



“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things,....” Heb. 1:1-2

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith.....” I Tim. 4:1

The scriptures abound with specific clarity of events announcing the world climate which will prevail in the last days. Jacob called his sons together specifically to “..... tell you that which shall befall **you** (Israel as a nation) in the last days.” Isaiah announces that even though there are bleak days ahead for this prized people, “.....it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the **LORD'S house shall be established** in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.” Isa. 2:2 Paul further describes conditions that will prevail in the Church, as he warns “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a **falling away** first,.....” II Thess. 2:3 He wrote also to Timothy declaring “.....that in the latter times **some shall depart from the faith**, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” I Tim. 4:1 The apostle further instructed his own son in the faith with these words. “This know also, that in the last days **perilous** (dangerous, furious, fierce) **times** shall come.” II Tim. 3:1

Peter also chimes in, with “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days **scoffers**, walking after their own lusts.” II Pet. 3:3

Scripturally speaking, the last days cover a rather long period of time. Many prognosticators of our day always associate the coming of Jesus with doomsday, but such is not the case. Were Jesus to make His first appearance at this very hour, seven years of tribulation would ensue, followed by a 1000, year utopia, before the dreaded “doomsday” or end of the world would occur. The reality is that we have been in the “last days” since the Day of Pentecost. Peter unveiled that bit of truth in Acts 2:16-21 “But **this** (all the phenomenon on the Day of Pentecost) is that which

was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:....

And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” When Peter quoted from Joel, The Holy Ghost moved him to change some key words in this passage, and these days, beginning with the glorious happenings on the Day Of Pentecost, are pronounced “last days.” Joel, however, originally declared “And it shall come to pass **afterward**,....” This simply means that God’s message to Joel clearly portrays events that will take place after this Church age is over. Furthermore, Peter says “I will pour “out **of** my spirit” whereas Joel asserts simply: “I will pour out my spirit,” meaning that the fullness of the Holy Ghost is yet to be witnessed by Israel and the world. The glorious experience beginning with Pentecost and continuing for the next seven years, were only a small foretaste of the greater dynamics that are yet to prevail throughout the Millennium.

Our opening texts, announcing the “last days,” are applicable to this entire Church Age. Paul wrote to the Hebrews, in a desperate endeavor to convince his own people, the Jews, to recognize that their Messiah had already come in the Person of Jesus Christ. The Jews had access to the scriptures and were indeed knowledgeable of the fact that God, “....at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” But now a dramatic change has occurred for He “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.” He has spoken to us “by his Son,” or through the scriptures throughout this entire age, but it seems that men have not, and are not listening. The many verses referenced earlier, indicate a striking number of conditions that are clearly manifest today, yet it seems that men refuse to see and hear, choosing rather to completely disregard the message that God continues to preach. His Voice was heard “in divers manners” in days of old and we are certain that the many disastrous happenings of our day are God’s Voice, speaking louder and louder, trying to warn men of the coming prophecies.

Many have concluded that these are “judgments,” coming from the Hand of an Angry God, but the prophesied “day of judgment” has not yet begun.

The above quotation from I Timothy indicates that these last days will produce a departure from “the faith.” It is important to distinguish “**the** faith” from the simple term “faith,” for “**the faith**” is an overall reference to “the faith of Jesus Christ” or “the faith of the Son of God,” (Gal. 2:16,20) which includes all of the Word of God. John clearly tells us that “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,” (John 1:14) meaning that Jesus is The Word of God, and as Paul states, God has spoken to us “by” or through His Son in these last days.

5 Departure from the faith is a departure from the truth set forth by God’s Word, and the bulk of the Church seems to have no qualms about participating in that departure. We were a bit shocked to read the following internet headline posted on “Front Page Magazine,” “Lutherans Denounce Israel, Just in Time For Christmas,” and this one in “The Blaze.” “Faith United Methodist Board Features Anti-Israel Message In Newsletter.” The message regarding the Lutherans goes on to report that a Palestinian Lutheran Bishop along with 16 Palestinian Christians, “blasted Israel in a new declaration that the 4.9 million Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is obligingly disseminating. We declare that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land is a sin against God and humanity because it deprives the Palestinians of their basic human rights, bestowed by God. It distorts the image of God in the Israeli who has become an occupier just as it distorts this image in the Palestinian living under the occupation. We declare that any theology, seemingly based on the Bible or on faith or on history, that legitimizes the occupation is far from Christian teachings because it calls for violence and holy war in the name of God Almighty....”

The message from the Methodist Newsletter, which appeared in the Blaze was written by Rev. John Calhoun and concluded: “The United Methodist Church stands for an end to illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine, and for political self-determination for its people.” Neither of the stands taken by these Churches, acknowledge God’s fore-ordained decree, concerning Israel in the last days: “**LORD'S house shall be established** in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and

all nations shall flow unto it.” This will not be fulfilled until the millennial period, but the mere omission of the fact that Israel will have all the land promised to Abraham is an admission that men simply do not recognize these last days. It also seems that many justify their position of supporting the Palestinians on the basis of Ishmael being a son of Abraham. However God was very emphatic when He told Abraham, “...in Isaac shall thy seed be called,” and that seed is Christ Jesus. Israel will one day claim and enjoy all the land promised to Abraham because they finally, as a nation, accept Christ as their Messiah!

Another rather momentous event reported by the “The Washington Post,” “The Huffington Post,” and “Faith Shared,” was an event held around the country on June 26, 2011. “The Washington Post” ran this headline: “Interfaith service at Washington National Cathedral promotes religious tolerance.” This was the theme of similar events taking place in some “70 Churches nationwide,” and the major purpose being to demonstrate tolerance for Islam. Jews, Muslims, and Christians, including a great number of denominations, such as Episcopal, United Church of Christ, Methodist, Lutheran, Catholic, Presbyterian, and Unitarian, along with a Baptist denomination, participated. The agenda proposed by “Faith Shared” included “clergy reading from each other’s sacred texts. (what happened to Jesus’ directive “....ye shall be witnesses unto **Me**....” Acts 1:8) An example would be a Christian Minister, Jewish Rabbi and Muslim Imam participating in a worship service or other event.”

The following is an excerpt from the article in The Washington Post describing the scene at the Washington National Cathedral. “As worshippers entered Washington National Cathedral for Sunday mornings’ service, some crossed themselves and some took photographs, some wore ties, while others wore shorts and a few even wore yarmulkes. In the center aisle, in the place of the baptismal fountain, candle-lit stands bore three books: a Bible, a Torah, and a Koran. When a visitor asked a nearby usher what to do, the usher replied: “This is a totally different service than what we usually do. There’s no wrong answer.”

