

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

Volume 111

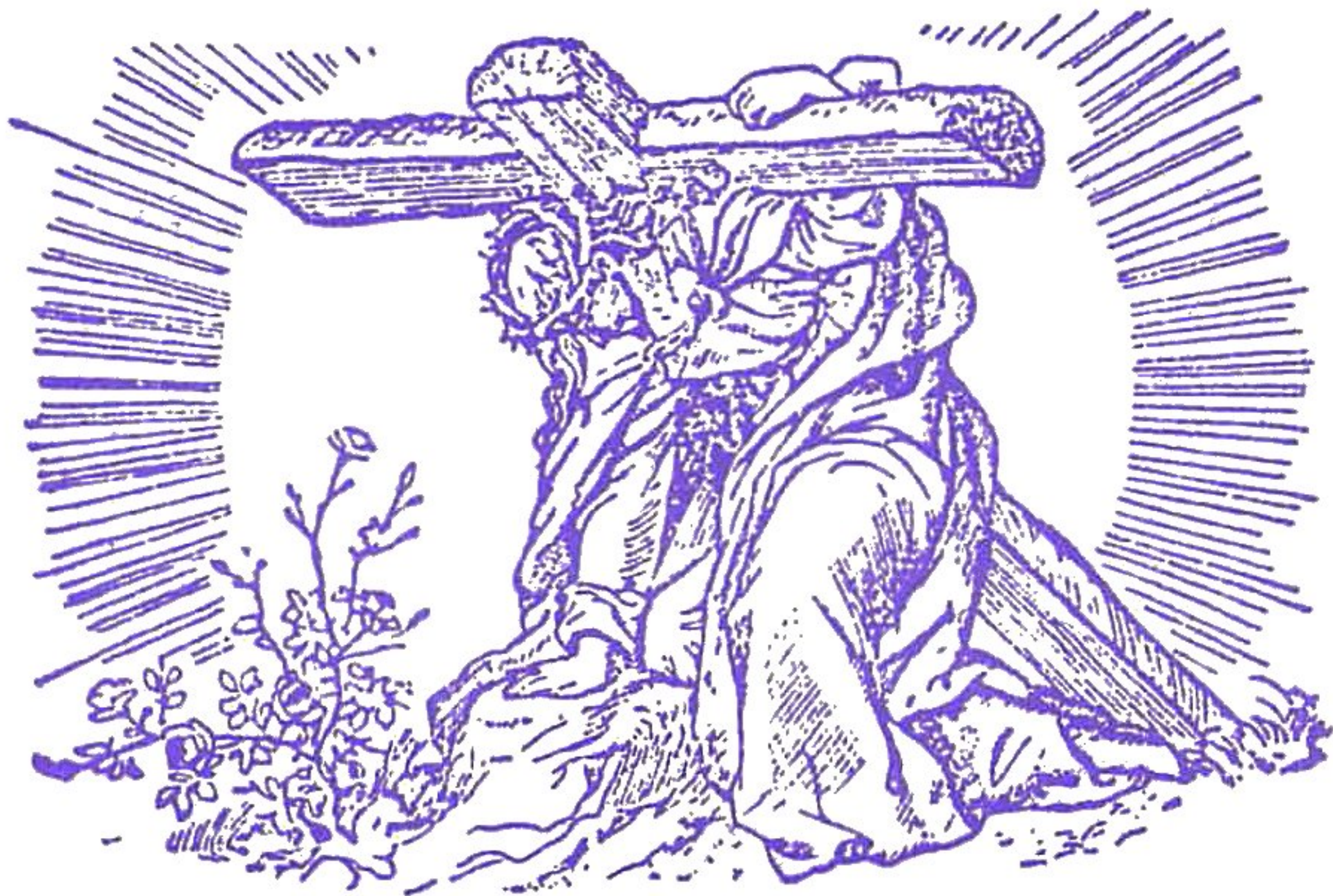
April 2021

Number 4



He is not here:
for he is
risen, as
he said.
Come, see the
place where
the Lord lay.

Matthew 28:6



THE CHRIST OF THE CROSS

*On Calvary's brow there was planted a Cross,
Which lifted a Man up to shame.
But He on the Cross was the dear Son of God,
Who died a lost world to reclaim.*

*They knew not their deeds of that one mighty hour.
"O Father, forgive them," He cried.
They knew not the Cross, long the emblem of shame,
Was there by the Christ glorified.*

*Let others, who will, praise the Cross of the Christ –
The Christ of the Cross is my theme.
For tho' we must cherish the old rugged Cross,
'Tis only the Christ can redeem*

Frank C Huston

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GRACE & GLORY is published for the purpose of proclaiming God's Holy Word. We believe that the Scriptures are inspired of God and were given to His holy apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit. (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21)

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Editor: Gene Hawkins

Definite Sign Posts Of The End

Gene Hawkins

“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes,.. I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.” Dan. 9:1-2

This text indicates that Daniel was in a great quandary because he was well aware of the fact that Babylon had been deposed by Darius the Mede (Dan. 5:31) and thus the captivity of the Jews should have ended. He had by this time endured the full 70 years of bondage, having been among the first to be taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C. He is, however, devastated because there seems to be no evidence whatsoever that the desolation of Jerusalem has ended, even though Jeremiah specifically foretold it. “And this whole land (Judah) shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.” Jer 25:11 It is quite clear from his prayer in the verses which follow that Daniel fully expected the restoration of Jerusalem and his beloved people to be implemented immediately. “O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain:...O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate,... open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name:... O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.” Dan. 9:16-19

3

Although God did not at this time indicate that Cyrus, who was soon to be the King of Persia, would shortly issue the decree to rebuild the temple, He did answer his cry with the fact that “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city,....” Dan. 9:24 The rest of this verse clearly shows that all those weeks would be fulfilled with a seven-fold blessing, in Christ Jesus “...to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” Daniel was also

promised that these same seventy weeks would begin with "...the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem,..." that is, the wall. V. 25 However, the remainder of this entire book testifies that the full restoration of the Jews would not occur in Daniel's day for he is instructed to "...Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." Dan. 12:9

4 There are undoubtedly a great many believers today who can identify with Daniel, because they too are looking earnestly for that which has been specifically promised by "the Book" of God's Word. Many are most assuredly disappointed because so many of the "signs" of Jesus' coming announced throughout the Word of God are clearly manifest, yet He has not appeared. It is vitally important that people of faith do not entertain the idea that someone will come forth with a "new revelation" of the end times after the pattern seen in Daniel, for Scripture plainly tells us that nothing shall be added or taken away from "...this book... For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:18-19 The "book" herein described is all of God's Word rather than just this book of Revelation. Some in our day seem to claim the role of an apostle or prophet, bringing forth new revelations of truth, but God's Word is very clear. The ministry of the apostles and prophets consisted of laying the foundation for The Church and that ministry has already been completed. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;" Eph 2:19 -20 Paul also adds the fact that "...other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Cor. 3:11 This simply means that no more revelations of truth will be added to God's Word through so-called "end time prophets." Peter declares plainly that "... holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," insisting that we too must have that same power to understand it because, "...no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." II Pet. 1:20-21

