western Sahara. Clashes at the borders of Israel in May 2011, as well as protests by Arab minority in Iranian Khuzestan, (this is the province wherein the Persian "Shushan the palace," was located Neh. 1:1) have also been inspired by the regional Arab Spring.

Violence, has greatly escalated in Syria, and despite many pleas, and even demands, that President Bashar al Assad, stop the slaughter of his own people and step down, he still refuses

to relinquish that power. Iran, as previously reported, certainly does not want Assad's power to end, because Syria is the channel through which terrorist supplies and arms are supplied, to attack Israel.

This "Arab Spring," has especially been harmful to Israel, due to the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood has assumed power in Egypt. There is no doubt that this same faction is just waiting in the wings to further assert their power in these other uprisings, and we believe that such terrorist organizations comprise the "... ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." Rev. 17:12

God described Cyrus as "his anointed," (Isa. 45:1) and "my shepherd," because he was given the reins of government over the world, including Israel, after the captivity. Isa. 44:28 Jeremiah 25 further gives a complete history of Israel, from the time they are taken captive, to the end time when these same "shepherd" nations will be punished for taking advantage of this chosen people and serving themselves rather than Israel. "For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it." V. 14,15 Jeremiah then names no less than 25 specific nations and the list is summed up with: "and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth," (V.26) meaning that no nation will be excluded from the coming judgment. Verse 34 of this chapter defines those same nations as "shepherds," showing us that Cyrus was not the only Gentile leader who was regarded as a shepherd of Israel. "Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes,..... for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel." This misery is awaiting all the nations, and those who are so persistent in their aggression against Israel at this hour, are most assuredly be included.

The current Iranian leader, though presiding over exactly the domain as that ancient monarch, is no Cyrus. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel, and his nuclear program is specifically directed toward Israel and the U.S., in order to implement that obsession.

Once again, all the world leaders are in a quandary, knowing full well that a nuclear bomb in the hands of a rogue nation like Iran, could trigger a world-wide holocaust. According to scripture, that will happen, but not until after Jesus takes His throne and the fragile “peace and safety,” gives way to “sudden destruction.” Rev. 8:8.

7 Meanwhile, all these nations are wondering what they can do to protect their own interests. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu made a trip to Washington, by way of Canada, in early March, trying to shore up support for Israel’s intention to launch a pre-emptive strike against Iran in an effort to at least slow down their nuclear intentions. Canadian P.M. Stephen Harper ultimately gave Israel Canada’s public approval for such a strike. “We, of course, recognize the right of Israel to defend itself as a sovereign state, as a Jewish state,” Harper said after expressing his hope that Israeli demands (which include Iran ending all domestic uranium enrichment) are achieved through sanctions. Rex Brynen, a long time Middle East analyst for the Canadian Government and Political Science professor at McGill University, chimed in saying; “Certainly when push comes to shove and the Israelis decide to do something unilaterally, you won’t find Canada criticizing it.”

Some in the U.S. have speculated that Mr. Netanyahu is using the Iran conflict to try and influence the fall election, indicating “concern that a reelected Obama would be more reluctant to attack Iran and more likely to push Israel on Palestinian issues.” According to numerous reports, President Obama did offer the Israelis military assistance such as bunker-buster bombs and aerial-refueling aircraft, for a strike against Iran, but with the stipulation that they do not carry out such an action until after the November election. Thus it seems that all the political “shepherds,” including those in Israel, are using the plight of this chosen nation to further their own political endeavors even as Jeremiah declared. “For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also:” Jer. 25:14

Mr. Netanyahu’s did sound like a true statesman, very much concerned for his own people, as he delivered a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby in Washington. According to the A.P. He “firmly asserted his country’s right to defend itself against the nuclear threat

emanating from Iran, warning that time was growing short and declaring he wouldn't 'gamble with the security of the state of Israel.'" This same article goes on to say; "Israel assesses that Iran is close to being able to build a bomb and wants to stop it before it reaches that point. Some Israeli defense officials have said Israel must strike by summer because Iran is moving key operations out of the reach of Israeli air power."

Though some do not share the Prime Minister's view that Iran presents a very eminent threat, the rapidity with which events in this article have transpired, attests to the fact that world prophecy is very quickly coming to pass. Some believe an Israeli strike on Iran would touch off the next world war, but as we noted earlier, the time has not arrived to bring forth such dramatic and devastating events as are recorded in Rev. 6-8. The time is most assuredly here for God's people to wake up and realize that the end of this Church Age is upon us. It should not be a time of dread, and fear, but rather a time of anticipation, realizing that Jesus could come at any moment. If we truly have the hope of Rev. 3:21, "I also will keep thee **from** (out of) the hour of temptation," in our hearts, we will look upon these present and calamitous days with joy and excitement at the prospect of being taken out of this world "before the first shot is even fired." Rather than being in constant turmoil or panic, due to the political upheaval and general unrest around the world, or obsessed with trying to "change" the ills around us, "**Let us** therefore fear, (reverence) lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Heb 4:1 "... **let us** not sleep, as do others; but **let us** watch and be sober." I Thess. 5:6 "...**let us**, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." I Thess. 5:8 In short, **let us**, "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28

*All the springs my soul had tested
Failed to meet my deepest need;
Christ alone has met my longing,
He has satisfied indeed.*

--Waggoner

TRIUMPH OVER DEATH

Mary M. Bodie

“THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, COMETH MARY MAGDALENE EARLY, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.” John 20:1.

9 In the preceding chapter we see the death of the Christ, the God-Man, on the cross. He faced it bravely. The mob had triumphed; but the earth revolted and quaked with a mighty convulsion when He died. Darkness was over His soul as well as over the land when God turned His face away from His beloved Son, because He was dying as the sinner's substitute. The world had said ‘We do not want Him,’ and it appeared as though God did not want Him either. Ignominy, defeat, loss, finis might be written over all of His life, as men could say, looking at His end from the natural standpoint; but He was Master over it all. His faith remained—a faith that did not loose its grip on God. Storms and clouds were round about Him; but His faith battled through, even when He passed into death, the very stronghold of the devil, the arch-enemy of God and man. He commended His Spirit to His Father's care. It is a unique and glorious scene. The Vanquished, yet Un-vanquished One passed on into the great unknown with a faith impossible to fallen humanity—but Divinity is here shown possessing humanity. That is the secret of the invincible faith displayed, as the Man Christ Jesus bowed His head in a surrender to death, as if saying, “Take your toll now; you will not be victor long. I shall rise from the grave and shout and sing and live and reign throughout the eternal ages.”

