

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLIV, September, 1950)

MOMENTOUS DAYS

Momentous days are on us! Our eyes may soon behold
A mighty clash of nations, which prophets have foretold:
A clashing and a cleaving of unmatched magnitude,
Wrought by some super being with evil power endued.

Momentous! Yes, momentous! But shall we be afraid?
The mighty conflict cometh, yet may our hearts be stayed:
The Lord from glory cometh—His coming draweth nigh;
Earth's most colossal conflict—we'll see yet from on high.

That nations all are arming! The worst is yet to be!
For Armageddon cometh not far from Galilee;
But brothers, Christian brothers, fear not of being there;
Before that awful carnage—Christ cometh to the air.

The days of tribulation are truly near at hand;
"Perplexity of nations" e'en now invades each land;
Yet not for woes and terrors, and earth's onrushing might
Look we for, but the morning of cloudless glory bright.

—J. Danson Smith

(Copied from "Now")

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

FELLOWSHIP

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full.

"And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John 1:3-7.

Four times in this short opening passage does the inspired apostle mention his theme. It is *fellowship*. What does "fellowship" mean? Fellowship is companionship, joint association and participation, a sharing together with others in resources, ways and undertakings—in short, fellowship is partnership. Here we learn several things about the Christian fellowship of which the apostle speaks.

1. First of all that the fellowship of Christians is the result of

their common acceptance of the gospel-testimony. ("That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us.")

2. The second important truth set before us is that the bond which unites Christians in fellowship runs—not on the horizontal plane, on the human level, between man and man, as in earthly associations such as lodges, clubs, fraternities, societies—but it runs up through God and Christ. ("Yea, and our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.") That is to say I have fellowship with my brother because we both have fellowship with God and with Jesus Christ, His Son. And in that lies the explanation of a fact which no doubt we have noticed, namely that when a Christian gets out of fellowship with God he presently falls out with the church and with his brethren. The backslider in heart soon begins to find fault with his brethren, and to condemn and criticise the church generally. According to him this and that one and another falls short of what he ought to be, and the whole church is nothing but a bunch of pretenders and hypocrites. Or, if he does not so criticise and condemn the church actively, his growing indifference and coldness shows how lightly he esteems it. That is all quite natural, for if your fellowship with the Lord is broken, what is left to bind you to your brother?

3. A third fact is that our fellowship depends on our walking in the light. This comes out in 1 John 1:5. Here we must observe an important distinction—the difference between relationship and fellowship. Fellowship may be broken and renewed, but relationship is constant. This fact is exceedingly important to us in the Christian life. It is quite commonly the case that one who has failed and fallen considers himself as no longer a Christian, nor a member of the church, or a child of God.

RELATIONSHIP VERSUS FELLOWSHIP

Now that there is something wrong in this view of things must be obvious to anyone who will stop to think. If any and every failure of conduct would cancel our relationship to God we could never know where any of us stand at any time. Today a Christian, a man may tomorrow be a man of the world. He may be a member of the church, the Body of Christ, but, having sinned and failed, he has ceased to belong—he is an outsider only. He may be a son of God by faith in Christ Jesus at one time; and the next time you see him he is no longer a child of God, but now a child of the devil. Yet, even if formally disfellowshipped by the church for some serious wrong, if he repents and acknowledges his sin he is received back into that fellowship. They do not baptize him again. This alone should prove that he never was really out of the church; for if he had been in the state of an outsider, he would have had to come in like an outsider—by faith and confession and baptism. The fact that he comes back by simple repentance and acknowledgment shows that he was a member through all the time of his sinful alienation—an unfaithful member, it is true, but a member still; an erring Christian, yet nevertheless a Christian; a wayward disobedient child of

God, but, if he was ever one, a child of God still. The fellowship can be broken; but the relationship persists and remains.

A PERFECT ILLUSTRATION

We have a perfect illustration of this in the well-known parable of the Prodigal Son. A certain man had two sons (said the Savior) and the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me." Here we see the relationship: the father, the son. But the fellowship is broken. The younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. Then came the inevitable harvest of his sowing in want, hunger, misery and humiliation. But when he came to himself and saw his lolly and his sin he said, "How many servants of my father's have bread and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son." So he arose and came to his father. The first word he spoke was "Father"; and the father said, "This *my son* was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." Thus, manifestly that underlying relationship had continued throughout all the long time of alienation.