Thus, it is imperative that all those who are awaiting the glorious promise of Jesus' appearing "...the second time without sin unto salvation," (Heb. 9:28) rely heavily on that which is already written in God's Word. It is noteworthy that the very first sign of Jesus' coming again is that of deception. "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Matt. 24:4-5 It has been declared many times previously that "...saying I am Christ;..." does not mean that some fraud is simply impersonating Jesus, but rather that he tries to lay claim to things only Jesus can accomplish. Coming "...in my name..." puts forth the idea that a false prophet would insist that he is speaking FOR or on behalf of Jesus Himself, bearing a new revelation directly from The Master. John warns: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." I Jo. 4:1 Such spirits can be tried only by measuring them against the Word of God. It is for this reason that men must be well acquainted with the principles of God's Word, especially in matters related to end time prophecy. For example, Jesus declared plainly, "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Matt. 24:23-24 The little word "Then..." gives reference to a time deep into the tribulation period wherein deception by Satanic signs and wonders will be rampant. He further states " Wherefore (because of the warning in the previous verses) if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not." Matt. 24:26 The reason they must not believe it is because of V. 27. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Jesus simply explains that He is not in the desert or in some secret chamber on earth because He is IN HEAVEN, ready to pour out judgment upon this earth. This is the same pattern we must use today in refuting messages that are contrary to God's Word. Make no mistake! Every false prophecy can be refuted by the truth set forth in Scripture.

The pattern which Daniel experienced of "expectation without immediate deliverance," is also quite evident in Ancient

Israel just prior to their exodus from Egypt. God had demanded of Pharaoh, "...Let my people go,..." However, that demand was refused and rather than being able to rejoice over the expected deliverance, Moses cried out to God "...Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people?.. For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all." Ex 5:22-23 This same sentiment has been expressed by many faithful believers of our day making such statements as, "I never thought it would get this bad before Jesus takes us home." The answer for Daniel was God's Word, and Moses also received this immediate promise. "Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go,...." Ex 6:1 All the faithful of today must also know that God still has His plan, and we must patiently wait for it to unfold.

6 Those of Moses' day not only experienced a delay, but what tranquility they had was quickly replaced by more intense bondage. America and the world have experienced this same pattern, and once again God's Word will provide the answer. It is rather interesting that after Jesus' announcement of the aforementioned sign of deception, the next one is a reference to the interaction of the nations. "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars:...For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:... All these are the beginning of sorrows." Matt. 24:6-8 If these be the "...beginning of sorrows..." none of God's people should want to be present for the ending of them, and as seen many times in these pages, those who are a part of the Church at Philadelphia will be spared "...the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world,...." Rev. 3:10

However, it is quite clear that "the green new deal" adopted by the current American administration has already brought forth many of these "sorrows" for American workers. Their situation has been described previously in these pages and is easily likened unto the bondage imposed by Pharaoh on Israel. Taxes will also skyrocket as promised during the presidential campaign. Not only so, but the open border policy now being implemented may have given new meaning to Jesus' warning that, "...nation shall rise against nation..."

David Brinkley made this startling announcement by Nikita Krushchev, then president of Russia, on his Nightly News

program in 1956, which literally shocked the world at that time.: "we will take America without firing a shot. We do not have to invade the United States. We will bury you from within." The statistics surrounding the immigrants at America's southern border at this present time also clearly indicates one way in which Mr. Kruschew's prediction might soon be realized. One report out of Washington, by Zolan Kanno-Youngs and Michael D. Shear, published these numbers which are staggering and threaten to get worse. "...Border agents encountered a migrant at the border about 78,000 times in January — more than double the rate at the same time a year ago and higher than in any January in a decade. Immigration authorities are expected to announce this week that there were close to 100,000 apprehensions, including encounters at port entries, in February, according to people familiar with the agency's latest data. An additional 19,000 migrants, including adults and children, have been caught by border agents since March 1."

Numerous reports indicate those coming to this country are, in fact, from a number of nations that could well desire to harm America. It is also asserted that those who are captured will then be released into various parts of the U.S. Some prominent politicians and religious leaders applaud this policy as being humanitarian and an endeavor to perform our "Christian Duty." The fact is that God's order for "massive evangelism" is "...Go ye into all the world,..." preaching the gospel, rather than bring men into a certain country. Mk. 16:15 Not only so, but it is quite certain that the thousands wearing t-shirts bearing the message "Biden Please let us in" are in no wise clamoring to enter America in pursuit of Christ and His Gospel.

Contraiwise, it is rather striking that few even mention what these "illegal immigrants" may be bringing to this country. Officials at present are greatly concerned with sickness, disease, illicit and deadly drugs such as fentanyl, the coronavirus, and terrorist gangs, but what about the ungodly and corrupt religious impact upon a nation already turning away from God? Consider this example of such spiritual declension from a headline found in 'The Federalist.' "**California Bill Proposes Removing Cops Who Express Religious Or Conservative Beliefs.**" It has been pointed out previously in this feature that Christians around the world are under direct attack, and it is quite evident from God's Word that

such a situation may get much worse. This country was founded on the principles set forth by the God of Israel, and yet it seems that men are making every effort to ensure that we are no longer a peculiar people as God stated of that nation. “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people:...” Ex 19:5 “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself,...” Deut. 14:2 “And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people,...and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments;” Deut. 26:18 Lest men think that only Israel is included in “peculiarity” note Paul’s declaration in Tit. 2:14. “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” A careful study of the citations above show that being the peculiar people which God intended is a direct result of adhering to the principles of His Word. Consider the order of Paul’s message in Titus. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;” Tit. 2:11-13 His reference to “...a peculiar people...” in V. 14 is predicated on the “teaching” of God’s Word offered in the previous verses.

Sadly, our nation gives more credence to ungodly Christ-denying religions than it does to the infallible Word of God, and one day she will pay a tremendous price for it. Israel was specifically instructed not to allow false religion in their land. “Speak unto the children of Israel,...When ye are passed over Jordan...Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land ...and destroy all their pictures, and... their molten images, and... all their high places:” Num. 33:51-52 Daniel summed up Israel’s failure to follow God’s direction with these words. “We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing **from thy precepts and from thy judgments:**” Dan. 9:5 Isaiah also repeatedly denounces Israel because they embraced the gods of their new land rather than follow God’s instruction to become a peculiar people. “Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands,

that which their own fingers have made:" Isa. 2:8 Let all men understand. This nation is making no attempt to "convert" those coming into this country. America is rather being influenced by the communistic socialist philosophies of foreign countries and one can only wonder if nations like Russia and China may be behind the reality that "...nation shall rise against nation."