As far as the intent and purpose of those who accomplished His death, they would have buried Him with the thieves among whom He was numbered; but that was not to be. They were through, having done their utmost. That death had been permitted, because there was no other way to save us. Joseph came on the scene with his hopeful cheery name, “He shall add,” which was Rachel's choice for her first-born, meaning, This is not the last token of favor that the Lord will add to me. So we too ask, “Is the cross the end? Is there no more to be added to the story?” Ah, Rachel had her Benjamin, “the son of the right hand.” And so for those waiting believers in their sorrow and travail, there is

another ending, an addition. There is an infinitely colossal work **ADDED** to that burial. Joseph, though unconscious of the signification, is brought into the picture. He is of Arimathea, which means “lifted up;” and this is what is added. Christ is exalted. He is lifted out of that tomb, up to the right Hand of the Majesty on High. The name Joseph, wherever used prophetically, tells us of a recovery; for example, Psa. 81:5, where the trumpet’s joyful sound is said to be “appointed to Joseph for a testimony.” It proclaims the fact, that as Joseph was taken out of prison and later, Israel out of Egypt; so again that nation shall be recovered from the dust and exalted with Christ over the earth. Dan. 12:2; Ezek. 37. And we too, all believers, have a part in that resurrection of Christ. We shall rise up out of the grave and live and reign with Christ a thousand years. We have a part in Benjamin when He comes forth from the Father’s right hand. This is added to our portion in Joseph.

And **Nicodemus**, “**ruler of the people**,” also has his story to tell. It was no accident that he attended the burial. He was there, even as was Joseph, by divine appointment. God was the real Rule over all things. His name, linked with Joseph, gives us further information. The God-appointed Ruler of the people, the Lord Jesus Christ, died by the hands of the self-appointed rulers; but He arose and shall come into His place of honor and majesty. Another day is dawning. A new creation will soon emerge from the tomb in radiant light. **The Sabbath** of the old creation passes in gloom and sorrow. Friends and apostles of Jesus are disconsolate and discouraged; but their sorrow is turned into joy, as He declared that it should be. Chapter 16:20. The first day of the new week comes, and with it the First-Born from the dead. The Head of a new creation steps out of the grave into life. We read nothing in this Record of the futile guarding of the tomb by the Roman soldiers; that would not be fitting for John’s Gospel of the Son of God. But we are informed of the stone rolled away and the open sepulchre in the early morning of that awakening; of the first day of a new week. These closing events in this fourth division of the book—**Revelation of God as Love to Man**—are all wonderfully suggestive. Every item is under the direct supervision of God. This is the **TRIUMPH SCENE of the God-Head**. The Three Personalities of Deity are on the ground floor of this exhibition. What a day of **GLORY** here shines forth!

How the flesh shrivels up in the presence of that empty tomb! It is **God's DAY**, the day of the mightiest spectacle of His power—and yet how few know of it and fewer yet view the great event—**LIFE OUT OF DEATH, VICTORY OVER THE GRAVE, HONOR OVER DISHONOR AND POWER – OVER WEAKNESS.**

Some folk are prepared for the revelation of the glory of God's transcendent triumph. Mary Magdalene, apparently the most unworthy of all, is chosen first to view the stone rolled away and the open grave. Not a hint of the Truth flashes upon the mind of this woman of destiny, representative of a great company of saints from the Church who will greet the Lord early on their resurrection day. She views the signs of the new day as calamity at first. She thinks they have taken her Lord away—still her **“LORD,”** though she thinks Him dead—and her heart is dead with Him. She runs with her burden of grief to those who are just as incredulous as she; and Peter and John run back with her. They ran fast, we are sure. **The beloved disciple**, who pens these lines, outruns **Peter**, which is significant. These characters have a figurative meaning at this place, speaking of varying ranks in the resurrection. John stoops down and sees a third item, the linen clothes, but Peter goes further. He not only looks within, but walks into the open grave and sees another token for faith—the cloth that was about Jesus' head, folded, not with the other wrappings, but lying by itself in the grave. Everything betokened peace and divine order. John enters the sepulchre after Peter, and they both were awed and convinced that Christ had risen from the dead. They knew that if He had been snatched away suddenly by rude hands of the wicked Jews, that those burial cloths would not have been left carefully folded there. They had not understood His words relative to His rising from the dead; but now believing, they lost interest immediately in the sepulchre. Though still perplexed, they went home to await developments.

But, oh what a change in their perspective and hope! Their Messiah was risen! He would soon appear and show those wicked Jews what He was and who they were. They were still fleshly, and Israelitish hopes were all they knew. They expected the kingdom to be set up at once as their question, recorded in Acts 1, proves. “Wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?” they enquire of the risen Christ. His answer was vague. There were other purposes on the horizon which it was not the

time to reveal. But Mary cannot leave the place. Her heart is there. She does not understand, and it does not appear that Peter or John told her anything of their findings. She is ignorant and unbelieving; but regardless of all that, her devotion to her Lord is supreme. Her own sight is so dimmed in the falling tears that she does not see what the Apostles saw and which filled them with expectation for the future. Now she stands weeping outside the sepulchre and stooping down, gazes into it. Maybe it was to prepare her for the greater sight she was to have later. **“Two angels in white are sitting,** the one at the head and the other at the feet,” where the body of Jesus had lain. They are sitting in peaceful contemplation of the place now vacant. They ask her, “Woman, why weepest thou?” Ah, yes! Women are the weepers of the world. There is no question as to who bears the heavier burden of life—but Jesus, through His resurrection, has staunched the wounds of humanity and stopped the falling tear. The query of the angels emphatically declared this consummation. Why weep? Jesus has vanquished death and the grave. Sin has been expiated; sorrow has been eased; and the devil has been annulled. But Mary is absorbed in her quest for her beloved Lord and does not seem to recognize the strangeness of the vision. She answers their question with the same words that she had spoken to the disciples that they had taken away the Lord and she did not know where they had laid Him.

12

Then again she goes away intent on finding **“HIM whom her soul loveth.”** S. O. S. 3:1. She cannot be distracted from her objective even by the miraculous appearance of angels. One alone, of all the sons of men, fills her vision, and her faith and love are rewarded. As she turns from the sepulchre, Jesus stands before her; though she does not recognize Him. He asks her the same question as did the angels, **“Woman, why weepest thou?”** The answer is as was intimated, that there is no more cause to weep. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Second Man, has more than compensated for all that Adam’s sin entailed upon the human race. He has defeated Satan by loosing men from his power, from sin, sadness and sorrow. It is true that we do not see all this victory in evidence. The ruin and wreckage of the old creation are still manifest in our midst, for the Lord is still rejected by the world; but the basis of full and final redemption is found in the cross of Christ. Hence, we can understand why the question was repeated to

Mary Magdalene. She did not grasp its significance, but we may. Therefore we may say to all who believe, **Why weep?** Death has passed away! Sin has lost its power! Sorrow has ended! Tears are wiped away! Christ has risen! Life and immortality have been brought to light through the Gospel. II Timothy 1:10.