It is a very important matter. Many a prodigal son, many an erring child of God, may be deterred from the attempt to return, because he is persuaded that all relationship is broken, and that he has no further claim on God. Suppose someone had overheard the Prodigal's resolve, "I will arise and go to my father" and told him that it was all a mistake, that the father was not his father any more, that that was all off from long past, that if he wanted to be his son again he would have to get his former father to go to court and take out adoption papers, etc.—we wonder if the Prodigal would have had the courage to come back? I fear not. The penitent returning sinner is likely to be timid and doubtful of heart, for his repentance has made him realize his utter unworthiness. No doubt the Prodigal's heart beat loud as he came in sight of the old home. Would he be admitted? Would he be forgiven? Would there even be a servant's place there for him? But, lo, his father saw him when he was yet a great way off, and ran to meet him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. The relationship had never ceased; but now came joy and gladness because the broken fellowship was restored.

FELLOWSHIP RESTORED AND MAINTAINED

Going back now to 1 John 1:5—we saw there that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the darkness we can have no fellowship with Him. It is sin that breaks our fellowship with God. In this same little chapter he tells us also how the broken fellowship can be restored. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; and, "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Another statement then follows: "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and

he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." The same blood, the same sacrifice by which the sinner of the world is brought to God and forgiven, can also cleanse the Christian and keep him in the fellowship of the Father.

Plentcous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.

Thou of life the Fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee,
Spring Thou up within my heart
Rise to all eternity!

THE PILGRIMS WERE PIONEERS

(The following quotations are from the farewell sermon on July 2, 1620, by John Robinson, founder and leader of the Holland Pilgrims. They reveal the spirit of true reforms that made the Pilgrims pioneers of religious freedom.)

"Brethren, we are now ere long to part asunder, and the Lord knoweth whether I shall live ever to see your faces more. But whether the Lord hath appointed it or not, I charge you before God and his blessed angels to follow me no farther than I have followed Christ. If God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth of my ministry; for I am very confident the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy Word.

"For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period of religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; . . . and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their time, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God, but were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further light as that which they first received.

"Remember your church covenant, in which you have agreed to walk in all the ways of the Lord, made or to be made known unto you. Remember your promise and covenant with God and with one another, to receive whatever light and truth shall be made known to you from His written Word; but withal, take heed, I beseech you, what you receive for truth, and compare it and weigh it with other Scriptures of truth before you accept it; for it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-Christian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."—Copied from *The Truth*.

NEWS AND NOTES

Johnson City, Tenn: "On July 9th I was privileged to fill regular appointments of the Mt. Auburn church, Dallas. There were four responses to the invitation at the morning service. Brother Jorgenson filled all of my appointments in Johnson City on that date.

"From July 17-30, I was with Orell Overman and the Melrose church, Lexington, Ky., for a Vacation Bible School and nightly meetings. Bro. Overman preached in Johnson City July 23, and other services were conducted by local forces."—Robert B. Boyd.

Report of the Burlington Church

The Burlington Church of Christ (Knoxville, Tenn.) is less than one year old and has an average Sunday attendance of 20 to 25 persons. Since June 5, the small congregation has had a full time minister. Prior to that time the services were conducted by laymembers who were responsible for establishing the new congregation.

The laymembers in beginning the new congregation felt that a place of assembly was needed where the full counsel of God could be declared. It was with that purpose in mind—and no other purpose—that the Burlington Church of Christ was established.

After much prayer, the congregation contacted Victor N. Broadus of Sellersburg, Ind., and asked him and his wife to come to Knoxville and serve the new congregation. Brother and Mrs. Broadus arrived in Knoxville June 5.

About 40 persons attended the Daily Vacation Bible School sponsored by the Burlington Church, and as a result of the Bible School two girls dedicated their lives to Christ and were baptized. Weekly prayer meeting services are being held each Wednesday. Bible study and regular church services are held each Sunday, and a young people's meeting is held each Sunday night just before the regular church service.

The Burlington Church needs room for expansion and a better place for assembly is being sought. Sunday School classes are held outdoors on sunny Sundays, but on rainy Sundays, four classes have

to be crowded into a room about 12 by 20 feet.