“There’s no wrong answer,” seems to reflect the over-all attitude of men today. There is no standard of right and wrong anymore, because men simply refuse to listen to the standard borne out by God’s Word. We are faced once again with the

attitude which prevailed in the time of the Judges: “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” Judges 17:6, & 21:25

7 Still, God “Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,” and the message which must resonate within our individual hearts must be: “Behold I come quickly!” The absence of that glorious truth striking a chord in our own hearts can, and will, be disastrous. We hear prominent religious men in Christendom today declaring that “Jesus will in no wise return in my lifetime.” However, Jesus Himself described the consequences of such an attitude in Matthew 24 where He closes this chapter on the last days, with a parable. “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” V. 45,46 The actual context of this chapter describes events that will happen very near the end of the tribulation period, but the principles recorded herein apply to all the appearances that Jesus will make. We are, at this present hour, in a period known as “the beginning of sorrows,” (V. 8) meaning that the troublous times manifested now will only increase, in both frequency and intensity, until Jesus makes His final appearance and sets up the millennial kingdom. His coming or parousia, will include several appearances leading up to that time and all of them will be marked by those who are in no wise looking for Him. This parable outlines the commission for His servants in any age or dispensation: “...give them meat in due season.” Paul issued this same charge to the Church, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, .....to feed the church of God, ....” (Acts 20:28) and she has failed miserably. God’s Word is not the cornerstone of most ministries today, and from the messages we have heard on radio, T.V., and various books along with the reports of people who are truly searching for spiritual provender, we must conclude that many modern day ministries are not satisfying their hearers with the deep meat of God’s Word. Time is rather spent speaking on various social programs, or preaching a message to create unity, or some other agenda, even as seen in the examples above. Note further that this parable cites the reason that an “evil servant” will not fulfill his obligation to “give them meat in due season.” “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to

smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,....” V. 48-50 The decline of this unfaithful servant begins when he says “...in his heart, My lord **delayeth his coming.**” (“no way will he come in my lifetime”) After that, he engages in conduct unbecoming to one whom Jesus chose as “His servant,” one who should be preaching the gospel, and giving meat in due season. A careful study of this parable will reveal that such an one will not lose his life, but he most assuredly will lose his reward, the reason being that his ministry was not motivated by his desire and anticipation for Jesus’ coming, and The Lord did catch him unawares.

None can stop the fulfillment of prophecy targeting these “last days.” Though some today loudly trumpet their intention to bring revival to this world, scripture will still be fulfilled that a “falling away” will prevail, and the evidence of that is clearly before us at this present time. Our hearts are grieved by the onslaught of wickedness which permeates every area of society, but none can change Jesus’ declaration that “iniquity shall abound.” 8 Matt. 24:12 We would love to convince the “scoffers” that their perception of Jesus’ coming is wrong, but all the arguments in the world, does not seem to sway them. “Perilous times” are here, politically, religiously, and morally, and no politician, preacher, or philosopher will change that fact, for God’s Word will be fulfilled to the very last jot, and tittle.

We are not however, without recourse, because God is still speaking loudly unto us “...by his Son.” Though some may be willing to be caught unawares, Paul’s message to him “that hath an ear,” is: “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light,... Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But 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. For God hath not appointed us to

wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. 1Th 5:1 – 11 We are not filled with fear or discouragement by the atmosphere that we see, and feel, around us today. We rather invoke Jesus' exhortation to "rejoice when ye see these things come to pass..." because we know of a surety that they simply prove the authenticity of God's Word and that the next sound we hear may be the voice of the trumpet inviting us to "come up hither!"

*When We Think Not*

The time is drawing near.  
May be this present year,  
That Christ may call His chosen home.  
Perhaps when we think not,  
But cumbered with our lot,  
We're apt in fields of gloom to roam.

The thought brings joy and cheer  
That Jesus might appear  
Before the end of forty-one.  
Oh, I think not so soon,  
Say some, but at high noon  
Of tribulation days half run.

O Bride of Christ, why fear?  
You are to Him most dear.  
He's shuffling furniture on high  
For your supreme delight.  
He's your most august Knight.  
When we think not, He may draw nigh.

(We believe that this poem was written by Sis. Bodie, and the second stanza dates it in 1941. The hope of Jesus' coming was so very real to those who have gone before us, and we continue to rejoice that we are just that much closer today.)

## THE STRETCH

Carson Richards

“WHEREFORE SEEING WE ARE COMPASSED ABOUT WITH SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us;” Heb. 12:1.

What do you know about race horses? They ought to form an interesting sermon topic, no doubt. Paul used athletic gladiators of his day for figures of our spiritual career. Why do not we also? Some months back we heard a portion of a "Voice of America" broadcast for Latin America. As it came on, a horse race was being broadcast, the great annual classic known as the Kentucky Derby. For a major part of the race several horses were mentioned as leading, but one came plunging thru at the end, and gained the prize. In horse racing terms, he won in "the stretch." The stretch is that final straight-way when it is all out for the finish line with full speed ahead. It is the thrill of the race. As in the above, example, those in the lead are often overtaken and outrun in the stretch. We remember in school days of being quite a baseball fan. Being a Missouri lad, naturally the heroes were the St. Louis Cardinals. Several times they thrilled their followers with a great finish spurt that gave them first place, also known as winning in "the stretch."

The lesson to us Christians is obvious. The Apostle Paul says, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain." I Cor. 9:24. As in the natural, examples which he gave too, "One" wins, whether it is one person in individual contests or one team in collective competitions. Praise God, we believe, this Scripture speaks of one "team," the Bride of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, there IS a spiritual race course set out before as Christians, as most of us have heard. It is a course held out for all to run and for all to be on the winning team, but as in all human enterprises, one gains the coveted goal.

However not focusing our attention on, the course of the race, let us consider momentarily that part, then



the last part which we shall call "the stretch." Surely this principle may apply to the Christian race in different phases. It may apply to the Church as a whole; it may apply to a particular generation of people, or it may apply to an individual Christian. Each undoubtedly has its "stretch" experience, or period, of his race course.