Daniel was assured that the Jews would be restored to their land, and while that did not fully come to pass at the time, God did ordain that the temple should be rebuilt under Ezra, and the wall was built by Nehemiah. The fullness of God's promise to Daniel and Israel will not be realized until the aforementioned "...time of the end," is past, and Israel enjoys the following decree, directly because she will adhere to God's Word. "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:" Deut. 28:13 This nation will "...hearken unto the commandments of the LORD,..." during the tribulation when they finally accept their Messiah.

Likewise, though in man's eyes it was delayed, God 9 did deliver Israel out of Egypt with a Mighty Hand as He had promised, and so it is with great assurance that all those who are looking for Jesus to come quickly will also realize the promise of God to them. Some may be discouraged by current events both in this land and around the world but God has proven repeatedly "...that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;" Deut. 7:9 Politicians and their political machines around the entire globe are struggling at this very hour to either obtain power or reclaim it. Let no man be deceived. None will achieve that goal nor make things better for any length of time. God's people must not put their confidence in the abilities of government, but rather in the promise of God, Who sustained all the above examples of disappointment and delay with His Own Precious Word. So let us Look Up! for deliverance. Paul's admonition in Titus must be staunchly claimed at this hour by those who have indeed received the promise. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" Tit. 2:13

CRISIS OR TRUST!

Ray Quintana

(Ed. Note: Bro. Ray is a

“Federal Government Finance Division
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“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.” Isa. 26:3 This statement has served to comfort multitudes down through the ages, but God does not stop there. Verse 2 continues with, “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” Entrance into this grace, wherein we stand, is a choice privilege. The greatest joy of true godliness lies in our being able to enter into such abundant grace.

10 Nothing is barred against us, for Jesus Christ has set before us an open door, and no man can shut it. We must not neglect our opportunities. Let it not be said, “We could not enter in because of unbelief.” But we like Paul, have believed and can claim, “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Rom. 5:2 Our feasting is not outside the door for we are seated in the heavens in Christ Jesus, but to enjoy this, we must enter in.

It is clear that, the coronavirus is not useful in and of itself. It is rather horrific, and even Evil. How then can God use it for good? Quite simply, He can use the coronavirus for good because God is good.

It is God’s great love for us. For Jesus bore not only the judgment of God for sin but also our sickness and disease. Jesus said in Jo. 16: 33 “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

The financial banking news reports that the loss of income incurred by the private sector and any debt raised to fill the gap must eventually be absorbed, wholly or in part, onto government balance sheets. Much higher public debt levels will become a permanent feature of our economies and will be accompanied by private debt cancellation. Banks must rapidly lend funds at zero cost to companies prepared to save jobs. Since in this way they are becoming a vehicle for public policy, the capital they need to

perform this task must be provided by the government in the form of state guarantees on all additional overdrafts or loans. How long can banks offer forbearance? Banks are promising to work with customers on forbearance measures, like payment holidays, and to extend new loans to companies that need liquidity.

Though the increase in digital services makes banking more convenient, safe and accessible for many, it also opens the door for more fraud. Because more Americans will conduct their financial lives online in 2021, there likely will also be an increase in identity theft stemming from data breaches and social engineering scams. Physical branches are becoming a thing of the past. Banks are faced with rising defaults, and the question must be asked, “Will banks have to change their approach to protect their own businesses?” Service businesses with large employee bases and churches which depend on giving to pay loans may not be able to meet their obligations. The payment deferrals have run out and the Federal Government’s Payroll Protection money is almost gone. Financial Times says, “you have to look within a crystal ball for the answers.” But we know, God sees all. “Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.” Psa. 139:16-19 Paul likewise asserts, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Col 3:1-3 We are doubly secure in God and in Christ.”

Banks may not have been able to get the stimulus money to the right people. Politicians have said the banks would play a big role in helping getting cash from the US stimulus package to the businesses and individuals who need it, and they would be paid a fee for doing it. But the fraud problems are mounting. Getting the money quickly into the hands of those who need it was supposed to be a critical step in stemming the economic crash. As banks have closed thousands of branches temporarily, there is a quiet debate over whether all those branches will need to

reopen long term. The crisis is also turning people away from cash and towards digital payments, since digital doesn't require any physical contact at the point of sale.

The coronavirus crisis in the United States and the associated business closures, event cancellations, and work-from-home policies, triggered a deep economic downturn of uncertain duration. The Federal Reserve stepped in with a broad array of actions to limit the economic damage from the pandemic, including up to \$2.3 trillion in lending support to households, employers, financial markets, and state and local governments. The Fed's powers and tools, as impressive as they may be, are not sufficient to cope with the economic harm of the COVID-19 crisis. A good deal of COVID's impact hasn't yet hit banks and credit unions because of a combination of government assistance programs and regulatory ease. However, it is very clear that few economists expect this state of suspended animation to last.

12 Across the globe, economies have been hit hard and fast by COVID-19. Unemployment in the U.S. spiked in the first half of 2020 at an unprecedented speed. While such a shock is unlikely to leave banks completely unaffected, equity buffers have improved significantly since the 2007 financial crisis, and monetary and regulatory policy responses were swift and radical to strengthen the resilience of the financial system. In addition, governments stepped in to support the real economy, which indirectly benefitted banks in the short-term.

Banks posted increases in 2020 trading revenues thanks to coronavirus-related volatility. It is because lending volumes are soaring, but not from the bank's own balance sheet. Major US banks extended fewer loans to US small businesses from their own balance sheets over the past year. Banks have been spending what they need to in order to keep their businesses running through the coronavirus pandemic, but the costs are stacking up. Running a main office and a handful of disaster recovery sites means some costs are duplicated. Banks have been buying thousands of screens and other computer hardware to set up their employees at home. The banking system is at the heart of this effort to keep businesses and consumers afloat. Just prior to the pandemic, banks had more capital and liquidity than they did 12 years ago. The danger is that large credit losses have

prompted them to cut back their lending just when it is needed most. Regulators have already relaxed capital and audit rules to allow lenders to trim loss-absorbing buffers. The wide range of loan provisions reported is indicative of the tightrope banks are walking.

The fact that so many banks needed government bailouts in 2008 spurred reform: special resolution regimes and bond bail-in powers were introduced to protect taxpayers in the future. During the last financial crisis, banks were the problem. This time around, as the coronavirus crisis unfolds, they look more like the solution to the problem. Rather than amplifying shocks to the system, as they did in 2007-08, banks are now helping to absorb them. Already, this crisis is becoming a sort of inverse of the last one. Governments are now leaning on the balance sheets of banks, rather than the other way around, while regulators are relaxing capital requirements to encourage banks to provide support to the economy. The concern is banks see this pandemic from no fault of their own as opposed to the crisis they created in 2007-08. The bigger picture is that what matters in the long term is not how much banks expect to lose on soured loans, it is rather how much they will lose as borrowers default and their loans have to be written off. The question is: will Government bail them out once again?