Financial Report, June, 1950

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|---|----------|
| Balance on hand June 1 | \$114.27 |
| Collections for June | 66.25 |
| From Highway Church, Pe- kin, Indiana | 32.40 |
| Mr. & Mrs. M. N. Harris, Franklin, Ky. | 53.00 |
| Worthington Church of Christ Prospect, Ky. | 33.64 |
| Total receipts | \$299.56 |

Expended:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| To Brother Broadus | \$66.25 |
| Rent on church building | 20.00 |
| Apartment for minister | 35.00 |
| Total | \$121.25 |
| Balance on hand July | \$178.31 |

Address correspondence to Lee Harris, 4023 Taliluna, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Louisville, Ky.: "Brother J. Scott Greer of Detroit, Michigan, held a fine meeting for the Parksville, Ky. church in July. Attendance was excellent and there were four responses to the invitation, three for baptism. We need the prayers of God's people."—Winston N. Allen.

Pekin, Ind.: "I enjoyed the Word and Work last issue; especially did I enjoy Brother Chamber's article on 'The Ailing Body.' How well I know his words are true. I wonder when preachers will learn to love each other? We have had fifteen baptisms here in the last few weeks and are praising the Lord for sending us such a lovely servant of His to teach us."—J. O. Hottel.

Lima, Ohio: "I have been visiting in the afternoons and have been pretty well received in the neighborhood. Although the results of the visiting are slow to appear, we do have new visitors at many of the services. We have had forty different people attend during the month of July. Of course, we count infants and children. We are greatly encouraged with the work thus far."—John May.

Dallas, Texas: "One lady was baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus, in the month of July, here at East Grand. I have promised to assist Brother Henry Harding and the Piedmont Avenue church in

Greenville, South Carolina, in a mission meeting in the month of September, beginning the tenth."—J. E. Blansett.

Tell City, Ind.: "We are having a wonderful revival with Brother J. L. Addams preaching. One has been baptized and two restored thus far, with much promise of results before the close. A basket dinner is scheduled for next Sunday, August 27. Pray for us."—Preston Winchell.

Camp Taylor, Ky.: "Two came forward the last night of our mission tent meeting south of Camp Taylor: one for baptism and one for membership. Three others came the Sunday following at the worship service; two of these were baptized into Christ. L. V. Houtz was our evangelist. His messages were excellent."—J. R. Clark.

Borden, Ind.: "Our meeting closed Sunday, Aug. 20. Brother Marsh has been with us for six consecutive years and we feel the sermons this year were the strongest and best.

"The house was filled to capacity nearly every night. Other churches were represented throughout the meeting. The Sellersburg young people were with us each Monday night.

"Visible results were eight baptisms, four restorations and one for membership. To God be all the thanks, glory and praise."—F. S. Spaulding.

Gallatin, Tenn.: "Since our last report in July we have had eleven responses to the invitation at regular services here at Gallatin: three by membership, one by restoration and seven by baptism."—H. L. Olmstead.

Dallas, Texas: "We had a wonderful Vacation Bible School. We had the largest number Fair Park has ever had, and I think that a very good work was done. Our largest number was 97 and our smallest 80, with an average daily attendance of 86 plus. Shortage of material in overcrowded classes of young children caused some one to say that, although we looked to the Lord, we didn't carry a 'big enough bucket' to catch the blessing."

"Things move along well here. The Lord continues to bless, numer-

ous visitors in attendance, a good working nucleus, and some responses along.

"I can supply in quantities, free, **"From the Cross to the Crown."** (This is a folder setting forth in a terse way, with many scripture citations, events from the cross to the crown.—Pub.)"—Frank M. Mullins.

Amite, La., Aug. 16: "This field of gospel work has been refreshed over and over this summer with good meetings and blessings from the hand of God. The Big Creek church has just closed out one of the best meetings ever held there. The attendance was good from the start and increased until the capacity of the house was reached. One pleasing feature of the meeting was the unbroken attendance. Seven responses were recorded and the congregation increased by that number. The Evangelist Richard Ramsey of New Orleans did the preaching, and to say it was well done, is to state it mildly. He preached Christ and Him crucified in an appealing manner, and those who came forward were confessing their faith in the Lord who died for them. Before service time each evening he devoted time to a children's Bible drill which helped much and drew a large number of children to the place early.

"Hayden Grove church, three miles east of Amite, is announcing a meeting beginning Sunday, August 21. Bro. Ivy J. Istre of Jennings is the evangelist. He is to be accompanied by Sister Istre and their son Kenneth. The son will preach on Sundays at other points as well as help in the singing at Hayden Grove. We also have radio programs for the week—Monday through Saturday—and expect to have some of our young people on the air in song.