11 First, let us look at the Church in its full course thru this age under God. She began her race, she has had, or is having, the development of it and she is having her culminating period. This last we shall call the stretch. The New Testament of God's Word gives us the history of the Church's beginning. It was glorious and blessed indeed, though not without its bitter trials. The Apostle Paul was the primary human guide but under the actual direction of the Holy Spirit, the Executor of the Godhead. The quality of the Church's leaders is shown in that they were characterized as, "men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 15:26. Praise God this is truly sterling character -- Christ-character. The first runners were good. Yet, even in this period there were signs that not all would win the prize: Christ as Bridegroom, for such we believe is the promised Prize. Such lapse is indicated near the end of Paul's career when he said, "Demas hath forsaken, me having, loved this present world." (religious no doubt) II Tim. 4:10. Even then, the strenuous nature of the race, its lack of flesh or adamic appeal, is apparent. Love for Christ had to, and has to, exceed any other love that a Demas might have. Next, of the main duration of the Church's course, not a great deal is known. The known history tells of the Church-truth's corruption into darkened religious Romanism. The visible picture of that period, of over ten centuries, is black. Whether there were individual runners during this time, we do not know. Possibly there were. God never seems to leave Himself without a witness in this earth. Some sincere souls may have "run well."

Shall we leave the dark side for brighter, things, then? Some more energetic runners appeared, as the period known as the Reformation in Church history, began. Luther, Calvin, Tyndale and others seemed heading in the

right direction. Surely the turn on the backstretch was begun. There, being "So great a cloud of witnesses," heavenly beings, surely they cheered fervently when these men took up the race of faith unto Christ Jesus, the Goal. Revivals, movements, persecutions, and increasing light speak of some competence as the Church started down the homestretch.

Now, we believe the real grueling "stretch" began soon after the turn of this century. The Church received a renewed divine blessing, the nearest approach to Apostolic days -- the revival of the in-filling of the Holy Spirit, and accompanying gifts. If the coming of the Lord is the goal, then a clearer view of Him and this great event was really a sign of His nearness. Also the impediments and pitfalls of the race course came to the front with new vigor. A tried, and increasingly wise adversary, Satan, brought forth new and old bags of tricks to waylay the Church in her onrush, the goal ever nearing. Nevertheless, out of all these obstacles and the slackening pace of many, the clearest vision of the goal yet, most likely, flashed into the eyes of the racers. The glittering prize appeared, in surely first-century glory to the Church. A remnant took up the challenge and took off for the finish line. Now then, we come up to date in the race course for the Church. Our opinion is it is the real testing time of the stretch right now. Satan is harassing, diverting attention, hamstringing the horses, blustering, lying on, and in every way, all out to check the racing portion of the Church. Since these few are pulling her on to the goal, the Church needs their constant attention and exertion to the race. Yes, surely it is the "stretch" of the Church's running. Praise God she shall be there.

As we mentioned the stretch in relation to a given generation, the above phrase brings us down to this fact also -- the present generation, very probably is a "stretch" generation in the Church course. We know every generation of men has had their part in the spiritual race. Each has had to win in his own day, if he wanted the Prize. None could rest on other's laurels, or bemoan the past, and murmur about the present, or fear the future. "For

David after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep" (Acts 13:36) Paul said. So it is with each generation of the Church. Therefore the present generation must run its peculiar race, not lament the joys lost, the crowds departed, nor accept a lesser place than the "one (that) receiveth the prize." We can't even get too occupied with the possibilities of being a "stretch" or closing generation. To stand and stare at the goal would be fatal. We must run on, according to Paul's rules, looking at Christ, Paul's Prize, and drawing on the lung reserve, God's grace, as given to Paul. We may have to have several "second-winds." We can get "fouled -out" too, and not win in our day. This reminds us again of another sports' event, attended in boyhood, the World Olympic Games a day or two. The great thrill to the boyish soul was one of the longer races, five or ten miles, one or the other. The beautiful afternoon drew to a close and, the sun dropped behind the stadium; shadows fell on the field. This particular race neared its close. As the runners went round and round the track, several had had the lead and relinquished it. The strain became pressing, some were closing wind. The American entry, a long-limbed fellow, had not been near the front the greater part of the race. Now, as the remaining laps came up, the long trained limbs began to lengthen out in almost imperceptible increase in rhythm, but it became very evident as the last lap neared. Finally, the last round began, many had dropped out, one, two, three dropped behind this runner, finally he was second. He and his competitor rounded the last turn -- it was the stretch, there was the sprint. Somewhere around 80,000 spectators were on their feet. The other man had not the reserve left. The American was slowly passing with thirty yards or so to go. Then to make the figure more effective, in the spiritual picture, the long tan limbs lost stride, it seemed as if the runner would fall on his face. His opponent had either accidentally or willfully shoved him as he passed. The cheering subsided, but reached a new roar when the racer, with supreme willpower, regained balance and sprinted to the goal ahead of his opponent. He had won in the "stretch" for his country and the chills

rippled up and down many spines.

So also with this present day Church race. The enemy would foul us out, maybe even use other runners whose heart has run out. One select group shall win as of other generations.

Too, the application to the individual Christian race ties in closely here. He has his beginning, long grind and stretch. We can drop out, for failure to lay hold of grace along the way, and fall out exhausted in the stretch. Grace is the wind and muscle and lung power for running. Praise God for this grace in Christ Jesus. Many may make the last turn apparently running well, and fresh for the stretch, but failures of drawing on grace may show up when it counts; the soundness of spirit may not be there, for "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."-Eccl. 9:11 As regards natural equipment, only those taking Divine grace for every step will have the reserve to draw on for the stretch. It is there that the race is won or lost. The Church will get there -- prophecy says so. Some of our generation most likely will, for truth revealed indicates it, so the question for us is our individual "stretch." Hear the "clouds of witnesses" cheering! See the Prize? Wherever we personally are in our own race before Him who leads us, let us run so as to win in "THE STRETCH."

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- \* To reduce spiritually, simply close your Bible.
- \* Happiness is the perfume you can't give to others without spilling on yourself.
- \* We don't know the exact age of the human race, but it is certainly old enough to know better.
- \* You don't have to be listed in "Who's Who" to know "what's what."
- \* To live here below like those up there; won't that be glory! But to live below with those we know, well, that's another story.
- \* Satan is never too busy to rock the cradle of a sleeping Christian.
- \* Let your testimony be written in large enough letters that the world can always read it.

## *Let My People Go*

***“AND AFTERWARD MOSES AND AARON WENT IN AND TOLD PHAROAH, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, LET MY PEOPLE GO, THAT THEY MAY HOLD A FEAST UNTO ME IN THE WILDERNESS” - Exodus 5:1.***

“Let my people go” was the demand of the Lord to Pharaoh who held Israel in bondage. Seven times it was repeated; three reasons being given as to why they should be liberated.