But we would return again to the sepulchre and the two angels guarding the place where the body of Jesus had lain. It seems to us a representation of the mercy-seat in the Most Holy Place in the Tabernacle. The blood of the typical offering was sprinkled upon that hallowed place which was the basis of fellowship with God, which we know was pointing on to the true Offering, the Real Mercy Seat, which is Christ. The Cherubim were always looking upon the typical mercy-seat with apparent serenity and satisfaction, as well as peaceful contemplation, which is also seen here in that open tomb. But the anti-typical Mercy-Seat, Christ in the garden, shows us more than the typical mercy-seat in the Tabernacle. He takes us beyond death into life which the typical offerings could not do. Christ's body was holy. His death was fragrant and a delight to God—and after He died, the place where He was laid was hallowed ground. His blood, His death, is the basis of all fellowship between God and man. God is satisfied with that Perfect Offerer and Perfect Offering. The saints, represented by the cherubim, also are satisfied. Praise the Lord! The Mercy-Seat abides forever. Christ has entered into the very presence of God in the power of His own precious blood (that is His blood was sufficient to open the way), and we may now approach the holy God without fear. He sees the blood and so passes over us—and more—enjoys our fellowship.

13

We left Mary hearing the voice of her Beloved. She, not recognizing Him, supposes He is the gardener—and so He is. Adam was the gardener of Eden. Eve was there in fellowship with him in that earthly Paradise from which they were banished because of sin. And here is the Last Adam, Caretaker of another garden, the Paradise above. Mary, representative of a choice company, the Bride of Christ, is the first one to be introduced into that halcyon scene, out of which she shall never be ousted. Mary speaks to the Gardener, saying, “Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him **and I will take Him away.**” He is overcome by her loyalty and says, “**Mary.**” Ah, she knows Him now. No one can speak her name in that way. She exclaims in her

ecstasy, "Rabboni," My Dear Master! Oh, what a denouement! What a surprise! What rapture! No tongue, nor pen can do it justice. She was looking for a dead body and finds a living Man, the One she loves supremely, standing before her in wonderful beauty and health. The early bird gets the revelation. It is written, **"I love them that love Me and those that seek Me early shall find Me."** Prov.8 :17 The details of these precious happenings of this section are John's only. And there are more.

Mary, in her delight, was about to take hold of Him, as though to keep Him forever; but He warns her, "Touch Me not; for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go unto My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, unto My God and your God." Here we find that a woman gets the greatest revelation yet given — that of the resurrection of the Lord and its subsequent results to His disciples. They are brought into immediate association with Himself — His Father is their Father; His God is their God. Such grace and condescension was never known before. An individual here and there before Christ's coming, enjoyed fellowship with Jehovah, such as Abraham, called His friend; David a man after His own heart; Daniel a man greatly beloved, etc; but never was a revelation like this heard, that a company of people had been brought into relationship with the Lord as brethren. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren," is written later. Heb.2:11 Here is the fulfillment of Psa. 22:22, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren; in the midst of the congregation, I will praise Thee." He had spoken before of His relationship with them, but now it is explicitly stated. He, the First-born, has been joined with His brethren thru the resurrection.

A new humanity is seen emerging from the debris of the old wreckage and ruin. "The Corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground and died; therefore in its coming up into newness of life the harvest begins to appear. Mary is chosen for this honor, to proclaim the great fact that the disciples of Christ have a heavenly Father, and that His God they may call their God. He is going up to receive His welcome from His Father before He can show Himself to His brethren. What an honor has been conferred upon the woman who refused to leave the garden until she had found her "Heart's Desire." She saw Him before His Father gazed upon Him — but notice, she was not allowed to touch Him. No, she could not actually have any part with Him until His Father

and God was satisfied. He must get His portion, that is touch Him first, as the sheaf of firstfruits that was waved to Jehovah before the harvest could be distributed. Lev. 23 This was fulfilled the very day of Christ's resurrection. He hastened to His Father after showing Himself to Mary. We have no account of that heavenly scene; but we know that the joy and rejoicing was beyond human comprehension.

(Reprint 1952)

BARABBAS

Barabbas, Barabbas, the ne'er-do-well,
Awaited death in his prison cell.

His cross was ready; in the dawning he'd die ;
When, hark ! from the distance there comes a cry,

“Barabbas, Barabbas! We want the thief.

Crucify Jesus. Put Him to grief.”

Pilate, the weakling, could not mob deny.

He said, “Take ye Him and crucify.”

They saved the robber with hands unclean,

And nailed to the cross, The Nazarene.

What did Barabbas, when he was set free,

And Jesus was hanging on Calvary?

Methinks to the hill, he quickly ran

And gazed at the cross that held The Man,

Who died for Barabbas, the son of shame,

And breathed in hushed accents, the sacred Name.

But this is the story, we fain would tell—

We, as Barabbas, were slated for hell.

All were awaiting the pale horse, and hearse;

But Christ has redeemed us from sin's death and curse.

He died for Barabbas, the robber, 'tis true;

But likewise He died for me and for you.

By His death on the cross, we now are set free,

May come out of prison, and shout, “LIBERTY!”

NOT SERVANTS, BUT SONS

H. G. Desha, Jr.

“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Gal. 4:7.

In the natural, a servant is one under bondage to his master. Generally the hard work is put on him, possibly carrying coal into the basement, cutting wood, cleaning house, scrubbing floors, etc. He is told to do this and that. If there is an inclination to leave things undone, he is threatened with punishment. During slavery time, the slaves were whipped. A servant has servant's quarters. He does not live in the same house with his master. He has no right to the master's table, but is put in a corner by Himself. He cannot dress as the master's son. If any old clothes are on hand, he generally gets them.

Not so with the son. He has more privileges than the servant. He does certain things to please his father, not because he has to do so, but because of his love for his father. He does not clean up the house. He is seldom found in the basement. He wears good clothes, looks clean and neat, dines with the father and enjoys the best that he has. He shares the fellowship of the father. He tells him all his troubles and takes advice and counsels. If he needs any money, he knows to whom to go for it. When hungry, his father's cupboard is open, and he has the right to help himself. His father shows him some of his plans and takes him into business with him. Finally, the son actually possesses the wealth of the father, because he is his rightful heir already.

As in the natural, so in the spiritual. As with servants, so it is with people under law. As with sons, so on the other hand, it is with people under grace. People who are under law are slaves to the religion of works. Theirs is really a hard way. They know nothing but work, work, work. They are occupied with house cleaning, etc; that is, cleaning up the old man, trying to, make him better. Of course their clothing is ragged. Their righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God, because they have not the righteousness of Christ. They fail to see the feast that the Lord has spread for them. They are too busy to enjoy the presence and fellowship of the Lord. They know nothing of freedom, being ignorant of what the death, burial and resurrection of Christ means.

But what about those who really see the grace of God? Ah! They are sons of God; not only sons, but heirs of God through

Christ. Their clothing never grows old, because they are clothed with the righteousness of the Son of God. The Spirit of God's Son is truly in them. Therefore God is their Father and they address Him as such. They enjoy His fellowship and protection. They do not have to clean house, for Jesus is the housekeeper. Theirs is a continual feast. What belongs to the Father, belongs to them also. The Father has revealed to them some of His plans. They are laborers together with Him. They know what the future has in store for them. The Father is proud of His sons and will show them off in His Glory. Amen. *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the SONS of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. "*

(This is the same brother who wrote a number of the songs in
Grace and Glory Carols)

It Is Finished!