"Some from here are to join Bro. Richard Ramsey and others from New Orleans in a mission cottage meeting at Ponchatoula Friday night. There is much activity in this whole field, including the brethren at New Orleans. We need your prayers and cooperation."—A. K. Ramsey.

Frankfort, Ky.: "On Aug. 13 we closed our meeting with seven additions to the church, six bap-

tized and one for membership. Bro. H. L. Olmstead did a fine job of preaching; he endeared himself to all the people of this community and his messages were a blessing to all. I have never heard a man preach undenominational Christianity any stronger than he did.

"Our attendance was the best we have had since I have been here. The house was filled every night and chairs had to be used several times. Cooperation from the denominations around here was the best I have ever seen anywhere. Some were present every service. It truly was an undenominational meeting and the church will still be reaping the fruit in years to come. Wesley Sparks did a fine job leading the singing. Truly the meeting was a blessing to our community.

"We had five additions some time before the meeting, 3 baptisms and 2 for membership."—Asa Barber.

YOUTHFUL SINGERS HAVE PART

Many local congregations were represented in the Song Rally at Jefferson Street Church the third Sunday of August. The song fest was characterized especially by the use of youthful song leaders. Among those of the young men who led were Tommie Marsh, Emory Grimes, Nathan Burks, Paul Clark, Neil Phillips, and Rudolph Schooling, Jr. Frank Gill, student of Ky. Bible College, put a finishing touch to this youthful aspect of the meeting by making a speech about the college. Then there were older and more mature brethren who had part in the rally. The next Kentucky-Bible-College sponsored song fest is scheduled for The Portland Avenue Church on the third Sunday of September.

BIBLE CONFERENCE

It has been suggested that we refer to our "Preachers' Fellowship Meeting" to be held from September 4 to 8 at Fifth and M congregation, Louisville, as a Bible Conference. It is not merely for preachers, but for all brethren who wish to attend. It is a season for the discussion of Bible themes in the study hour, in the open forum, and in sermons. Many preachers have notified us that they are coming,

some bringing their families. Christian homes are being opened to provide entertainment. This should indeed be a time of spiritual awakening and refreshing in the Lord. It has been necessary to make a few changes in the program along. All who wish to come to Louisville at this time are welcome. Write N. Wilson Burks, 6602 S. Third Street, Louisville, Ky., for reservations.

Sullivan, Ind.: "Meeting at Berea has started with splendid interest. The house was well filled last night; Dugger, Linton, East Jackson of Sullivan, and other places were largely represented. Brother Waldo Hoar and Brother Maurice Clymore were present. Fine spirit prevails. There is to be an all-day meeting September 3.

"We had great service at Fair Park Sunday morning. Seven responded at the morning service. One man about seventy years of age was baptized. Of those restored two had been away from the Lord for about twenty years. All will be a great asset to the church. Keep praying."—Frank Mullins.

SYLVANIA CHURCH

(On Sylvania Rd., south of
Louisville, Ky.)

The Sylvania tent meeting closed August 13 after continuing for five weeks. Good interest was manifest throughout and a number expressed regrets at its closing. The hand of the Lord was manifest in this endeavor from the very beginning and to Him we give the praise for the results. There were eleven responses—five baptisms and the others to take their stand as simple Christians and rededicate their lives to the Lord.

During the meeting it was the prayer of many that the work might be permanent in this community. Some investigation was made concerning a suitable lot, but good lots were scarce. But the Lord did more than we expected. Five days after the meeting closed an ideal lot with a concrete block house 20 x 20 ft. was bargained for and paid for in cash a few days later. One couple meeting with the new congregation gave \$500. There were a few other substantial gifts and many smaller ones—all unsolicited. In fact very few knew of the need. We are look-

ing to the Lord to continue the good work He has begun in this community. Several of the new converts are young people, and they are already manifesting a hunger for the Word. Even before the meeting closed they were holding spontaneous meetings in one of the homes and studying on their own. Some are having to face persecution and ridicule. Brother Paul Knecht is taking the primary responsibility for carrying on this work."—Dennis Allen.

Louisville, Ky.: "A fourteen-day meeting at the Bohon Church of Christ came to a close on Sunday, August 20th. Orell Overman

of Lexington, Kentucky, was the evangelist. Attendance and interest was good throughout the series which resulted in four responses, two being baptized and two for membership. Several teachers in the congregation, along with Harold Preston of the Ebenezer Church, assisted Brother Overman in afternoon Bible classes. This was Bro. Overman's fifth consecutive meeting at Bohon where he has gained the love and respect of the entire community.