13

“But this time is different,” bankers say. Rather than being admonished for their role in causing the 2008 crisis, they are being called on to help distribute unprecedented stimulus programs worth trillions of dollars designed to save the global economy from collapse. Although governments and central banks are providing much of the cash, **lenders** are being asked to serve as the “transmission mechanism” to ensure support finds its way to the companies and consumers who need it most. But where is the money coming from? The burden will be ultimately on the tax payers. We are printing money which devalues the dollar. Where will be the finger pointing when the “chickens come home to roost?” Fraud, cybersecurity crimes, and ransom ware crimes are of highest concern and they are the highest costs facing banks. With remote banking, there is a rise in these crimes which is unprecedented.

The point here is that none of this caught God by surprise. It is obvious as to what is good and what is not. What we do with

what we see and hear is up to each of us. I am reminded of the tribulation period that is soon coming and will get everyone off the fence. One place it is called Armageddon and another place it is called the Valley of Decision. It means that man is brought to an ultimate decision. There are some who are putting off making a decision for God, but He is going to place people in positions where they have to make a decision, either for or against Him. The trust men are placing on getting their fair share from the stimulus money available has been such a focus. Many do not want to go back to work due to fear of the virus or dangerous work places or many other reasons. But there are those workers afraid to return because they risk losing hard-won unemployment benefits. With the pandemic, much emphasis, at least in the financial world, is on money.

James declares plainly that, "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." Jas 1:8 People just do not always see Who it is that supplies all our need "...according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:19 "...Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." I Kings 18:21 This faithful prophet indicates that men cannot ride the fence. If God be God, then let us prove which one is God. But the people were silent.

Today hearts are divided, as seen in Hosea. "Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images." Hos. 10:2 But what can we can do? Pray! "Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." Psa. 86:11

James also instructs that, "the rich,... is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away." Jas. 1:10 So also shall the rich man today fade away in his ways. This apostle simply means those who are rich in themselves, self-sufficient, wise in their own conceits, not simply they who possess houses and lands. He shows how weak are the strong and how poor are the rich before a fiery trial. In the end of this age, the Jews in their helplessness, bending under the tribulation days, will cry to God to be delivered. Those enriched by their own efforts, aided by anti-Christ, will wilt and wither away forever.

But, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for

when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” Jas. 1:12 It is the weak who endure, they of low degree who will cry out to God. They endure by the wisdom and the power of God. The weak stand up under these trials today, a paradox indeed. The promised rewards are never for mighty achievements, or deeds done, but for suffering, for endurance, for faith’s fullness of love toward God, and then especially for full overcoming.

We must think of the love that the Father has manifested unto us that we should be called the sons of God. How are we sons of God? By Jesus Christ. I am not worthy in myself but I am worthy in Jesus Christ and the love He has for me. It is this hope of the coming of the Lord that is working in us to purify us and to cleanse us. “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?” Paul asks “...what is our hope, or joy, or crown?” You are! We are part of Paul’s crown of rejoicing. He then declares that it is “...in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.” Why? Because we are watching and waiting for His soon appearing.

And then one might ask, “What is God doing when we are patient?” He is establishing our hearts. How important is patience to us? Paul answered thus: “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Rom. 5:3-5 How could we ever acquire patience if we want to skip the suffering and the trials? If we ask for God’s best, we are asking for tribulations because tribulation worketh patience. And Jesus bestows reward directly “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience...” Rev. 3:10 He doesn’t give that hope to every Christian but to those who have kept the word of His patience. There are many things facing us today from sickness to finances and everything in between, but God is for us. He wants to be gracious to us. “And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.” Isa. 30:18

We can be confident in the Lord, for His glorious return is eminent. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" Phil. 1:6 Watch, be diligent; the Lord is coming soon; watch and pray! "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch!" Mk. 13:33-37 What is it that awaits us? Glory! Glory to the Lamb of God! Praise His Name forever more! It won't be long!

The Bride Hath Made Herself Ready

The Bride is standing all glistening bright
In her wedding garments so pure and white;
Her hands have sewed the needlework fine;
The gold was brought by her life divine.

16

It has not been easy, this garment to make,
But all that she did was for Jesus' sake.
There were trials and pains and heartaches sore
Many were the needle pricks and cuts she bore.

There were times when dark doubts would flood her soul;
Yet His Divine Word again made her whole.
Disappointments came and trials to test
But in this, she learned to trust Him best.

At last, her garment was ready to wear
Though many dire hardships she oft did bear.
Then came her Bridegroom to call her away,
And gone was the night, behold now the day!

Her life of toils are remembered no more,
As she and Christ enters the Open door;
Glory and Light fills her once-burdened heart,
For now she's in heaven, ne'er to depart!

Paul N. Smith

" ... AND A LITTLE CHILD"

There's a story, which I understand is true, about a small farming community in the Southwest which demonstrates an interesting and important point.

It seems that this community had been suffering for a long time from a serious drought. Their crops and cattle faced certain destruction along with their economy, if the needed rains continued to stay away. Finally, the situation became so serious that drastic measures were called for and the entire population was called upon to collect at the small local church to pray for rain.

On the appointed day, the thirty or forty families of the area dutifully showed up at the church. The sky was a blazing sheet of brass without a cloud in sight. The heat was almost more than a person could stand. Dust devils could be seen whirling across the fields; and, the group looked upon the dreary scene through squinted eyes as they trooped into the church, depressed and silent.

Inside, led by the local preacher, they fell silent and each in his own way prayed for the cooling life-giving rain that could save them. An hour passed. Outside, there was a change in the wind; and, over the distant mountains to the West, a long heavy line of clouds began to darken the sky. The worshipers inside the little church were unaware of this, and continued their silent prayers; until, suddenly, their heads raised at the distant sound of thunder. They held their breath until the sound came again, this time unmistakable --- the distant crack of heavy business-like thunder.

They ran out into the churchyard and filled their lungs with the sweetest smelling air on earth --- the smell of fresh cool water falling on dry parched earth. Soon the fast moving storm reached them, and the rain fell in torrents. They jumped up and down and shouted and hugged one another; they danced in circles and thanked God for the saving rain. Then, suddenly, they all fell silent. There was only the sound of the booming thunder and the cascading rain, as they all stood and looked at one little seven-year-old girl who was smiling from ear to ear and watching the rain from beneath the shelter of a tiny umbrella.

Out of the entire assembly she had been the only one who, in her simple childish faith, had expected the rain to be delivered; and had, in her womanly wisdom, provided herself with an umbrella. The dripping adults looked at each other, and then splashed back into the church for a sober thanksgiving service.

REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:”
II Cor. 1:9

18 There are many attributes known among men which can apply only to God, Who testifies of Himself, “...that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.” Isa 45:6 He reiterates that same message in Isa 45:21 asserting that, “... there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.” Thus, the text above describes Him as “... God which raiseth the dead:” That glorious statement was proven on that first Easter Morn when those faithful women were told by the angel, “He is not here: for he is risen, as he said....” Matt. 28:6 Such Divine Feats also bring forth glorious results and those springing from this great miracle are legion. Paul made it personal when he published his own experience of being under the sentence of death, yet knowing that even death presented no obstacle for God. The apostle likewise presents a list of those things in I Cor. 15:14-19, which would not even exist were it not for the resurrection of Jesus. “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain,...” Paul’s entire message of Divine Grace was based on the resurrection of Jesus. Not only so, but if Christ be not raised “...your faith is also vain.” In other words, “everything we have taught you, and all the glorious provisions of redemption to which you have laid claim are nothing but a myth.”