17

On the Cross of Calvary, Jesus proved His love for me.
All my sins and sickness freely He did bear
Oh such wondrous grace displayed! Full atonement has been made
"It is finished," wondrous grace supremely fair!

"It is finished," Jesus said, In the tomb they lay the dead;
Bursting prison bars, He rose triumphantly.
Hence He was my substitute, Wondrous grace! Who can refute
That He won for me eternal victory.

Jesus now doth intercede, For the souls whom He hath freed
By His power I'm daily kept with loving care.
With His seal upon my soul, Sweet communion has control.
Oh the riches of His grace I surely share.

So I thank Him for His grace, Which has brought in a new race
E'en a heavenly one to share His great renown.
And thru Christ, my Life and Light, Day by day my hopes are bright
That I shall enjoy an out-translation crown.

Chorus:

It is finished! It is finished!
Not by works that I have done; Grace alone my son-ship won,
It is finished! It is finished!

H.G. Desha Jr.

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” I Cor. 15:20

This glorious, positive, and emphatic announcement comes after some in Corinth had questioned the resurrection. Here, Paul asserts that Jesus Himself is the “firstfruits of them that slept,” meaning that His resurrection is the guarantee for all the others. Scripture is very careful to record that though “... graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,” they came out of the graves only “.... **after his resurrection**, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” Matt. 27:52-54

God introduced the teaching of the firstfruits as He commanded Israel: “The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.” Ex 34:26 He had also said, “Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: **it is mine.**” Ex. 13:2 God claimed the “firstfruit” of man, beast, and the land, as His Own, and the scene with Mary, who owned the first human eyes to behold Him after He had risen from the dead, beautifully, and literally, proclaims that fact of Jesus' resurrection. “Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:...” John 20:17 The Father must receive His Choice Portion first. This account tells us that Jesus had to have gone to heaven for that glorious reunion with His Father, and then returned to Jerusalem where the disciples were invited to “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” Luke 24:39

Exodus 34:26 also shows that Christ death and resurrection are inseparable. “The first of the firstfruits of thy land...,” are to be brought into the house of the LORD, but in the same breath, “Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.” This is a reference to Christ's death. Jesus is “the kid,” here and there was no comfort from a mother's breast when He died on Calvary.

There was no tempering of the judgment falling from the Hand of a Righteous and Holy God upon sin.

Today also, we commemorate the resurrection with the firstfruit of our increase, which is the tithe. These two are the same according to Numbers 18:12,20,21. “All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine, and of the wheat, the **firstfruits** of them ...have I given thee. (the Levites) “.....Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land,I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the **tenth** in Israel for an inheritance...” Nehemiah likewise identifies the tithe and firstfruit as being the same, after the captivity. “And that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, ...and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. Neh. 10:37

The very term “firstfruit,” attests to the fact that more is to follow. Christ’s resurrection is the guarantee of ours, and when we obey the scripture and give the first fruit, or tithe unto Him, it is an open testimony of faith that we do proclaim the truth of resurrection and that the greater part of our blessing is yet to come.

GH

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We have recovered a short excerpt (about 16 minutes) of either a sermon or bible study by Sis. Mary M. Bodie, which had been recorded on a reel to reel tape. It has been transcribed to CD, and is now available for those who wish to hear the voice of this remarkable and faithful woman.

Denver Youth Camp July 2-6

Youth Camp will be held at Ponderosa Retreat and Conference Center in Larkspur, Colorado, just south of Denver. Camp will begin with dinner Monday night and end with lunch on Friday. There will be Bible studies for all ages in the mornings, supervised recreation each afternoon, and Church services every evening.

For lodging and registration, please contact Angie Siebert (303) 906-6809 or Polly O’Dorisio at (303) 594-0933. Forms and additional information will be available at www.livingwaterstabernacle.com. We invite you to join your brothers and sisters in Christ for this gathering to give glory and honor to God and to be strengthened and renewed by His Spirit.

Pilate to Caesar

The history of Christ's three years' ministry, trial, death, burial and resurrection, by Pontius Pilate, copied April 7th, 1893, from original scroll in Greek, now in the Vatican Library at Rome.

To Tiberius Caesar, Emperor of Rome, Noble Sovereign, Greetings.

Previous to this, Herod called on me at the Pretorium, and on rising to take leave after some insignificant conversation, asked me what was my opinion concerning the Nazarene? I replied that Jesus appeared to me to be one of those great philosophers that great nations sometimes produce. That His doctrines are by no means sacrilegious; and that the intentions of Rome were to leave Him that freedom of speech which was justified by His actions. Herod smiled maliciously, and saluting me with an ironical respect, departed. The great feast of the Jews was approaching and the intention was to avail themselves of the populace's exultations, for the populace always manifests itself at the solemnities of a passover. The city was overflowing with a tumultuous populace, clamoring for the death of the Nazarene. My enemies informed me that the treasures had been employed in bribing the people. The danger was pressing. A Roman centurion had been insulted. I wrote to the prefect of Syria for a hundred foot soldiers and as many cavalry. He declined. I saw myself alone with a handful of veterans in the midst of a rebellious city, too weak to suppress a disorder and having no other choice left but to tolerate it. They had seized upon Jesus; and the seditious rabble, although they had nothing to fear from the Pretorium, believing, as their leader had told them. I winked as this sedition continued, vociferating "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Three powerful parties had at that time combined together against Jesus. First the Herodians and Sadducees, whose seditious conduct seemed to have proceeded from double motives. They hated the Nazarene and were in fear of the Roman yoke. They could never forgive me for having entered the Holy City with banners that bear the image of the Roman Emperor. And, although, in this instance, I had committed a fatal mistake, yet the sacrilege did not appear less heinous in their eyes.

Another grievance also rankled in their bosoms. I had proposed to employ a part of the treasures of the temple in erecting edifices for public utility. My proposal was scorned. The Pharisees were the avowed enemies of Jesus. They did not care for the government. They bore with bitterness the severe reprimands, which the Nazarene for three years, had continually thrown out against them wherever He went. Too weak and pusillanimous to act by themselves, they had embraced the quarrels of the Herodians and the Sadduces. Besides these three parties, I had to contend against the reckless and profligate populace always ready to join the sedition and to profit by the disorder and confusions therefrom. Jesus was dragged before the High Priest. Caiaphas performed a devisory act of submission. He sent