"Our thanks to some twelve or thirteen Louisville singers who rendered special numbers on several occasions."—Demus Friend.

AN HONEST ADVERTISEMENT

A historic development: On February 24, 1886, there appeared in the Boise *Democrat*, an advertisement of a saloon owned by James Lawrence. It follows:

"Friends and neighbors; having just opened a commodious shop for the sale of liquid fire, I embrace this opportunity of informing you that I have commenced the business of making drunkards, paupers, and beggars for the sober, industrious and respectable portion of the community to support.

"I shall deal in familiar spirits which will incite men to deeds of riot, robbery, and bloodshed, and by so doing, diminish the comfort, augment the expenses and endanger the welfare of the community.

"I will, on short notice, for a small sum, and with great expectations, undertake to prepare victims for the asylum, poor farms, prisons and gallows.

"I will furnish an article that will increase accidents, multiply the number of distressing diseases, and render those who are harmless incurable.

"I will deal in drugs which will deprive some of life, many of reason, most of their property, and all of their peace; which will cause fathers to become fiends, and wives, widows, children to become orphans and all mendicants.

"I will cause many of the rising generation to grow up in ignorance and prove a burden and a nuisance to the nation. I will cause mothers to forget their offspring, and cruelty to take the place of love.

"I will sometimes corrupt the minister of religion; defile the purity of the church and cause temporal, spiritual, and eternal death; and if any be so impertinent as to ask me why I have the audacity to bring such accumulated misery upon the people, my honest reply is 'money.' The spirits trade is lucrative and some professing Christians give it their cheerful countenance.

"From the United States Government I have purchased the right to demolish the character, destroy the health, and shorten the lives and ruin the souls of those who choose to honor me with their custom."

THE JUDGMENT OF MATTHEW 25

R. H. B.

The judgment of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew calls for more careful study than has been given to it. The generally received views concerning this judgment fail to take full account of the actual facts and statements of the record. In sizing up some passages of scripture, we may read through the spectacles of our own pre-conceived ideas, and take some things for granted which are not warranted by what the scripture actually says. We are apt to read things into the record which are not there, and fail to observe some things that are there. This, I believe, is generally the case in regard to this passage of scripture. Let us approach the study of it with a simple purpose to see it as it is.

I. The first statement (Matt. 25:31) specifies the time. It is "when the Son of man shall come in his glory" that this judgment is to take place. This is certainly the coming mentioned before in Matt. 24:30. And further we are told that "then"—at that time—"shall he sit on the throne of his glory." It is not implied (as some may think) that He had been thus sitting on the throne of His glory all along, but that *then* He will assume His place on the throne of His glory. He shares His Father's throne in heaven now; but in His promise to the church He distinguishes between the Father's throne and that which is peculiarly His own. (Rev. 3:21.) When therefore He comes in His glory—His own glory as well as that of His Father, Luke 9:26—instead of giving up the kingdom (as some have mistakenly inferred from 1 Cor. 15:24) He takes His seat on the throne of His glory. (Matt. 25:31; compare 19:28.)

II. The next declaration is that "before him shall be gathered all the nations." Now it is commonly taken for granted that this is what is called "the general judgment," or the "last judgment," in which all the dead of all past generations, good and bad, along with all the living, are to appear before God's judgment seat. It is thought that this view is backed up by such scriptures as John 5:29, 30; 2 Tim. 4:1. Nevertheless the assumption is entirely unwarranted, for (1) there is no statement to the effect that the raised dead are included among "the nations" that are gathered before Christ's throne; and (2) the basis of this judgment is inapplicable to the dead of former ages. The ground on which these nations are judged, for life or condemnation, is that of good works—not good works in general, for no one is saved by that (Eph. 2:8; Titus 3:5)—but of works of love and mercy *done to Christ's brethren*, betokening (as Rahab's treatment of Joshua's spies, Josh. 2:1-11, Heb. 11:31) their *faith and allegiance to Christ*, as manifested in their treatment of Christ's brethren; or on the other hand, their disregard of Christ, as shown by their neglect of His brethren. Now it is evident that the dead of past centuries, as the tribes of Africa for instance, or the hordes of China, the Buddhist and Hindoo multitudes of India—could not have been so judged. Their judgment could not be determined by deeds of love and kindness done to Christ's brethren,

for the simple reason that they never knew anything of Christ, and had never seen any of His brethren. These are living nations who had heard, and who, during the "Great Tribulation" (Matt. 24:21, 29f) must have had opportunity to help or to ignore Christ's brethren. Questions may be raised about the circumstantial details as to that time and situation; but the facts as set forth here stand out unmistakable and clear.