The first reason - “Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me.” We cannot feast with the Lord in Egypt. It is only as redeemed and saved, that we can sit down in His Presence and enjoy His fellowship. We are called into such a place of privilege by the fact of redemption. God would have us show our gratitude and appreciation of His grace and love by holding a feast unto Him. At such a feast, we should not be occupied with ourselves, our blessings, or our benefits; for this lowers the standard of true worship. We are to rejoice in the blessings that are ours in Christ Jesus, that is true. But there is a higher note to a feast unto the Lord than even this; that is, occupation with the worthiness of the Lamb and His preciousness and personal worth to the Father. Our hearts are thus constrained to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Our feast then is not “with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth”; and, we are in the spirit of the future worship of Heaven, where the multitude ascribe all glory and honor to the Lamb - Revelation 4,5.

The second reason for the command to Pharaoh was, “Let us go.....and sacrifice unto the Lord our God” - 5:3. Redemption has purchased us for the Lord. We are to yield in spirit, soul, and body to our Master. We do not belong to ourselves any longer; so that any sacrifice that we make is only our reasonable service. As David declares, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise” - Psalm 51:17. There are sacrifices of joy, sacrifices of thanksgiving, sacrifices of praise which we are called to make - Psalms 13:15. This is on the ground of redemption. We must be out of Egypt, in order to offer such sacrifices.

The third reason given Pharaoh follows, “Let My people go, that they may serve Me” - 7:16. Folk cannot serve God while in Egypt; that is, as identified with the old creation.

Man may imagine that they are serving God because they are humanitarian, or kind-hearted and help the poor or their church; but this is far off from the standard. When we know something of what it means to go inside the veil and worship as priests, offering up spiritual sacrifices through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, we will be divinely equipped to go forth without the camp to serve even as Christ served - as sons of God.

In Old Testament times, there were three kinds of servants or bond slaves - those taken captive in war; those who, because of poverty, sold themselves to satisfy the demands of their creditors; and others who became slaves by choice, and had their ear bored through with an awl. Thus, they signified that they would love and serve their master forever. The latter figures the perfect Servant, Christ. He had His ear opened or bored (Psalms 40:6); so that morning by morning, He was awakened to hear as the learner, that He might know what His Father wanted of Him each day, and where and how He should serve - Isaiah 50:4,5. It was His delight to do His Father's will and pleasure. We, as identified with Him, are saved to serve. But, we need to have our ear nailed to the door 16 of our Master's house, to get instructions daily; also to have the tongue of the learned that we may speak words in season and out of season to them that are weary. Then our service will be, even as was Christ's, effectual service. We are thus free men, yet bond-slaves - I Corinthians 9:19.

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### PRAYER

*I know not by what methods rare,  
But this I know: God answers prayer.  
I know not when He sends the word  
That tells us fervent prayer is heard.  
I know it cometh soon or late;  
Therefore, we need to pray and wait.  
I know not if the blessing sought  
Will come in just the guise I thought.  
I leave my prayers with Him alone  
Whose will is wiser than my own.*

## **SOLEMN "DEATH NOTICE"**

Sister Old Time Prayer Meeting died recently at the First Neglected Church on Worldly Avenue. Born many years ago, in the midst, of great revivals, she was a strong, healthy child, fed largely on testimony and scriptural holiness. She soon grew into world-wide prominence and was one of the most influential members of the famous Church family. She was a great influence for good, gathering, the multitude of mankind to her bosom to hear the story of Him who wore the seamless garment, a story of never-failing interest to all.

For the past several years Sister Prayer Meeting has, been in failing health, gradually wasting away until rendered helpless by stiffness of knees, coldness of heart, inactivity and weakness of purpose and will-power. At the last, she was but shadow of her former happy self. Her last whispered words were inquiries concerning the strange absence of her loved ones, busy in the marts of trade and places of worldly amusement. Her older brother, Brother Class Meeting, has been dead for many years.

Experts, including Dr. Works, Dr. Reform and Dr. Joiner, disagreed as to the cause of her illness. They administered large doses of organization, social contest drives, and religious education, but to no avail. A postmortem showed a deficiency of spiritual food, coupled with lack of faith, heartfelt religion, shameless desertion and non-support as contributing causes. Only a few were present at her death, sobbing over memories of her past beauty and power. Carefully selected pallbearers were urged, to tenderly bear her remains away, but failed to appear; There were no flowers. Her favorite hymns, "Amazing Grace" and "Rock of Ages" were not sung. Miss Ima Modern rendered "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," but none had any idea where this fancied isle might be. The body rests in the beautiful cemetery of Bygone Glories awaiting the summons from above which shall bring her, with her blood-washed garments, into the presence of the God of Glory, spotless, blameless and full of glory. In honor of her going, the Church doors will be closed on Wednesday nights, save one Wednesday each month, when the Ladies' Pink Lemonade Society serves refreshments to the handball team. --Selected.

# REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

*... From the Editor*

“Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings,..... that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the LORD your God.” Num. 10:10

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers..... Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.” Rom. 13:1,5

Surprisingly, for many of us, we have come to the beginning of yet another year. Some might wonder how the above verses could possibly be connected, but the first citation is a reference to the requirements for Israel as they came to the beginnings of their months. The silver trumpets are a beautiful expression of sounding out the message of redemption, recalling the constant benefits of Christ’s offering on Calvary. The second portion quoted above is also an admonition for all Christians today, as we are to be in total submission to the powers whom God has ordained. Many are finding it almost impossible to keep up with, and abide by, the ever changing and growing demands of present day governmental bureaucracy, but we must sound the silver trumpet of redemption in our lives, if we intend to abide by God’s decree, and keep our conscience clear, so we too can “...have a memorial before your God:.....”

Grace and Glory has recently experienced the complications of the ever increasing governmental control inflicted on this country. Somewhere around 2006 or 2007, congress passed a law requiring organizations such as Grace and Glory to file an annual report with the IRS. Evidently, Bro. Smith filed the first one but, for the most part, no one else knew about it. We were told in August 2011, that the tax exemption of Grace and Glory had been revoked as of May, 2010. I had spoken with an IRS official in July 2009 (when it became apparent that Bro. Smith would not be able to continue at his former pace) wanting to ensure that we did have the tax exemption letter, and to change our mailing address. We received that letter of confirmation at the Grandview address, but all subsequent correspondence, including the notice of revocation, was forwarded to us from Mountain Grove. This letter informed us that since they had not heard from us in three years, we had been automatically revoked and none of the circumstances



listed above, including Bro. Smith's departure for glory, held any sway with canceling that revocation. Our only recourse has been to re-apply for exemption, which requires a lengthy application form, along with 5 other forms and required schedules, which detail financial statements for Grace and Glory over the last five years. That task has been completed, but we were advised by the IRS that it would take from 90 to 120 days for them to issue a response.