Furthermore, “...we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.” Simply stated, “we are liars because we would dare publish that which is not possible as some declared the truth of resurrection to be.” Paul continues his argument, repeating again that if Christ is not raised, “...your faith is vain;...” This seems to be one central theme of his message here because V. 2 of this chapter presents the possibility that “...ye have believed in vain.” That possibility would only exist if there be no resurrection, and indeed if that be the case, “...ye are yet in your sins.” What a horrible thought!

Yet it is clearly written that, Christ was "...was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. 4:25 Contemplate the truth of this verse for a moment, for it means that Christ could have died for our sins but if He were not raised from the dead, man would have been left in a condition whereby he would simply continue in sin and death would still be a reality. The resurrection of Jesus changed all that, for that glorious miracle which only God could accomplish proved beyond doubt that Jesus was Whom He claimed to be: The Son of God. It also proved that God had accepted His offering for sin, and when He was raised from the dead we also were raised up in newness of life with Him. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead... even so we also should walk in newness of life...if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:...our old man is crucified with him,...that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. 6:4-6

Paul continues his assault against those who denied the resurrection with the fact that if there be no resurrection, "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." There is not a shred of hope for an afterlife, and if that be true "...we are of all men most miserable."

19

The Glorious News, however, is: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." I Cor. 15:20 Thus, not only are all the above benefits ours to claim, but all the tremendous provisions of redemption now belong to us directly because the message imparted by the angel was absolute truth. "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said....!"

ANNOUNCEMENT:

We continue to rejoice in the response to our online presentations of both services at the Church, and the Bible School Classes on Mon, Tue, Thurs., & Fri., Evenings at 7 P.M. These broadcasts may be found at www.gracegod.com Just click on the desired service or class listed in the upper center portion of our home page.

PSALM 23 (Continued)

Dr. Vicky Moots

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.” Psalm 23

20

Psalm 23:4a: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...” Notice first of all that David says, “I walk through the valley.” He does not stay in the valley, and neither must we, but we are compelled to walk through it. The children of Israel had to walk through the wilderness to get to the promised land of Canaan. God had a purpose in doing that. He wanted them to learn to trust Him for all their needs and to strengthen them for the battles that He knew would lie ahead of them. There were giants in the land of Canaan that would need to be conquered through faith in God’s power, not in themselves. The wilderness, due to its lack of water and food supply, would teach them to trust God. They were, in fact, like sheep being led by their shepherd through the wilderness. He provided them food and water miraculously for forty years. There were no green pastures in the wilderness, but they had to be led through the wilderness in order to reach the green pastures of Canaan, which was a very fruitful land, flowing with milk and honey. However, they were not always willing to be led and often rebelled against the Lord.

It was only an eleven-day journey from Egypt to Canaan, but it took them forty years because of their unbelief (Numbers 14). Nevertheless, those who had faith made it through because God promised them that they would. We go through valleys for a reason. Don’t pray to be taken out of your trial, or your valley or wilderness experience. Pray for the Lord to teach you through

it what He wants you to learn so you won't have to go through it again. Valleys and trials are not permanent, even though they may seem like it at the time. They serve a purpose, and we must stay in them until that purpose in our lives is completed.

Paul tells us in II Cor. 4:17 that the valleys and trials are only temporary. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." He was saying that the reward, the glory, was eternal, but not the trial. Paul's afflictions and trials were not exactly what I would call "light" or "but for a moment" and neither are ours. Paul was beaten and left for dead, imprisoned, shipwrecked, and there were many other times when he barely escaped with his life. He could only refer to his trials as "light" and "momentary" when he compared them to eternity and to the rewards that he would receive in Heaven. He looked beyond his suffering to God's eternal purpose for his life. We must be willing to do the same. Our Shepherd must take us through some dark valleys at times in order to reach greener pastures on the other side. Valley experiences increase our faith and cause us to grow spiritually, for we learn to draw closer to our Shepherd during those uncertain and dark times. 21

Paul encourages us regarding this in Rom. 8:28. He said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose". Paul learned this by experience in his own life. He didn't say, "I'm pretty sure that if you stick with it, everything is going to work out for the best, so just hang in there." No! He said, "I know!" There was no doubt in his mind, for it had already been proven to him by God. He had first-hand evidence. God will also use our trials to work His purpose in our lives, if we will let Him. The valley in this Psalm is called "the valley of.... death;" but it is only a shadow. A shadow requires light in order to be produced. A shadow is a guarantee that the sun is shining on the other side. It is evidence that the light exists. Just like faith, it is the evidence of things not seen. We do not like shadows because we cannot see clearly when we are in them. But if we could see clearly, we would not need faith. We do not need to fear shadows or to fear

death if we know the Shepherd. Jesus, the light of the world, conquered death when He went to the cross. Now, it is only a shadow and no longer has a sting. The Good Shepherd laid down His life and tasted death for all His sheep that we may follow Him through our valley and be victorious. He leads us through many valleys during our lifetimes where death may seem eminent, or even preferable, but we are not expected to walk through them alone, and they are not without a purpose.

God never wastes our pain or our tears. David tells us in Psalm 56:8 that our tears are so precious to God that He keeps them in His special bottle. Even Jesus wept when He was sorrowful after the death of His friend Lazarus. We also are instructed to weep with them that weep. Isa. 38:5 proclaims that God comforted Hezekiah with these words when he was faced with death: "...I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears...". We can continue to walk through our valleys, through our tears, by faith, in the shadows, knowing that our Shepherd is with us and will never leave us or forsake us.

22 Psalm 23:4b: "I will fear no evil for thou art with me". It is normal to fear a dark, gloomy place if you are alone and don't know what lies ahead of you because you simply cannot see it. But the fear is gone if you can hold the hand of someone you trust, someone Who knows the way because He has been there before and Who is able to protect you from harm.

The word "evil" means "something harmful or bad" and would refer to anything that has the potential to hurt you or harm you in any way. It is not just referring to sinful things. A shepherd's duty is to protect the sheep from danger, from predators, snakes, poisonous weeds or anything else that could harm them. As Christians, we do not need to fear Satan, the evil one, because our Shepherd defeated him at the cross of Calvary, but he does try to put fear in our minds. There are times when unexpected circumstances happen in our lives, affecting us or our family members. There are often events which can harm us and darken our pathway and have the potential to produce fear.

For me, personally, I experienced this situation when I was diagnosed with advanced stage cancer 2 1/2 years ago.

At that point I did not know what lay ahead of me. I knew the cancer would take my life if it was not treated and that it might not even respond to treatment. I also knew that the treatment itself, which included surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, also had the potential to harm me and cause side effects. But this verse showed me that I did not need to fear that evil thing in my dark valley, because the Lord, my Shepherd, promised to be with me all the way. I did not need to fear the cancer, or the treatment or death.