III. It has also been generally supposed that the "sheep" on the Lord's right hand are "His brethren," and that, accordingly, Christ accepts and receives them for the kindness they have shown to one another. But His brethren are spoken of as a third party throughout, not as included among the "nations." The term "nations," and "all the nations," practically without exception, in the Old Testament and the New Testament, refers to the Gentiles, and is so translated in most instances. Israel indeed is a nation—but she stands by herself and is not reckoned among the nations. (Numb. 23:11.)

IV. Neither is *the Church* included among "the nations" that are to be judged before Christ's throne of glory. For the Church is manifestly *with Him* in glory when He comes in His glory (Col. 3:4)—and, in fact, has her seat with Him on His throne (Rev. 3:21), and participates with Him in the judging of the world. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2, 3.)

V. It is also obvious that this judgment of the nations *takes place on the earth*. These nations good and bad, who are assembled before the throne of His glory are not the saints who are "caught up to meet the Lord in the air." On this entirely different occasion, the nations are arraigned before—in front of—Christ. The Greek word "*emprosthēn*" means emphatically this. (Comp. Matt. 27:11.)

In noting these facts and features, the plain practical lesson is not to be lost sight of. Scripture is of perpetual application. No matter what time or circumstances any prophecy of God's word directly refers to—it has its message for those who read it today. The *lesson* of the judgment of the nations comes to each and all of us. It is the lesson the Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples in Matt. 10:40-42, and again by His apostle in Gal. 5:6.

WORLD-OUTLOOK

- "The Morning Papers are depressing.
- "The shadows of the Kremlin are lengthening.
- "The Orient appears to be disintegrating.
- "Europe is confused.
- "America is perplexed.
- "Men's hearts are failing for fear.
- "The Lord is close.
- "I will be glad."

—Joe Maynard.

CAN IT HAPPEN HERE?

As we read of what has taken place in other parts of the world, no longer do we dare say, "It can never happen here!", for with the invention of the atomic bomb a new and startling element of uncertainty has suddenly been injected into the life of every one everywhere. It has once for all removed even the most secluded parts of the earth's surface from any possibility of isolation and has added new meaning and force to the statement that "thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov. 27:1.)

Humanly speaking anything may happen, may happen anywhere and at any time, with the sudden unleashing of hitherto almost undreamed of forces of destruction. With the tremendous bitterness and suspicion among the nations which is constantly being manifested, even as their representatives are seated around the peace tables, the future prospects of the world seem to be darker than ever.

However for a true Christian there is a glorious day of divine certainty amid the threatening clouds of human uncertainty and confusion. This certainty lies in the knowledge that:

1. *God has a Definite Program for the Nations of the World.*

In Matthew 24 and elsewhere there is a clear outline as to what we should expect and in what course world history shall continue to run until the consummation is brought about through the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. In His omnipotence God will permit nothing to interfere with the fulfillment of His Word, regardless of the plans and attempts of men and of forces of evil to thwart or to change it.

2. *God Has a Definite Plan for His Church.*

The Lord Jesus Himself promised to Peter that the unshakable foundation of His Church would be the absolute and changeless Deity of His Own Person and that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:19). The certainty of the fulfillment of God's plan for His Church is guaranteed in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

3. *God Has a Detailed Blue-print for the Life of Each One of His Children.*

Every true believer KNOWS that he is a child of God, by reason of his personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as his own Savior and as Lord of his life, to Whom he has unreservedly committed himself for time and for eternity. (1 John 3:2; 4:12-15.)

He KNOWS also that the Lord has a definite work for him to do and a definite service and witness in that particular sphere which He, and He alone, has appointed. Moreover the success and satisfaction in living will be in exact proportion to the degree in which his life is lived in accordance with God's plan for him. (Eph. 2:10.)

He also KNOWS that nothing can come into his life in the way of danger, disease, disappointment, nor even death itself without the Lord's permission. Moreover, that permission will be granted only with the purpose of God's glory and of His blessing upon the one who meets them. (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 9:8; Job 23:10.)

With this threefold assurance in our heart you may begin each day of your life in calm assurance and confidence, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28), and knowing also that since you are clasped in the love of Christ, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39).