the prisoner to me to pronounce His condemnation and secure His execution. I answered him, that as Jesus was a Galilean, the affair came under Herod's jurisdiction, and ordered Him to be sent thither. The witty Tetrarch professed humility and protesting his deference to the lieutenant of Caesar, he committed the fate of the man to my hands. Soon my palace assumed the aspect of a besieged citadel. Every moment increased the number of the seditionists. Jerusalem was inundated with crowds from the mountains of Nazareth. All Judea appeared to be pouring into the devoted city. I had a wife from among the Gauls who pretended to see into futurity. Weeping and throwing herself at my feet, "Beware," said she, "Beware and touch not the man, for He is holy. Last night I saw Him in a vision. He was walking on the water; all were obedient to Him. Behold the torrent of Mt. Kedron flows with blood. The statutes of Caesar are filled with gemonide. The Columns of the Interium have given away, and the sun is veiled with mourning like a vestal in the tomb. Ah, Pilate, evil awaits thee if thou wilt not listen to the vows of thy wife. Dread the curse of the Roman Senate. Dread the frown of Caesar." By this time the marble stairs groaned under the weight of the multitude. The Nazarene was brought back to me. I proceeded to the Halls of Justice, followed by the guard, and asked the people in a severe tone what they demanded. "The death of the Nazarene, the king of the Jews." "Roman justice," said I, "punishes not such offenses with death." "Crucify him! Crucify him!" belched forth the relentless rabble. The vociferations of the infuriated mob shook the palace to its foundations. There was but one who appeared to be calm in the vast multitude—it was the Nazarene. After many fruitless attempts to protect Him from the fury of His persecutors, I adopted the measure, which at the moment appeared to me to be the only one that could save His life. I proposed, as it was their custom to deliver a prisoner on such occasions, to release Jesus and let Him go free that He might be the scapegoat, as they called it, But they said, "Jesus must be crucified." And I appealed to them as to the inconsistency of their course as being incompatible with the laws; showing that no criminal judge could pass sentence on a criminal unless he had fasted one whole day and that sentence must have the consent of the Sanhedrin, and the signatures of the president of that court; that no criminal could be executed on the same day his sentence was fixed. And the next day, the day of his execution, the Sanhedrin was required to review the whole proceeding. According to their law a man was stationed at the door of the court with a flag; another, a piece off, on horseback to cry the name of the criminal and his crime, and the name of his witnesses, and to know if anyone can testify anything in his favor. I urged all these pleas, hoping it might awe them into subjection; but they still cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" I then ordered Him to be scourged, hoping this would satisfy them, but it only increased their fury. I then called for a

basin and washed my hands in the presence of the clamorous multitude, thus testifying that in my judgment Jesus of Nazareth had done nothing worthy of death; but in vain; it was His life those wretches thirsted for. Often in our civil commotions have I witnessed the furious animosities of the multitude, but nothing can be compared to what I witnessed on this occasion. It might have been truly said that on this occasion all the phantoms of the infernal regions had assembled at Jerusalem. The crowd appeared not to walk, but to be borne off and whirled as a vortex, rolling in living waves from the portals of the Pretorium, even unto Mt. Zion, with howling screams, shrieks and vociferations, such as were never heard in the sedition of Pannonia, or the tumults of the forum. By degrees the day darkened like a winter's twilight, such as had been at the death of the great Julius Caesar. It was likewise the ides of March. I, the continued governor of a rebellious province, was leaning against the column of my basilic contemplating athwart a dreary gloom. These fiends of Tartarus dragged to death the innocent Nazarene. All around me was deserted. Jerusalem had vomited forth her indwellers through the funeral gate that leads to Gemonica. An air of desolation and sadness enveloped me. My guard had joined the cavalry; and the centurion, to display a shadow of power, was endeavoring to keep order.

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I was left alone, and my breaking heart admonished me that what was passing that moment appertained rather to the history of the gods than that of men. A loud clamor was heard proceeding from Golgotha, which borne on the winds, seemed to announce an agony such as was never heard by mortal ears. Dark clouds lowered over the pinnacles of the temple and settling over the city covered it with a veil. So dreadful were the signs that men saw both in the heavens and on earth that Dionysius exclaimed, "Either the Author of Nature is suffering or the universe is falling apart!" Whilst these appalling scenes of nature were transpiring, there was a dreadful earthquake in lower Egypt, which filled everybody with fear and frightened the superstitious Jews almost to death. It is said Balthasar, an aged and learned Jew of Antioch, was found dead after the excitement was over; whether he died from grief or from alarm is not known. He was a strong friend of the Nazarene.

Toward the first hour of the night I threw my mantle around me and went down into the city toward the gate of Golgotha. The sacrifice was consummated; the crowd was returning home, still agitated it is true, but gloomy, taciturn and desperate; what they had witnessed had stricken them with terror and remorse. I also saw my little Roman cohort pass by mournfully, the standard bearer having veiled his eagle in token of grief; and I overheard some of the Jewish soldiers murmuring strange words which I could not understand. Others were recounting calamities almost similar to those which had so often smitten the Romans led by the will of the gods. Sometimes groups of men and women would halt, then looking back toward Mt. Calvary, would remain motionless, in expectation of witnessing some new disaster.

I returned to the Pretorium, sad and pensive. On ascending the

stairs, the steps of which were still stained with the blood of the Nazarene, I perceived an old man in a suppliant posture, and behind him several Romans in tears. He threw himself at my feet and wept most bitterly. It is painful to see an old man weep, and as my heart was already overcharged with grief, we, though strangers, wept together; and in truth it seems as if the tears lay very shallow that day with many whom I perceived in the vast concourse of people. I never saw such a division of feeling, both on the extreme. Those who betrayed and sold Him; those who testified against Him; those who cried, "Crucify him! Crucify him! We will have his blood," all slunk off like cowardly curs and washed their teeth in vinegar. As I am told that Jesus taught a resurrection and a separation after death, if such should be the fact, I am sure it commenced in this vast crowd. "Father," said I to him, after gaining control of my feelings, "who are you and what is your request?" "I am Joseph of Arimathea," replied he, and am come to beg of you upon my knees the permission to bury Jesus of Nazareth." "Your prayer is granted," said I to him, and at the same time ordered Manlius to take some soldiers with him to superintend the interment, lest it should be profaned. A few days afterward the sepulchre was found empty. His disciples published all over the country that Jesus had risen from the dead, as he had foretold. This last report created more excitement than the first. As to its truth I cannot say for certain, but I have made some investigation in the matter, so you can examine for yourself and see if I am in fault, as Herod represents me.

Joseph buried Jesus in his own tomb; whether he contemplated His resurrection, or calculated to cut him another, I cannot tell. The next day after He was buried, one of the priests came to the Pretorium saying they were apprehensive that his disciples intended to steal the body of Jesus and hide it and then make it appear that He had risen from the dead, as He had foretold, and of which they were perfectly convinced. I sent him to the captain of the Royal Guard, Malcus, to tell him to take the Jewish soldiers and place as many around the sepulchre as were needed. Then if anything should happen they could blame themselves and not the Romans. When the great excitement arose about the sepulchre being found empty, I felt a deeper solicitude than ever. I sent for Malcus, who told me he had set his lieutenant, Ben Isham, with 100 soldiers around the sepulchre. He told me that Isham and the soldiers were very much alarmed at what occurred there that morning. I sent for this man Isham, who related to me as near as I can remember the following circumstance: He said that at the beginning of the fourth watch they saw a soft and beautiful light over the sepulchre. He at first thought that the women had come to embalm the body of Jesus, as was their custom; but he could not see how they could have gotten thru the guards.