Our hearts are greatly grieved in this matter because it means that all those who have contributed to Grace and Glory in 2011 will not be able to claim their offerings as a tax deduction on their 2011 return. Technically, all of us who claimed such a deduction in 2010, were in violation, but I have heard of no negative reports in this regard.

We are praying earnestly that the "God of the silver trumpet" will fight our battle and restore our former status with the IRS before April 15, 2012. We would advise our readers that if you need a 2011 receipt, we must be declared tax exempt, before we can issue one. If you have the luxury of filing closer to the April 15, 2012 deadline, we are hopeful that this issue will be completely resolved, and encourage those who are interested to contact us. We will announce it in the Grace and Glory, just as soon as our request is granted. In the mean time, we must comply with the law of the land, "...not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." We are assured that God is Greater than even the IRS.

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President's Day Weekend Convention  
Living Waters Tabernacle  
February 17-19, 2012

Come fellowship with like-minded saints during this annual gathering in Denver, Colorado. Sermons, studies, and plenty of food will be provided throughout the weekend. You'll be encouraged and refreshed in the Lord!

Book of Hebrews

Hebrews, James and Titus, have all been included in one book, and are now ready for distribution. You may send your order to P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Missouri 64030 or e-mail us at [gjhawk1@msn.com](mailto:gjhawk1@msn.com)

## *Things I Know*

C. B. Neidholt

(A Convention Sermon)

“I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.” Eccl. 3:14

What God doeth, He doeth. What God doeth, and not man.” If we do not realize what this word “forever,” or “everlasting,” or “eternal,” means this morning I hope we will before we leave. If God has saved a soul it is forever and ever. God doesn't save us then lose us. Salvation is of the Lord.” Jon. 2 :9 Do not forget there is nothing can be put to it and nothing taken from it. It is done, there is no room for anything to be added. There are thousands, millions over this world that do not know believers are in Christ. In I Tim. 4:3 we read of those who believe and know the truth. Believe it with the heart. Even that which is built in the flesh, we cannot add one thing to it; neither can we add anything to Salvation, nor take from it. If we are saved, God has done it. If we had saved our soul we would be continually adding or taking from it. When a building is put up we do not add to it and try to improve it, neither can we do anything to merit God's grace. “God doeth it that men may fear before Him.” “Men” is in italics; It means that all should fear before Him, both saint and sinner. We should reverence God.

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” I John 5:10-13

When we believe on the name of the Son of God, God sends the Spirit of Christ in our hearts and we have the witness in ourselves. Gal. 4:6 “**And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying,**

**Abba, Father.”** We have the spirit of Christ in our hearts. If we do not believe God's word, we do not believe God. If we love God we will believe Him. The new man believes God. HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT GOD HAS MADE HIM A LIAR. Have you ever seen a saint of God make God a liar? Not the spiritual man, but the natural man. We are a dual nature, we have a natural man that is wicked. He is against God, we also have the life of Christ dwelling within and He believeth God? Amen! And He will not make God a liar. If we do not believe God's word we know who it is that does not believe God. God gave the record of His Son. We did not give it, no other one gave it, but God gave it and He expects us to believe it. And when we believe it we rejoice and if we do not believe it we are miserable. It convicts and it makes us miserable until we believe it.

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I know some of us have had experience with these verses of Scripture. I run around over the country preaching the Gospel and I find many that do not understand these verses. I did not either for many years, but one day God opened my eyes, took the scales off, broke down my stubborn will and I said, Have mercy on me, I have called God a liar. What is God? Is He a liar? You say, we did not say that did we? We don't have to come out and say it to make God a liar. We have all made God a liar by not believing the record that is given to us in the Scriptures.

God knew what men would say and He got ahead of us and did not leave a moments time between these two verses. He says: **“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”** I John 5:11 God gave this message of His Son. This is the record that God has given to us eternal life. What kind of life is this? The word everlasting means, “never had a beginning and will never end.” I am convinced that a few people need to get their dictionaries and look up the meaning of a few common words.

A sister in Emporia, who is a recommended Holy Ghost Bible teacher, did not know that she was seated in the heavenlies. The words Eternal, Everlasting, mean without beginning, without end, unceasing, un-intermittent, perpetual, for all time, an endless wheel as it were. The Holy

Spirit got us and blew us in the wheel and He is still holding us there in the wheel, there is no opening on the other side, and no door and the devil cannot open it. I am sure God has us. Hallelujah! **"HE HAS THE KEY OF HELL AND OF DEATH, WHERE THE UNSAVED ABIDE,** but he does not have to have any key to where we abide. Rev. 1:18 He is holding us Himself. **"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."** Col. 3:4 **"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."** Col. 3:3 The Devil can't find us. We are in the secret place of the most High God. I believe we are safe because we can't help ourselves.

The way we would have it were we doing it, we would labor, pay our tithes, do everything we could then we might have a chance to be saved, but the Scripture declares **"BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THRU FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES; IT IS THE GIFT** 22 **OF GOD -Eph. 2:8,9. NOT OF WORKS LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST.** Abraham had whereof to glory according to his works, but not before God. God said don't do it before me Abraham, and Abraham did not do it. **"HE BELIEVED GOD AND THE LORD IMPUTED IT TO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS."** Rom. 4:3. Thank God forever. Some say I am saved but have not eternal life. If he has the Son he has Eternal life. That is the only kind of life that God gives. . He is not selling it, or trading it, all we have to do is accept it, It is a gift. We can't earn it or pay for it after we get it. If we gave one token for it, it would not be a gift. He purchased it, we did not. This life is Jesus Christ, Eternal life everlasting, perpetual, endless, continual' life, Thank God. I will be saved if I never preach another sermon, never testify for Jesus I will be saved. I am trying to emphasize the fact we are not saved by testifying, preaching or giving, but by believing.. "These things I write unto you that you may know" for certain, every individual that, believes on the Son of God, you, you and you and all who are in Christ, have eternal life.

Let us turn to Acts 13:39-48. We hear some more about Eternal life. When the Holy Ghost first fell they were so occupied with the blessings they did not realize what they had. That is the

way it had been for years. They were occupied with healing, coming of the Lord, and our working for Jesus, and looking for the Lord to come to earth, but they did not know much about the GRACE OF GOD. But Paul came around and they began to get their eyes open; They began to see eternal life. Paul was spokesman and he was the first and only one that mentions eternal life.