Without this assurance life cannot but be dark and foreboding in view of the universal uncertainty that prevails. Only as your life is definitely committed to the Lord and as you are consciously and continually under His guidance and His protection can your future be assured, either in this world or in the world to come. If you have not yet taken this step, why delay doing so any longer? "Now is the day of salvation." Just now accept Him in your heart as your Savior and Lord and begin today to rejoice in the experience of His presence and power in you and step out in faith under the sure guidance of Him "Who knows the end from the beginning."—T. Stanley Soltan.

Rickenbacker's Epic of the Sea

One of the great stories of the war, the ordeal and rescue of Captain Rickenbacker and his companions, has touched and moved the world.

The landing of their four-motored plane in the sea, their life in the tiny rafts, their suffering under a merciless Pacific sun for 21 days; how God sent a seagull in answer to prayer, how fresh water was sent from Heaven against the wind, how they read the Bible and saw deliverance—all have been told and retold.

As these men faced death on the boundless waters of the South Pacific they realized that they must meet God. How gladly they turned to the Word of God, the New Testament that Private Bartek carried. These men found that God was real, that He was the ruler of the universe, and that He was merciful even unto them.

Lieutenant Whittaker, the co-pilot, in a copyrighted *Chicago Tribune* story, said: "I was an atheist. But from my companions I learned to pray. I saw prayer answered. . . . There can be no atheists in rubber rafts amid whitecaps and sharks. My entire life has been changed by the events that began October 20, 1912. It is a day I'll never forget."

Telling of the favorite Scripture they read, Captain Rickenbacker said: "With the New Testament as an inspiration, we held morning and evening prayers. We found one passage that more than any other bespoke our needs. This we never failed to read: 'Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. . . .' (Matt. 6:31-34.)"—Selected.

“BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD”

Stanford Chambers

“Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?” (1 Cor. 15:29.) This is the sole passage on which is based the tenet and practice by the Mormons of proxy baptism. In no other Scripture is there hint or allusion to such a thing, and there is no historical record of the practice except by a few heretical sects or cults. What is the explanation?

“SOME AMONG YOU”

“Now if Christ is preached that he hath been raised from the dead” (which of course is true and not denied) “how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (15:12.) Some among the Corinthian sthen were denying the fundamental truth of the resurrection of the dead. How account for that? “Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (v. 33). Some evil companionships had been formed, which in turn resulted in the corruption of the truth. Paul meets this perversion and disbelief by meeting the deniers on their own ground. They were practicing baptism for the dead. Note Paul’s “they” in contradistinction from “we.” “Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead”? Who are the “they”? “Some among them” who were saying “there is no resurrection of the dead.” “What shall they do . . . if the dead rise not”? The practice of those who make such denial is inconsistent with their denial, and is certainly not a practice to be patterned after.

WHAT MOTIVATED THE PRACTICE?

Evidently concern for friends and loved ones dying unbaptized. On the same principle we have the fact of proxy *faith*. Parents, foster parents, “God-fathers” and “God-mothers” are that concerned for infants that they “stand for” the child hoping their faith will be acceptable in lieu of the child incapable of believing at the time of christening. While on the campus of the Mormon temple in Salt Lake City we heard one of their lecturers appealing to the hearts of the hearers on behalf of their departed loved ones, telling them that they could hand in their names, and that someone authorized could be baptized for a whole list. Then we realized for the first time what effective use Mormons make of proxy baptism, i. e. in their propaganda for converts. It is of course incumbent upon such propagandists to interpret Paul as endorsing, even teaching, baptism for the dead. But even the devil quotes scripture.

A DESERT FLOWER

I would be like a desert flower,
Growing and blooming hour by hour,
Depending entirely on His love,
Sustained and nourished from above.

POWERFUL PRAYER

J. H. McCaleb

In the last book of the Bible a vivid picture is painted showing the power of the great beings of heaven. In this setting of strength and might, the prayers of the saints have a prominent place. They appear to have a great and wonderful influence on God and those around Him. Perhaps we have overlooked the dynamic impact of prayer springing from faith.

Most of us pray because we were taught to do so as children. And so we continue in a somewhat perfunctory manner through the remainder of life. We mumble a few sleepy words before we go to bed, or cry out in distress when a particularly sharp blow hits us. If we have never been taught to pray; if our parents were too enlightened for such foolishness, then perhaps our only prayers have been the involuntary outcries springing from an anguished heart.