While these reflections were passing through his mind, behold the whole place was lighted up, and there seemed to be crowds of the dead in their grave clothes. All seemed to be shouting and filled with ecstasy, while all around and about was the most beautiful music he had ever heard, and the place seemed to be full of

voices praising God. At this time there seemed to be a reeling and swinging of the earth, so that he turned so sick and faint that he could not stand on his feet. He said the earth seemed to swing from under him and his senses left him so that he knew not what did occur. I asked him what position he was in when he came to himself. He said he was lying on the ground with his face down. I asked if he could not have been mistaken as to the light. Was it not the day that was coming in the East? He said at first he thought of that, but at a stone's cast it was exceeding dark and then he remembered that it was too early for day. I asked him if his dizziness might not have come from being awakened and sitting up suddenly, as it sometimes has that effect. He said he was not and had not been asleep all night, as the penalty was death for him to sleep on duty. I asked him how long the scene lasted; he did not know, but thought nearly one hour. Then I asked him if he went to the sepulchre after he came to himself? He said no, because he was afraid; that just as soon as relief came they all went to their quarters. I asked him if he had been interrogated by the priests. He said he had. They wanted him to say it was an earthquake, and to say they were all asleep, and offered him money to tell that the disciples came and stole Him. But he saw no disciples. He did not know that the body was gone until he was told so. I asked the private opinion of the priests he had conversed with. He said some of them thought Jesus

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was no man; that He was not a human being; that He was not the son of Mary; that He was not the same that was said to have been born of the Virgin in Bethlehem; that the same Person had been on earth before with Abraham and Lot, and at many other times and places.

It seems to me if the Jewish theory be true, these conclusions would be correct; for it would be in accord with this Man's life, as I know of and as testified by friends and foes, for the elements were no more in His hands than the clay in the hands of the potter. He could convert water into wine. He could change death into life, disease into health; He could calm the seas, still the storms, call up a fish with a piece of silver coin in its mouth.

And now I say if He could do all these things, which He did, and many more, as the Jews all testify, and it was doing these things that created their enmity and offence, nor was He charged with violating any law, nor of wronging any individual in person — I am almost ready to say as did Manulas at the cross, "Truly this was the Son of God." Now Noble Sovereign, this is as near the facts in the case as I can arrive at, and I have taken these pains to make the statement more full so that you may judge of my conduct upon the whole, as I heard that Antipater has said many hard things of me in this matter. With promise of faithfulness and good wishes to my Noble Sovereign, I am, Your most obedient servant,

PONTIUS PILATE

From an Exchange.

(Reprint 1933)

THE CUP

Gene Hawkins

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” I Cor. 10:16

“**The cup,**” of which Paul writes here is declared to be singular, but a number of facets regarding it, are clearly listed in the remainder of this chapter and the next. It is called a cup of blessing and communion in verse 16 while Ch. 11:26 denotes it as a cup of suffering and death. This same verse also indicates that it is a cup which looks forward to joy and resurrection.

Paul’s major thrust in this tenth chapter is oneness and communion. He speaks of being under “the cloud,” “baptized in “the sea,” and drinking of “The Rock.” V. 1-4 The apostle further enlarges on the communion of “the blood of Christ,” and partaking of “the bread,” declaring that we are indeed “one body.” The word “communion” means partaker, or fellowship, and such camaraderie and oneness was sorely lacking in Corinth.

Many have taken his words “...whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily,” as a command to stand in judgment of one’s “worthiness,” to partake of the communion supper. Such is not the case. This is specifically a cup of “remembrance,” not of ourselves and our “spirituality,” but of Christ and His work of redemption. The word “unworthily,” is an adverb describing the **manner** in which something is done rather than the “condition,” of the person doing it. Paul declares plainly what he meant by partaking of this service unworthily in V. 29. “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, **not discerning the Lord's body.**” The problem in Corinth was that they simply did not recognize the oneness, the communion, of the body of Christ. They proceeded to shut some of them out; as we read: “For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.” V. 21 There was no unity among the Corinthians and absolutely no regard for one another, even as it is in Christendom today. The communion supper, which was supposed to bring Christians together in unity, has actually created stark differences and divisions in The Body of Christ. We would emphasize that even though men do not recognize the

oneness of the Body Of Christ, God most emphatically declares “There is one body....” Eph. 4:4

The “worthiness,” of a believer is determined by only one thing: the new birth. Revelation 3:4 says it thus: “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.” The Church at Sardis claimed the worst spiritual condition of all the Churches. There is no commendation attributed to it and the words “thou hast a few names **even** in Sardis which have not defiled their garments,” mean that as spiritually bankrupt as this Church is, there were a few that “shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.” They are worthy only because they are clothed in white or the righteousness of Christ. Some have also taken the words in V. 5, “...I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,” as a threat, posing the possibility that a believer’s name could be blotted out of The Lamb’s Book of Life. That is in no wise the context here. These words are rather a **promise**, that as lacking as they were in spiritual things, claiming only the worthiness of the new birth, He would in no wise blot out their names. So it is today. We drink the cup of communion because of our birth, not because of our conduct. We are a part of the body due to faith, and not because of works or lack thereof.

This brings us to the cup of blessing. “After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood:...” I Cor. 11:25 The entire body of Christ has been blessed with this “new testament” or new covenant of Divine Grace, purchased by the precious blood of Jesus. Romans 8:32 states it beautifully. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” We read also that He “hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:...” All that we have, and all that we are, including our eternal state in glory, is directly attributed to the blessing of this new covenant which was purchased at Calvary by the blood of Jesus. The problem in our day is that men simply do not drink deeply of this bountiful cup. We have been blessed “*with all spiritual blessings...*” but alas, so many live far below the privilege provided them.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death...” I Cor. 11:26 This is the cup of

suffering and death. Jesus spoke of it in Matt. 20:22-23. “But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.” Jesus’ words here are in answer to the request of the two sons of Zebedee, who wanted a select place with Him in glory. He cannot grant that request but does tell them that it will be obtained only by drinking of His cup, the terrible characteristics of which, are found at Gethsemane. “...Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” Lk. 22:42 We well remember the inward battle, turmoil and agony, Jesus experienced that night as He contemplated the bitter dregs of that cup. He looked into the immediate future wherein He would be made sin for us, and experience the unthinkable separation from God whereby He would cry out, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me. We can only imagine the excruciating physical pain He endured, but no Christian will ever understand the outer darkness, of separation from God, that He felt in those final three hours on the cross. This is the cup He would ultimately drink, and it was the thoughts and pressures of such a vision, that brought forth “...his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Lk. 22:44

Jesus plainly told His disciples “Ye shall drink indeed of my cup,” but we must surely understand that there is a difference in His cup and ours, His cross and ours. The cup which Jesus drank purchased our redemption, and none but He, can claim that distinction. No man can ever add one whit to the work of divine grace wrought by Jesus alone on Calvary. We must, however, be possessed of the same spirit that motivated Him to pour Himself out completely unto the Father’s Will. Paul describes it in Colossians 1:24 as he rejoiced “.....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:..” It seems that some of the sufferings of Christ were left behind on purpose for us. Though we do not, in any wise, make the atonement for sin that He did, we surely do suffer for the same reasons and for the

same people, “his body’s sake, which is the church.”