God encouraged Joshua after Moses died, in Josh. 1:9 when He told him, "...Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." He has also promised to be with us, and He will lead us all the way through our valley to the other side. We are promised again by the Lord in Isa. 41:10: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

If you find yourself crippled by fear, it may be because you are not fully trusting in the Shepherd to never leave you or that you do not understand how much He loves you. His love for you is not based on any merit of your own. He will not stop loving you even if you happen to stray or stumble. A shepherd will carry a lamb that is unable to walk on his shoulders until it is able to walk again, because of his love for his sheep. Our Shepherd's love is even greater than that.

We are told in I John 4:18 that "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear..." Allow His love to be perfected, or fulfilled, in you by accepting it completely without questioning it. The apostle Paul assured us in Rom. 8:35-39 that nothing (that means no person, no power, no "thing," no circumstance) is able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus (not even death).

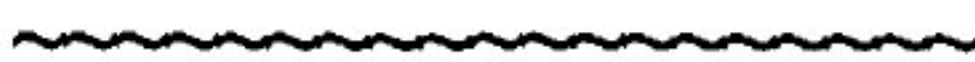
Jesus loved you enough to die for you. There can be no greater love than that. His love cannot fail even when you do. It is a love that is eternal, a love that you can trust. Let His love cast out your fear, for His love is perfect.

Paul prayed a prayer for us which we read in Eph. 3:17-19: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge..." How can we know something that passes knowledge? His love is so great that our minds cannot comprehend it. We must experience it personally in order to know it. We experience it during the dark times in our lives when we need it the most, especially during the times He has to carry us on His shoulders.

24 We find out how deep His love is when He reaches down to us after we have fallen, or when we are in the depths of depression. We find out how high it will go when we are lifted up with pride and He has to bring us back down. We find out the breadth of His love when we experience how far He will go to bring us back after we have strayed. What about the length of His love? It is eternal and never runs out or wears out, no matter how often we need it. We learn to know His love as we experience it in our lives, with our hearts.

We are safe in the Shepherd's care, no matter what happens, no matter how dark the valley. We have no need to fear, for He will always be with us, just like David said: "I will fear no evil for thou are with me."

(To Be Continued)



BENEATH HIS WINGS

*Beneath His wings I am secure;
In Him I ever shall endure
He is the Rock on which I stand;
He leads me by His guiding hand.
The signs abound in earth and sky:
I know His coming draweth nigh.
Just any day I'll hear Him say,
"Arise my love and come away."*

Beula Clark

The Resurrection

A.S. Copley

“But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” Matt. 22:31-32
“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.” Ex. 3:6

PROPHECY CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION

Our text declares that Exodus 3:6 is the first intimation of this blessed hope. The Sadducees said "that there is no resurrection." They asked the Lord if a woman had seven husbands, and they all died, which one would be her husband in the resurrection. He answered that the marriage relation ends with death. He showed further that God's words to Moses implied the certain resurrection of the dead; for He is the God of the living, though the bodies of the patriarchs were still in the graves when Jesus spoke. Job was distressed by the unbelief of his wife and friends. Nevertheless, he saw that though disease would corrupt and destroy his body, yet because his Redeemer should stand on earth at the latter day, in his flesh he would see God. Job 19:25,26. Daniel 12:2 says, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." What else can these words mean than that human bodies in graves will come out of their beds of death? The Lord said to His people, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help. I will ransom (free) them from the power of the grave (sheol); I will redeem (free by avenging or paying) them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave (sheol), I will be thy destruction." Hos. 13:9,14 Does this not mean that sometime the spirits of believers should be taken from their homes down in the earth, and their bodies out from their graves? This is exactly Paul's explanation of Hosea's prophecy. "Then (at the resurrection) shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave (hades), where is thy victory?" I Cor. 15:54,55 Both the grave and sheol (Hebrew) or hades (Greek) should be robbed of their victims.

THE HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION

Lazarus died. To comfort Martha his sister, Jesus Christ said to her, "Thy brother shall rise again." To that word, she replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Christ's response confirmed that hope and brightened it greatly. He exclaimed, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Now she had not only the declarations from the Old Testament, which to her postponed the resurrection to the distant future; but that glorious event stood before her in the Person of her Lord. Martha voiced the hope of all real worshipers of God among the Jews. That was not a new doctrine. Nevertheless, we wish the reader to observe further.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESURRECTION

26 By Jesus Christ: He did so indirectly by His unique answer to the Sadducees, recorded in Matthew twenty-two and Luke twenty. Now here is an emphatic declaration of the resurrection of all men. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Jo. 5:28,29 He knew that some folk would oppose it, and others would be slow to believe it; hence, He prefaced His remark by, "Marvel not at this." This language cannot be spiritualized. For He had said just before, almost in the same breath, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Persons dead in trespasses and sins were hearing Him every day. Some believed and received spiritual life. The promise of a resurrection was to them an encouragement to keep on believing. His meanings could not be misunderstood. He uttered two great truths. The living dead should hear Him and obtain life by believing on Him. The physically dead also shall hear His Voice and live. The former as continuous - "and now is." The latter was future - "is coming."

By Paul: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruit of them that slept." The word "firstfruit" implies that others are after fruits; that is, other saints will be raised from the dead. "For since by man (Adam) the death came, by Man (Christ) shall come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But

every man in his own order (cohort, company, or rank): Christ the firstfruit; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." (parousia, or presence) I Cor. 15:20-23 Surely Paul declares clearly that the dead in Christ, or those asleep in Christ, shall be raised up from among the dead. Nothing could be plainer. The dead bodies are in cemeteries or in the embrace of death somewhere. They shall be brought to life again. As truly as Jesus Christ was raised up from among the dead, so shall all who sleep or die in Him be raised. Ten times we read the word raised in this chapter with reference to the dead in Christ, because the resurrection of a body means that it is raised up out of the tomb or the embrace of death. Note these sentences - "It is raised in incorruption it is raised in glory it is raised in power ... it is raised a spiritual body."

Now let us note the apostle's comforting words to the Thessalonian saints. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." Is there any doubt as to who is meant by "them which are asleep"? Three times mention is made in this chapter of saints being "asleep," or "sleep in Jesus." This is explained as "dead in Christ." Evidently this speaks of folk in the embrace of death in the earth somewhere. They are down here; for "the Lord Himself shall descend," and those asleep "shall rise." They are separated as to their bodies from the Lord while asleep, though present with Him as to their spirits; but they "shall be caught up," and they shall "meet the Lord in the air" and "ever be with the Lord." That is indeed comforting. Neither is there anything vague or fishy or unbelievable about it.