“And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

There is not a thing against us this morning if we believe. God counts us as though we had never sinned, God sees us that way this morning. All those that are born of God, do not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him 'and He cannot sin.” I John 3:9. If you believe it, this is wonderful news. If you do not believe it ye will be miserable. John 3:6. “THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE FLESH IS FLESH; AND THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT.” That born of the flesh is natural, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

There was a teacher in Emporia that taught saints that Jesus could have sinned if he had wanted to. If He could have sinned He never would have been a sin offering for us. There was no sin, no spot or blemish in Him, and so it is with us who are born of God, not the flesh but the spirit.

“AND WHEN THE JEWS WERE GONE OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE,.....” THAT is the way with many. They go out of the synagogue when you preach Christ to them. They do not want the Truth. Some believed and some believed not. So it is always.

Paul persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. That is different from the persuasion of many today. They do not want the Grace of God. They refuse to hear the Word of God. They will not listen to those who are preaching the grace of God. Some say, “O yes I believe in Eternal life, but not like you preach' it.” But there is only one way to preach it.

“ALMOST THE WHOLE CITY CAME TOGETHER TO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD.” They came to hear the WORD OF GOD, not fairy stories, but to hear the Word of God. If some man had told about building some tabernacle, they would have said, but we came to hear the Word of God. Those are the folks I like to talk to, those who not only hear the Word of God, but believe it. It is good to have our Bibles. “SOME WERE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND SOME WITH ENVY.” Everyone is filled with something. Some speak against the words spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. But we do not have to be filled with envy and blasphemy. We may be filled with the Word of God. Some were FILLED WITH JOY AND WITH THE HOLY GHOST, when they heard of eternal life. At this time the Holy Ghost refreshed them, gave them courage to press on and sent them forth and they went to the Gentiles.

“SEEING YE JUDGE YOURSELVES UNWORTHY OF ETERNAL LIFE WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.” It was necessary that the word be spoken to them. Why? The Holy Spirit is responsible (regardless of the vessel He might use, to bring the message to every soul sometime) that they might have no excuse. And likewise He is responsible to bring the truth about the **grace of God and eternal life**, to

folk, that they might have no excuse. Saints will be judged for their works, not to see if they have salvation, for that is everlasting.

“WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE GLAD.” What had they heard? The Truth of this eternal life. When they heard this, they were glad, not mad. It makes some folk mad, but we should be glad. The new man never gets mad. He gets righteously indignant, disgusted with the unrighteousness of this world. A mad dog bites, but saints are glad to hear the Word of God" and as many, as were ordained to eternal life believed.

In the Gospel of John we find the word "believe" 98 times. If there was ever a man in the world that believed, it was John. Do you know why he believed? It was because he heard it. He handled the Word of life. I John 1:1.

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I thought I might bring some other message, but I am satisfied with what I brought. It was the message God wanted. I am not preaching **about** eternal life, but preaching Eternal life. When we preach Christ, IT IS ETERNAL LIFE, and we do not simply preach it. We have it.

When I saw the truth I began to realize how many ministers and missionaries all over the world had never heard the truth of eternal life, and what a difference it would make in their lives to get the revelation of the Grace of God. What an army of soldiers there would be and how greatly the Lord would be glorified. Let us tell it more. Let us preach Christ, the essence of eternal life. Amen!

**(Reprint From 1937)**

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Did you ever think of the many dumb children God has? The Churches are full of them. They can talk about politics, art and science; they can speak well enough about the fashions of the day, but they have no voice for the Son of God. Dear Friend, if Christ is your Savior, confess Him!

D. L. Moody.

## **HOLD THE FORT**

Author-Philip P. Bliss, 1838-1876 Composer-Philip P. Bliss,  
1838-1876 Meter-8 5. 8 5. with Chorus  
Scripture Reference-Revelation 2:25

“But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.”

As was true of so many of P. P. Bliss's gospel songs, this stirring hymn was inspired by an illustration used by Major Whittle, an officer in the American Civil War, while addressing a YMCA meeting on the text from Revelation 2:25. Major Whittle's illustration was about a small Northern force of soldiers in charge of guarding a great quantity of supplies. They were being hard pressed by greatly superior Confederate forces. Finally, the Confederate general, General French, commanded the Federal troops to surrender. At that moment the troops saw a signal from their leader, General Sherman, on a hill some miles away which said, "Hold the fort, I am coming. Sherman." The story so captivated Bliss's interest that he could not retire that evening until he had completed both the text and the music for this rousing gospel song.

At the next day's YMCA service, Bliss introduced his new hymn to all of the delegates and the response was immediate and enthusiastic. Later it became a great favorite in the Moody-Sankey campaigns both in Great Britain and in the United States. As Moody and Sankey were leaving the British Isles in 1874, Lord Shaftesbury, presiding at the final service remarked, "If Mr. Sankey has done no more than teach the people to sing 'Hold the Fort,' he has conferred inestimable blessing on the British Empire, and it would have been worth all the expense of these meetings."

Although Philip Bliss did not consider this to be one of his better songs, his monument at Rome, Pennsylvania, bears this inscription:

"P. P. Bliss, author of 'Hold the Fort. ' "



## HOLD THE FORT

Ho, my comrades, see the signal Waving in the Sky!  
Reinforcements now appearing, Victory is nigh.

See the mighty host advancing Satan leading on;  
Mighty men around us falling, courage almost gone.

See the glorious banner waving! Hear the trumpet blow!  
In our Leader's name we triumph Over ev'ry foe.

Fierce and long the battle rages, But our help is near;  
Onward comes our great Commander – Cheer, my comrades, cheer!

Chorus:

“Hold the fort for I am coming,” Jesus signals still;  
Wave the answer back to heaven, “By thy grace we will.”

27



## Mine Won't Be Missed

In a certain Jewish community on the Continent there once lived a Rabbi, esteemed and loved by all his flock. To prove their gratitude for the services he had rendered, the community decided, upon the suggestion of a merchant, to offer the Rabbi a present of a ton of wine; and, in order that all might contribute to it, it was agreed that each should bring a bottle of wine and pour it into the receptacle. The Rabbi received with gratitude the offering and deposited the precious liquor in his cellar. But when he wished to taste it he thought a miracle had operated; instead of wine he found only water! His honest friends had all individually thought that a bottle of water would pass unperceived in the quantity of wine. Unhappily each had the same idea.

A profitable question for each of us to put might be: “What would become of the work of God if everybody gave to it as I give?”

# THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

By Mary M. Bodie

(Ch. 4 Concluded)

## The First Temptation

“If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” That is, prove that you are the Son of God; let your power be manifested in this time of need. Why should the Beloved of the Father be hungry and desolate when it is in His power to remedy His condition? He need not wait for circumstance to change. He can easily adjust them Himself. The need is real; the hunger sinless; why then not put forth His power and make the stones of the ground to minister to His necessity? Satan becomes very solicitous for this Man of whom already he is afraid. He would see His credentials as to Son-ship. And the suggestion is so simple and plausible, the reason of it so obvious, the inclination to minister, with what power we have to our own necessities; this to any of us naturally would appear to be no evil suggestion at all - no temptation whatever. But the Lord’s answer serves to show us that we have a deep crafty enemy with whom we have no power to cope except by the Word of God which the Last Adam uses in all three of these temptations.

We need to observe closely this battle, for such it is, that we may learn how to wield the sword dexterously; for the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. The battlefield may appear to be narrow; the points of attack few; the weapon employed weak; but herein lies one of the excellencies of scripture, that its principles, though simple are yet freighted with divine wisdom, and therefore weighty with divine power to meet our every need. And the Lord makes use of this one weapon, with which He is equipped to defeat the adversary, while the Spirit gives it edge; therefore it is sufficient. How marvelous that the Lord, as a Man takes the creature place in absolute subjection to the authority of God. And the verse of Scripture which He quotes, “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God,” is part of a passage which makes this doubly evident. It shows that God directly designed the path of trial and testing in the wilderness to teach His people His wonderful solicitude for them. “And He humbled thee and suffered thee to hunger; and then fed thee with manna which thou knewest not and neither did thy fathers, that He might make thee to know that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord,

doth man live” - Deut. 8:3. Christ had proved this Word of God sufficient for these forty days. His life had been sustained and nourished by the Truth. He had lived by it and though He was not hungry, yet He was alive and well and able to wield the sword.

Notice therefore that it is as man He speaks, and it is of man these things are written. He did not come in the glory of the Godhead to walk and talk with men; but He came in weakness, in the path of humiliation to learn obedience by the things which He suffered. He came as man to work out redemption for men; thus He cannot put forth divine power to deliver Himself. Appetite may crave; need may clamor, He feels these desires as other men. If this were not so, His humiliation would not be complete; but this is no impelling motive to Him. He has but one incentive in life - to do the will of God. He has taken upon Him the form of man for this purpose alone. Shall He now fail and do His own will? Nay! Nay! He will do nothing of Himself. He waits His Father's command. He lives by every Word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. He demonstrates that the Word is practicable. It can be lived in the world by the spiritual man. Satan finds it is impossible to move Him to take Himself out of His Father's hands; but yet he is not baffled. He has another scheme. He will try Him as to His soulish nature.

29

### **The Second Temptation**

**“Then the Devil taketh Him up into the Holy City and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple.”** Notice his power. The city and temple were the figure of God's dwelling place - Christ and His people being the Antitype. Hence Satan puts Him in the place that belongs to Him as the Last Adam, the pinnacle, or highest place in God's tabernacle - King of the universe of God. Then he commands Him to cast himself down from this exalted place, which is exactly what Jesus would have done, spiritually as well as literally, had He obeyed this arch-enemy. The latter assured Him, bringing the leverage of God's Word to bear upon this, that He cannot be hurt; **“for it is written, He shall give His angels charge over Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.”** This implies that He compel His Father to prove His Son-ship - let God come to His defense and witness by His power to His assertion, that He is the Son of God. Give God the opportunity to prove your boast and establish your claim as His Son before the universe.

But the Last Adam is not moved. He conquers again by the Word of God, and we see in this victory, that the man who

lives by the Word of God will be wise as to the use and misuse of Scripture. Satan omits part of the passage - **“in all thy ways”** -Psalm 91, from which he quotes, and those very words guard them against the abuse that he would make of them. The **“ways”** of Him, who in the same Psalm says of Jehovah - **“In Him will I trust,”** - will be God’s ways, and He will assuredly wait upon Him for the fulfillment of His own Word and not impatiently grasp for its fulfillment before the due time. This no doubt is Satan’s effort now, for since the Man refuses to move without the Word of God, here is now the Word to move Him to act. This Psalm surely refers to the Messiah; therefore it seems that simple confidence in God would cause him to claim and act upon it.

But Jesus does not yield. He answers; **“It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”** Thus to tempt the Lord, is to try Him by our thoughts; by our impatience that cannot not wait His due time, not take the lowly path, the hidden way, and take, by force if necessary, what we desire.

But the Conquering Man, He to whom all things belonged, moved on in weakness, leaving His case in His Father’s hands, waiting His own time for vindication and proof of His Son-ship. And yet here was the proof - He could not be tempted to desire anything outside of His Father’s will.

### **The Third Temptation**

**“The devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain and showth Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. ...And saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.”**

Satan changes his tactics completely in this third test, the number of manifestation, where he assails the spirit of the Last Adam; for He was tempted in all points, even as the first Adam. The devil shows himself more openly than before; but this time he does not say, **“If Thou be the Son of God.”** He suddenly appears to realize the fact that he cannot tempt Him on this line. He has already resisted both his attacks. He will not endeavor to prove by His own power, that He is the Son of God and neither will He move His Father to prove it; therefore the devil now virtually says, “I will prove it. I do not deny that you are the Divine One, who is going to rule all nations with a rod of iron. I am sure you are what you claim, and I will give you all these kingdoms. But there is one condition; acknowledge me as sovereign; fall down and worship me, admit my authority to give them to you, in other words worship me as your God.

This is the most blasphemous temptation. It is an insult

to the divine glory veiled in frail humanity. Satan is playing a desperate game and he ventures boldly to win but he has met his Master at last. He had wrested from man the sovereignty of the earth and for 4,000 years he has triumphed in undisputed sway; but here is his Conqueror--the Man who is going to chain him in hell for a thousand years and afterwards cast him into the lake of fire.

The Lord answers, as He does the two preceding challenges, by the Word of God, though with an indignation that was not manifest before. The enemy has shown himself and can now be called by his proper name, rebuked and bidden to depart - "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Instead of yielding, Jesus now asserts His authority as the Son of God, who, though clothed with frail humanity, is yet the Seed of the woman, the destined Man, who is to bruise the serpent's head. He cannot be moved from His allegiance to God and He will have nothing out of His Father's will, nor from the hand of the enemy. He has met Satan as a man - the Second Man, and though there is no display of Deity, no outburst of divine judgment, or power, yet not only is He not defeated, but He overcomes the devil at every point, and solely by the written Word of God. Its sufficiency as a divine weapon is tested to the uttermost; and this is an encouragement for us. We need nothing but faith to make it effectual; for Christ is seen here as the perfect example of faith .