We would hasten to point out that the communion cup is a cup of remembrance for Christ, not ourselves. Though Paul reminds us “...that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,” (Rom. 8:18) we are to remember His death and accomplishment, rather than our own “suffering for Jesus’ sake.” This brings us to the second part of the admonition in V. 26: “ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” This cup of remembrance not only looks back, but forward; to His resurrection and beyond.

Jesus emphasized this fact at the Last Supper. “And he took the cup, and gave thanks,For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it **new** with you in my Father's kingdom. Mt 26:27-29 These words of the Master look past His death to glorious resurrection, for He knew full well that “....thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” Ps 16:10 A partial fulfillment, in regard to this cup of “new wine,” occurred 50 days after the resurrection when the Holy Ghost was poured out on The Day Of Pentecost. Many in the end of this Church age seem to be trying desperately to re-invent those days at this present time. That is not going to happen, for scripture plainly tells us that the day for which we are looking will not come except there come a falling away, not a revival. The atmosphere around Pentecost, with its spectacular air of ecstasy, was just a very small foretaste of the glory yet to be revealed in the coming Millennial Kingdom.

We are to remember His death “till he come.” When we partake of the communion cup in this manner, we are boldly testifying that we do embrace the glorious message that Jesus is coming again, and that soon, we too, shall drink the “new wine” with Him in glory.

Most Christians today will give mental assent to the second coming of Christ, at least to some degree, but the dividing issue in the Church today is: will Jesus come in my lifetime? Some answer with a resounding NO! and often with a tinge of anger in their voices. I would ask this question. Did Paul believe Jesus was coming in his lifetime? That answer is found a number of times in his writings, but none plainer than I Thess. 4:16-17. “For

the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, ...and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together" Paul said "We" shall be caught up, not "all of you who are left after I am gone, shall rise to meet Him in the air." We simply do not know when Paul finally embraced the reality in II Tim. 4:6, "I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand," but when he wrote to these Thessalonians, He fully expected to be translated. John informs us that having this hope is imperative to our spiritual well-being for "...every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." I John 3:3 The Church today is in no wise purified "even as he is pure," because this hope, which must motivate every part of our lives, is missing. There is simply no urgency for Christians to fully surrender themselves unto The Lord. Much of the Church is involved with numerous projects, some endeavoring to "save the world," and present it to Christ on a silver platter, but the message of "Behold I come quickly," is sorely missing. Whether or not Jesus comes in my lifetime is irrelevant. The imperative, pressing issue is: do I **believe** He is coming in my lifetime? Then, and only then, will I be truly ready for His coming.

This is the glorious season of resurrection, and we well know that being caught up with Jesus, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye..." (I Cor. 15:52) is a glorious part of that cup of joy for which He longed. Let us also partake of this cup, with renewed urgency, remembering His tremendous work on Calvary, but with our eyes fixed on "till he come." Every fiber of our being must be strained daily, listening for the sound of the trumpet to catch that first glimpse of The Coming Bridegroom, and be caught away.



* Truth is not a "what," but a "Whom." We should rest our souls upon a person, Christ, and not on a philosophy

* Take care for your life and the Lord will take care of your death. - Whitfield

* Christian faith is both assuring and enduring.

* Cross bearing precedes Crown wearing.

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

By Mary M. Bodie

The Prophet of the New Age (Second part of Sermon Continued)

The King now takes up the question of marriage, and insists on the positive obedience to the letter of the law, with but one exception, that of fornication, as a plea for divorce. Men have taken this as their standard for the Christian upon the subject of divorce; but this is not its force here. The Lawgiver is expounding the law to the Jew and the consequent result which it entails upon the offender. Israel herself is here personified as the wife who has committed fornication. Moses allowed divorce on lesser ground; but not so this greater Lawgiver. He could only divorce His people because of their faithlessness to Him.

He further shows the cause of this departure in heart of Israel from Jehovah. She had made vows, promised, as many wives do, to love and obey her Husband; but because of the weakness of the flesh had been unable to perform those vows. Therefore the Lord now urges the people to make no more vows; for these only express self-sufficiency and self-control of which they had indeed proved their woeful lack. "Swear not at all," He exhorts. **"But let your words be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."** They who cannot make one hair white or black, that is change their natural condition one iota, should not make resolutions. Rather they should own up to the weakness of the flesh and depend upon the Omnipotence of Jehovah, is the teaching that He is enforcing as to His kingdom. But its principles are in force for us today also; the safe place is lying low at Jesus' feet. God has sworn to Israel, as well as to us, that He Himself has undertaken the case of man, and His oath is sufficient. We have only to abide in His love and depend upon His faithfulness.

The Lord proceeds with His **"sermon"** which is indeed a masterpiece as to diction and exposition. Whence knows this Man letters? Asks the Jew. Ah! He attended the Highest School in the universe, studied at the court of heaven, the Father Himself being His Teacher, and He became learned in more than all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Hear the Master: **"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also."**

He now contrasts law with grace and emphasizes the difference between them. He is still teaching the principles which will rule in His kingdom. All men will then dwell in peace and harmony, gracious, long suffering and merciful. But today while we may have

the spirit of such non-resistance of evil, yet the actual practice of these admonitions is not possible because of the evil in the world. Yet we are not to be overcome of the evil, but to overcome it with good. We are not only to yield, but to show readiness to do more. We are under a heavenly government which is abundantly able to provide for any loss that we may sustain because of our giving up our own rights, as people express it. Therefore we need not advocate our own cause or take up arms to defend ourselves. The Lord Himself will attend to this matter for us. And we are partakers of such an abundant portion that we are exhorted to abundantly **“give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away.”**

And while all this needs wisdom in exercise, the latter will be forth-coming in the love, divine, discerning love, upon which we may draw. And to this the Lord now proceeds - **“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you,”** says the New Lawgiver, the Prophet of the Grace dispensation. Hard work indeed and impossible to the flesh; but He who commands has in Himself the enabling, for God manifests every day such love to His creatures, though men take His benefits as a matter of course. He blesses them that curse Him, does good to them that hate Him; and He has set before us, in the person of His Son the most wonderful example of His infinite compassion. He took this place as lover of His enemies, and poured out not only His heart’s love upon them, but His heart’s blood as well. He actually fulfilled, as a man, that which seems impossible for even God. And His love is our enabling and will also be Israel’s enabling when their day has dawned.

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And He adds, **“That ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven.”** The Son encourages His disciples to apprehend and accept the place of son-ship, thereby manifesting the character in harmony with such profession. For those whose Father is in heaven nothing can be permitted but heavenly perfection: and the fact that this is repeated in the last verse, **“Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,”** proves that the emphasis is upon the heavenly life, the new birth, which alone qualifies and enables us to act like our Father in loving the unthankful and the evil.

Our Life Under God’s Eye

Third Part of Sermon

“Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven,” - Chapters 6 and 7.