The fourth, fifth, seventh, twelfth, and fourteenth chapters of Revelation imply a resurrection of the saints; for those inhabitants of the holy city will not all be caught up to Heaven without dying. We read in Rev. 6:9-11, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held ..." They are absent from their bodies. In Revelation 20:4,5 John speaks again of the same victors, that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." He adds, "This is the first resurrection," in distinction from the resurrection of the wicked which will occur a thousand years later. The Greek reads thus - "This is the resurrection, the first;" for it includes all believers whose spirits will be separated from their bodies by death. It seems to me that this array of Scripture portions is proof positive that there will be a literal, physical, material raising up of

human bodies out of graves, whether from the earth or the sea.

EXAMPLES OF A RESURRECTION

Jude informs us that Michael and Satan had a dispute about "the body of Moses." What the point of dispute was, and when it occurred, is not recorded. We believe that Michael was there, as God's representative, to withstand Satan who was insisting that Moses' body should not be raised from the dead. Satan had a mortgage on man which had not yet been paid off by the death of Christ, and he was holding Moses' body in the grave and his spirit in upper sheol. Therefore, God had to come on the scene and loose the prisoner from sheol and the grave. The Greek word "diakrino," rendered "dispute," means also "to separate, to divide, to part combatants." Doubtless, the latter is the meaning here. A real battle ensued between Michael and the devil, in which God won out. He raised him from the dead. Two other instances are recorded in which Michael helps the Lord. One is Daniel 10:13. The other is Revelation 12:7. The devil was the first Sadducee and the founder of Sadduceeism. Reader, are you a Sadducee? Do you say with that religious cult, "There is no resurrection of the dead"? If you do, we will read about you later. If Moses' case is vague and visionary to the reader, please consider Matt. 27:52,53 "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His (Christ's) resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Seven undeniable facts are expressed in these two verses. How can anyone read them and still deny or disbelieve the resurrection of the dead? They speak twice of actual literal "graves". They mention real human "bodies," many of them. They "slept." They "arose." They "came out." They "went into the holy city." They "appeared unto" other saints, even as Jesus did after He was raised. It is no stretch of imagination to believe that they met with the disciples when Jesus appeared to them. You cannot explain away the stern facts by saying that the Greek word "mnemeion" means "a memorial, remembrance, record, or a monument." There can be no memorial, record, or monument of a person that does not or did not exist. Monuments or tombstones are placed at the head of graves that house dead bodies. The Greek word "mneme," or its derivative "mnemeion," is translated in the New Testament - "sepulchre" thirty-four times, "grave" nine times, and "tomb" five times. In every instance, reference is

had to a burying place of dead human bodies. If that word does not mean grave or tomb in all those forty-eight citations, why did the Holy Spirit not use "taphos" which is rendered "sepulchre" six times and "tomb" once? Echo answers, "Why?" I have not mentioned Christ's resurrection as the chief example or sample, because no Christian questions His resurrection.

THE NECESSITY OF THE RESURRECTION

Our Divine sonship or son-placing (incorrectly called adoption) is not complete or perfect until we receive "the redemption of our body" (or resurrection). "For we are saved by hope" in that respect. Now we "have received the Spirit of sonship" only. "The manifestation of the sons of God" cannot take place until we have our glorified spiritual bodies, or are made perfect. See Romans 8:15,19, 23,24. Paul considered himself "perfect" as to his attitude or yieldedness to God; but not as to his attainment. He said, "Not as though I had already attained (to the resurrection from the dead), either were already perfect" or have a glorified body. He will be raised from the dead and receive his glorified body, his house from Heaven, when Jesus comes. We must have our glorified bodies in order to be rewarded for the deeds wrought in our frail earthen vessels. I Cor. 4:5 and II Cor. 5:10

29

Jesus said, "I do cures to day and tomorrow (two years), and the third day I shall be perfected" - Luke 13:32. His invisible ingress and egress among the disciples after His resurrection prove that He possessed His glorified body. When He shall come to raise from the dead His sleeping followers and change the living ones who remain and take them all home to glory, then we shall be perfected. We shall not prevent, or go before, the sleeping ones; for "the dead in Christ shall rise first." Then the changed living ones and the raised dead ones shall be caught up together in clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

THE LOGIC OF THE RESURRECTION

This is a very vital point. It is persuasive and convincing in its effects. I Corinthians 15:12-20. It is prefaced by a question. "Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." Christ must be included in the resurrection. The resurrection of

Jesus Christ is the pledge, proof, and guarantee of the resurrection of His followers. Do you perceive what a dismal muddle is occasioned by a denial of the resurrection? Then Christ is still in the grave. Paul continues his unanswerable logic. "And if Christ be not risen," then half a dozen proclaimed results cannot be believed. "Then is our preaching vain." Then "your faith is also vain." Then we preachers "are found false witnesses of God." Three times the apostle shouts that if there be no resurrection, then Christ was not raised. "Ye are yet in your sins." Your profession of salvation is a falsehood. What about the dead in Christ, who hope to be raised again? They "are perished." "We are of all men most miserable." The entire fabric of our boasted redemption and glorious salvation falls to pieces if there is no resurrection of the dead.

THE MANNER OF THE RESURRECTION

30 "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" - I Corinthians 15:35-55. Paul terms such questioners "fools." Yet he answers them and illustrates from nature. The grain of wheat or corn which is sown must die. Out from that dead seed springs a new living organism. I have seen the mere shell of a corn grain or pumpkin seed pushed up through the soil by the stem that grew out of it. "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body." The sprouting of a seed is dependent upon God. A wheat grain produces wheat. A corn grain does not produce oats, but corn. Likewise, out from the dead human body will spring forth a new, living, thrilling, glorious organism, a body as it will please God. It is objected that bodies which are in the graves very many years have decomposed and turned to dust so that nothing of them can be found. Be it so. He who made the first man out of nothing, or the earth of which He formed man, is able to create another more glorious body. Our only responsibility is to believe what God has written. We need not understand it all. His responsibility is to make His promise good.

The apostle teaches that the resurrected bodies will vary in splendor or glory by mentioning the variations of splendor among the planets. Then he says, "SO also is the resurrection of the dead." Then he delineates, "It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption." The wheat grain corrupts after it is sown; but out of it comes a green stem. "It is sown in dishonour" (being sick,

or frail, or old, or worn out); but "it is raised in glory." "It is sown in weakness," unable to survive any longer; but "it is raised in power." All these expressions indicate that the body which is sown is the same one that comes up, though verse thirty-seven seems to contradict it. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." How marvelous! As out from a tiny, dull, apparently lifeless grain comes a living, thriving, powerful, productive stem of waving beauty; so out and up from a dull, deformed, decomposed lump of failure arises a living, powerful, great, imposing, splendid, glorious, victorious, and eternal organism that will outshine the splendor of the sun. The indescribable contrast is indicated by these verses - "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is the Lord from Heaven." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep (or die), but we shall all be changed." This declares the simplicity of the whole matter. It is a mystery. It behooves us to believe it without reasoning. "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we (those who are living) shall be changed. For this corruptible (in the grave) must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality ... then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

A warning: "Be not deceived" by critics and objectors, doubters and reasoners. "Evil communications" or instructions, saying, "There is no resurrection of the dead," "corrupt good manners" or good sincere characters. You cannot deny the resurrection or quibble about it without doing damage to yourself and to others.