The devil now leaves Him - Victor indeed - calm, undaunted, invincible in spirit, though no doubt weak and well-nigh fainting in body. But, oh, the angels came to minister with tender hands to His needs and we are confident that they brought the choicest refreshments that heaven afforded, the nectar more rare than Jupiter sips, to the Man who refused to doubt His Father's love and faithfulness amidst all the opposing circumstances which environed Him.

Oh this was victory indeed, the greatest of the ages past, the beginning of Satan's defeat. His sharpest arrows were aimed at this holy Man, but they were rendered powerless before they ever reached His breastplate of righteousness, by the shield of faith which He carried. He never let the shield down even for an instant. He stood and withstood; and finally he was alone, the honors all His own. And yet not alone, for the Father sent holy company, heavenly friends to comfort and minister unto His wants. He won the laurel crown that day - the crown of the Champion of the human race - the Redeemer of mankind. And

now He is ready to introduce His Kingdom.

**“Now when Jesus knew that John was delivered up, He departed into Galilee.”** The King is now ready for His presentation to Israel, but it is upon the basis of grace alone. As was noted, John figures the Covenant of law. It had its day in the purpose and plan of God and was sent before the Covenant of Grace, even as John was the fore-runner of Jesus: but now he is off the scene and Jesus alone has the stage. He is the prominent figure in the setting of the Covenant of Grace; all blessings, with which the latter is replete, cluster around and spring from Him.

As intimated the King is now ready for His introduction to Israel as their Messiah; for we must constantly bear in mind that this Gospel Record is a Jewish book. It speaks emphatically of the kingdom which had been promised to the chosen nation. And this kingdom, which John announced, Jesus now proclaims by His preaching, **“Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.”** The Jewish people were in expectation of their Messiah. The prophets had spoken again and again of such a future glorious reign of righteousness, peace and joy upon the earth, with Israel’s personal Messiah as its Source and Head; and their own nation as its center and channel of blessing to all other nations. And now the due time is at hand: the King is on the scene to set up the kingdom.

32

Galilee, the portion of Israel’s land which bore a decided reproach (John 7:52) was, in general, the sphere of the Lord’s ministry, while Capernaum as its center and the witness of His greatest miracles, was now true to its name, **“the city of consolation.”** It had been divinely marked out by Isaiah the prophet, long before, as Matthew reminds us. Galilee, as **“the land of Zebulon and Naphtali”** on the one hand, but now **“Galilee of the Gentiles,”** tells us plainly of the ruin which is manifest. Zebulon, **“the dweller”** had fulfilled Jacob’s prophecy, and **“dwelling at the haven of the sea,”** was the type of Israel as a whole, the chosen nation, giving up dwelling alone, to mingle in fellowship in commerce, with all other nations. Now it could truly be said, it was **“the way of the sea,”** as though Zebulon was swallowed up in its waters, which was indeed the case; while Naphtali, **“the wrestler,”** had ceased to struggle and was apparently satisfied to dwell in darkness which was but **“the shadow of death.”** But this is the very place for the light to **“spring up,”** so hither to Zebulon came a true Dweller, one in whom God had come to dwell with man; and to the land of Naphtali came more than a **“wrestler,”** a glorious Conqueror as

He had just proved.

He takes up John's word as to the coming kingdom, for Israel must "repent." They must own that they have failed, as regards the covenant of law: and that God was under no obligation whatever toward them, except to fulfill His promise to Abraham. And with this also comes the call for disciples, those who will share with Him in the toil and service necessary to the introduction of His kingdom, and later will share His honors and His triumph. Peter and Andrew, James and John answer His call immediately. They marveled no doubt at His condescension in choosing such poor unlearned men for His aides in such an exalted undertaking. But it is the way of the Lord. He does not choose the wise or the wealthy of this world to accomplish His will. They would take the glory to themselves as having done something. God does not need natural qualifications to further His purposes. The one qualification that is absolutely imperative in those associated with Him is dependence. He can get along with poor material and few gifts if we will only let Him be the Master. He will furnish all the wisdom and power if we but yield to Him. And He calls His men. He yet chooses them for office, as He ever did: He has not abdicated the claim to do this in favor of any one. He is Lord, and Master and Guide in all His people's service. And furthermore, His call requires prompt, unhesitating obedience.

33

The offer of the kingdom on God's part was in truth and reality. He was not mocking them. It was actually "at hand." Christ shows His credentials to office. His Father signs His ordination papers with mighty miracles which witness is beyond question and cannot be disputed. He gives powerful evidence that He is the Sent One, the long expected Messiah of Israel. He heals on every hand, lavishly blessing, delivering from Satan's power both right and left, apparently without regard to personal faith at all. This was according to prophecies which went before as regarded Him. As the nation's Deliverer, He brings national deliverance: and not until national criticism and national rejection appear, does the Lord ask for personal faith and confession of Himself before He will perform His works of blessing. And as we go on in the Record we notice that the miracles become steadily fewer from the tenth chapter on, though at times He lets the streams flow out in power to the most undeserving, for who can absolutely restrain or shut up the out-gushing of grace from the heart of Love.

And great multitudes flock after Him from all the

surrounding country: from Galilee itself; from Decapolis, the (significant number) colonial cities of Rome; from Jerusalem also, the city of prestige, vaunting itself for privileges, which being misused were now bringing ruin upon all connected with it. They all came out to see the great prophet from Nazareth. They came to see if He was the Savior-King, the Restorer of the breach, the One in whom they would be blessed and therefore a blessing. **"The world has gone after Him,"** said His enemies at a later time; and so it seemed for a while; but when the highly spiritual requirements of His kingdom become known, the nation refused the King.



Look Up  
Mary M. Bodie

O, look not back at all the wasted years,  
The fruitless hours, the failure and regrets.  
Leave them with Him Who wipes the record clean  
And lovingly forgives and then forgets.

34

Look not around; let not fears and doubts assail:  
For storms and tempests rule upon life's sea,  
So dark the night; so filled with sin and woe,  
That vain's the hope of comfort there for thee.

Look not within; for wretched thou' shalt be.  
There's naught in man wherein to put thy trust,  
Tho' he perchance appears both great and wise,  
He is a broken reed, creature of the dust.

Look up to Christ. He is the One to trust.  
No one will fail who leans upon His breast.  
He rules the sea; the wind is in His fist .  
He'll comfort thee and give thee blessed rest.