In this third section, the Law-giver emphasizes the **“righteous acts”** of the heirs of His Kingdom. The word translated **“alms,”** in the first verse, should be **“righteousness,”** see Revised Version. In the following verses, the word **“alms”** is correct. The Lord is **“laying down the law”** in more ways than one, we might

say. Observe the frequent occurrence of the word "Father" in this third part, three being the number of manifestation, which fully justifies its symbolic meaning; for it brings us into His presence where we live and act in full view of His all-searching gaze.

In the first eighteen verses we have these righteous acts expressed in three different ways; alms-giving, prayer and fasting. And these embrace all the duties, or privileges rather, of our religious life in its every aspect, man-ward, God-ward and self-ward. He commences with the righteousness toward our fellowman - almsgiving; for it is more manifest and most popular. The natural man judges according to our acts man-ward. Their estimate of our religious status is according to the giving of our substance to benefit mankind. As to whether it is according to the mind or will of God, they do not consider of any moment whatever. But this is of supreme importance, as the Great Prophet of the New Testament instructs. The motive for giving is the supreme test. Is it to be seen of men? God looks upon the heart, not on the alms we give. If we sound a trumpet, "**as the hypocrites do,**" that is, "**blow**" about our good works, etc., that we may be popular and praised of men; verily, He assures us, we shall have the reward that we desired; but this is all that we shall have.

While on the other hand, if we do good, that is give alms, and make no boast whatever, but "**give as unto the Lord and not unto men the Father which seeth in secret shall reward us openly.**" And who can measure this recompense? The next expression of the righteousness demanded by the new Lawgiver is that of prayer - our privilege God-ward. Prayer emphasizes the need of the creature. It is utterly inconsistent with any expression of pride or self-will. And yet these two incompatible things are here joined together. We can hardly imagine it possible that any one should pray to God, in order to be seen of men. "**As the hypocrites do,**" says the Lord; yet He does not so characterize His people though they too in public utterance, may be conscious of, and therefore influenced by the presence of men, because they have not yet learned the way of mastery over the self-life. It is certainly a wonderful victory when we are enabled to pray as though we were alone with God even when we are in the meeting house. But this only comes through the enduement of the Holy Spirit.

The Pattern Prayer

The Lord now follows His instruction on this subject with a model or pattern prayer. The divine principles of the dependent life are herein embodied. It contains the whole essence of prayer for all time and for all people. It deserves a careful study in detail. It is in two parts. The first refers to God and His glory; the second to man and his needs; thus teaching us that in divinely indicted prayer the Gather's interests are paramount. This is a family prayer. It commences with calling on God as "**Our Father,**" and

therefore the basis of it is relationship. The believer is a child of God through the new birth hence to such, God is more than simply The Creator, who brought a universe into being by His Word, and established laws for its government. He is more than a sovereign, more than a Law-maker, determining the future by His immutable Word. He is the Father of a great family for whom this very universe with its great laws exists. He is therefore the responsible party, which the very act of prayer assures. He has the affections of a Father toward all those who believe in Jesus Christ.

Therefore at the outset we learn that prayer is the petition of a child to an all-wise, all-loving and all-powerful Father, God; the cry to One who hears and answers prayer. And this Father is in heaven. He is a **“heavenly,”** and hence a **“spiritual”** Father in contrast to our father in the flesh. He is the Father of a new creation, having no fellowship with the flesh, the old Adam, neither under any obligation to hear its cry. This ends the salutation.

“Hallowed be thy Name,” is the first thing in order as to the petition proper. That is, praise is the first principle of prayer; not just repeating the above phrase as a parrot; but the very essence of prayer is a **“praiseful”** spirit, the heart bubbling up with worship and adoration to our Father and God.

“Thy Kingdom come,” is the first real petition. It betoken a **“longing”** spirit, desiring the coming of Christ who will Himself introduce His Kingdom. The world can never have the latter, regardless of all the dreams concerning the coming League of Nations, without the Personal Christ Himself. He must be present to superintend the affairs of God’s government. He is the very life of the Kingdom, as well as the life of the world.

“Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth,” will then follow as a matter of course. God will then, for the first time since the fall, have His perfect way in the earth. His creatures will delight to do His will when His Kingdom is come, but it will be as **“new creatures,”** born of God through Jesus Christ. This petition assures of an **“obedient spirit.”** It is the outflow of a heart that is itself surrendered to all of the will of God. Such obedience is the essence of the prayer that prevails. We desire to witness the sovereignty of God in the earth. We cry for a perfect obedience even the obedience that prevails in heaven, every high thing brought down under the sway of God’s government, yielding to His authority. This will commence to be fulfilled in the Millennium when **“a king shall reign in righteousness,”** but will not be consummated in all the earth until the Eternal Day has dawned. We are enjoying our Millennium today when Christ the King is reigning on the throne of our hearts and the will of God is being done in us and by us. This ends the first section of the prayer. The petitions following are of a personal character.

“Give us this day our daily bread,” is the beginning of our side of the great prayer. It speaks of a **“dependent”** spirit, a hand-

to-mouth experience which the flesh always abominates, but which is unspeakable delight to the spiritual child; for it brings God upon the scene. It is from His hand to our mouth, as one has aptly expressed it. The bread is simply the statement of a "daily" need. It means we are to bring everything to the notice of our heavenly Father, all the needs, little as well as big needs. He is able for all of them, as faith gladly owns.

"And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." This expresses a "**gracious**" spirit. A life of faith, emphasized by dependence upon God, is entirely inconsistent with an unforgiving spirit. When we are conscious of our frail needy condition, an earthen vessel, fragile and cumbered with infirmity, we are only too willing to forgive anyone who asks us, though he may have injured us deeply. But we cannot voice our forgiveness until he asks us, and neither can God, for His grace is only manifested to those who request forgiveness. When folks justify themselves in their willfulness, the Lord just lets them alone, and we do likewise. But when any one asks forgiveness, we are to show grace and quickly respond, assuring them that they are forgiven, even as God has forgiven us.

"And lead us not into temptation," tells of a "**trustful**" spirit. It is the only negative petition. Its very essence is a sense of frailty, coupled with a realization of the danger which surrounds our pathway because of our knowledge of the enmity of Satan. The temptations here refer primarily to the afflictions and persecutions which are the portion of the just and which God allows; for they work good to them who are exercised thereby. But we are not to pray for them as this betokens sufficiency and strength, not weakness and need. **"But deliver us from evil,"** is the positive side to the foregoing. We want not only a negative keeping out of, but a positive deliverance from the evil. And this evil is not only from without, but from within. Satan is a most powerful enemy, and he can most woefully afflict us; but the evil that is within ourselves, (**"for in our flesh dwells no good thing"**) is more to be dreaded; for only through this can Satan have any advantage over us. Therefore our faith must take sides with God against it before we will have positive victory.

"For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever, Amen," emphasizes the whole purpose of prayer. It acknowledges the sovereignty of the Creator over the creature which He has made, for He is sovereign in authority, in power, in glory. Thus this sublime pattern of prayer ends with God in His place on the throne and man in his place in the dust.

(To Be Continued)