PORTIONS EXPLAINED

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." II Cor. 5:1 From this verse, some persons infer that Paul and all other dead saints are clothed already with their glorified bodies; therefore, the resurrection for which we hope is an imaginary something that cannot be explained. In plain English, there is no resurrection. We might just as well conclude from Eph. 2:6 that we will never die and never experience a change of any kind, because God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Oh, you say, "That is provisional." Exactly so,

provisionally we have "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." II Cor. 5:1,8 Today, Paul is absent from his old body and from his new provisional body, though he is present with the Lord. Compare Phil.1:23 Then he adds, "Wherefore (for which reason) we labour (are ambitious), that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him." A beautiful sidelight! Jesus said, "In My Father's house are many mansions (or abiding places) ... I go to prepare a place for you" - John 14:2. There was no room or place in Heaven for man until Jesus died for him and went to Heaven. He purchased, by His own blood, mansions for all of us; which He went to Heaven to provide and prepare. Hence, as Paul declares, "Our house which is from Heaven." II Cor. 5:2 Or, it is a "heavenly" house, or body. I Cor. 15:47-49 The house or body of "the dead ... raised incorruptible" is from Heaven.

32 "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" - I Thess. 4:14. The last five words are thought by some persons to mean that God will bring the dead from Heaven with Him. If so, whence will He take them? Three times in this chapter we read the phrase "asleep in Jesus," and once "dead in Christ." Are saints in Heaven "asleep," or "dead?" To what can that condition refer except to the body?

And, if it refers to the body which is asleep or dead in the tomb, how shall God bring them from Heaven? The Greek word "ago" ("axei" in the text) rendered "bring" means "to lead, to guide, to lead out and up." Hence, the original reads thus - "Then will God lead out and up with Him." The verses that follow show how He will do it. Every other word and expression indicate that, when the Lord descends from Heaven with the shout of command, then "the dead in Christ" (the bodies of believers in graves, they "which sleep in Jesus") "shall rise first." They will be "raised incorruptible," before the living ones who remain will be changed. The raised-up dead ones and the changed living ones "shall be caught up together" in clouds, or crowds, "to meet the Lord in the air." As God raised up His Son (Acts 2:24) by miraculous power, so He will raise up and lead out and up His sons from their tombs together with the changed living ones to meet the Son, the Head of His Body the Church, in the air. "So shall we ever be with the Lord" - not absent from our bodies, but

clothed with our mansions from Heaven. Hallelujah! Glory! Peter proves that the bodies of believers are still in their graves; and that they are not yet clothed with their glorified bodies, or houses from Heaven. He shows that Psalm 16:10 refers to Jesus Christ. He says, "Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day." Acts 2:29.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." I Cor. 15:58.

(Reprint 1979)

WHEN JESUS CRIED

The night was dark. Perhaps the wind was cold.

However He was held in gentle arms.

The little Christ Child, God to man come down.

For Mary held Him close from all that harms.

We did not hear sweet music from His lips.

He had no words of wisdom then to tell.

And yet no sound so ominous and clear

From helpless, little infant ever fell.

I hear Him cry, thank God, I hear Him cry.

That cry is His first sign to all the world

That now with needy man He takes His place.

His voice now joins creation in its groan.

He lifts the cry as ancient as the race.

O Love of God, so wide, so deep, so free,

You used no words to tell your Advent here.

But by a language known to all mankind

You spoke a mystery in accent clear.

The deep, deep love of God is heard to cry.

In love the miracle of words He gave.

Embodiment of Truth and Light was He.

To all the world He spoke the words of Life.

Alone, He speaks to God upon the tree.

The words are few. And then He cannot speak.

Past words the love to Him He loveth most.

I read it in the ancient Scripture clear,

He cried aloud and yielded up the ghost.

O, deep, deep love of God, I hear Thee cry.

John Wright Follette

A FAITHFUL WITNESS---WHY NOT?

You never can tell what God may do with a Gospel witness.

Many years ago in St. Louis, a Christian man was completing some business with a lawyer. Before leaving the office, the Christian turned to the lawyer and said: "I have often wanted to ask you a question, but I have been a coward."

The lawyer was surprised. "I didn't think you were afraid of anything!" he said. "What is the question?"

The client replied: "Why aren't you a Christian?"

The lawyer hung his head. "You know my weakness," he said. "Isn't there something in the Bible about drunkards having no part in the Kingdom of God?"

Not to be detoured, the Christian said, "That's not what I'm asking you. I want to know why you aren't a Christian."

"Well," said the lawyer, "I can't recall that anybody asked me, and I'm sure nobody ever told me how to become a Christian!"

34 Before long, the two were praying together, and God moved into that lawyer's life. He saved him, and immediately broke the power of drink that had bound him.

The lawyer was Cyrus I. Scofield who later edited the famous Scofield Reference Bible, the most widely used study Bible in the world.

You never can tell how God will use your witness - so BE FAITHFUL!

*He said he gave no thought to faith,
Did not believe in God
Yet every year he stored the seed
And each spring turned the sod.
Could anything but faith bring hope
That seeds would bear their kind
Could he have hope of future fruits
And be so blind?*

Grace Sayre

Our Corn Crib

A Problem, Solution & Triumph
 Arrangement & End of Ages
 Attack against the Truth
 A Burning Truth
 A Growing Relationship
 Caught up with Paul
 Cherubim & Seraphim
 Chaste Virgin
 Comfort in Time of Sorrow
 Death, Hell & Lake of Fire
 Destiny of the Wicked
 Diamonds in the Rough
 Dying Daily
 Earnest but Wrong
 Eternal Life
 Extra! Extra!
 Fact of Tongues
 Faith
 Fear of the Lord
 First Day of the Week
 Five Much Mores
 Five Consequences

Friend Listen
 Freedom
 Gifts of the Spirit
 Glossolalia
 God- A Triunity
 Gospel Records
 Gospels, Acts & Epistles
 Holy Spirit- Baptism & Anointing
 How to Receive Holy Spirit
 It is Finished
 Jesus Heals Today
 Judgement Seat of Christ
 Law or Grace
 Life Everlasting
 Light on the Law
 Living Ones
 Made Sin for Us
 Man Child. Rev. 12
 Mercy or Judgement
 New Birth
 Not Legislation, Revelation
 Oneness of Christ

Pauline Sanctification
 Paul's Superlatives
 Phoebe
 Preaching Another Jesus
 Predestination
 Preparation of the Bride
 Ranks in Resurrection
 Resume of What we Teach
 Salvation for the Body
 Scriptural Terms Defined
 Words on Eternal Security
 The Adams Case
 The Two Adams
 The Sin Offering
 The Unforgiven Sin
 This is That
 Times of the Gentiles
 Tithing
 Water Baptism
 Wheat and Tares
 Why am I Not Healed

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