The more we read about prayer, however, the more we must realize what an effective instrument it can be. True prayer is intimate conversation with God Almighty, the creator of all things, through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. This conversation can be intimate and mutual only if there is fellowship and friendship between the two parties. We know that, through Jesus Christ, we need no longer be banished from the presence of God. The enmity of sin has been overcome. The conversation can flow freely from friend to friend.

The prayer of faith taps the very power of God. There is no question about God's ability to perform. He will work in our behalf, however, only if we ask Him, and believe He will do what we ask. This kind of faith is based upon a knowledge of God's will, and so we will make our requests accordingly.

This kind of prayer is powerful. It overcomes all of the obstacles of life and death. Try it.

* * *

ALWAYS ONWARD

From deep down in a man's heart spring the motives of his life. Many of our actions may seem thoughtless or instinctive, but a real probing will reveal that even back of them is a well-defined purpose.

What is your real purpose, and what is mine? That requires some thinking. But even that is not so difficult. Just as sure as we live and breathe there is a motive back of our activities. What is it that keeps you doing what you do?

When the applause is abundant and we bask in the fellowship, of our friends almost nothing seems too difficult. No doubt we accomplish many good deeds under those incentives. Do we do the good for the sake of doing good, or do we exert our good efforts only for the sake of approval? It is pretty difficult to judge correctly. The outsider will guess both ways. At times we ourselves are confused.

God always lets the testing time come. He always knows, but He

wants us to know too. It is necessary for our own development. The good seed fell on the wayside, on the rock, among the thorns, and in the good ground. The seed was equally good but was nourished only by the good and honest heart. In all other cases it was snatched away by the devil, temptations, cares, riches, and pleasures of this life.

When the blow comes, what do we do? Some toil on and on. The crowd jeers and our friends despise, but the object of life is God, and from Him is expected the reward. There is something noble about a soul like that. We know truly that God does not fail. His truth and strength are demonstrated in that good fight. I do not know of anything that has so strengthened my own life as the steadfastness of a great soul.

If we expect all conditions in life to suit us we are due for a rude awakening. Nor will all people. But God is just and good. If we but trust Him, no man can stop us in our path up to eternal peace.

Truly by our works we are known. There is only one road, and that is onward—stubbornly, patiently, hopefully and faithfully onward.

HOW TO BE NORMAL

Paul Clark

It has been said of the Lord Jesus that he was the world's only normal man. Some of us think of Him as God only and others go to the other extreme and think of Him as man but not God. It is hard for us to grasp the fact that He was God and man at the same time. Still our wonderful relation and access to God depends on this very fact.

As God, He has access to the heavenly throne; as man, He knows our weaknesses and temptations. He has come in contact with man's great enemy, sin, and He even won the victory over Sin. Certainly with this knowledge of man and of God, he is the one to plead our case before God. (1 John 2:1.)

He was normal because He was really the only man that has fulfilled God's expectations in man. Man was not made in the beginning for the purpose of sinning. God did not intend for man to suffer the consequences of sin—death, sorrow, the thorns and thistles of this life. But Adam sinned and all of us inherited his abnormal nature. So until we find Christ and learn of the new nature He can give us, everything is wrong and out of order (abnormal) for us.

We have not increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man in the strict sense because sin has made our lives imperfect. However, if we will take on this new birth, this Christ nature, we too can be "normal" people—not through our own power as was Christ, but because God through Christ has made us that way. (See Romans 5.)

WORK AMONG THE JEWS

As a missionary among the Jewish people, I feel my responsibility toward God and my brethren. So while laboring in the Gospel among them, one Jew (Orthodox) remarked that he performed a "Mitzvah" (Commandment, or holy deed), namely he brought a "Cup of Consolation." The bereaved ones on their return from a funeral, relatives, friends or neighbors bring in a meal. The meal is called "Seudah Habroach" (Cup of Consolation). I reminded him that the funeral bells are ceaselessly tolling, and that he, like his neighbor, by not accepting JESUS, the Son of God, as the Mochi-ach (Messiah) will likewise go into Christless eternity." All have sinned." "All we like sheep have gone astray." The power of choice is your own. If you want His Salvation, you may have it by honestly and humbly acknowledging Him as your Savior, and "being buried with Him in baptism." I further endeavored to enlighten him of the lifelessness of the ancient customs and traditions, and that Christ is the true "Consolation" in fulness and completeness. How terrifying to think one would disregard the final and irrevocable sentence!

Another Jewish man who was in that business establishment listened intently to our discussion in Yiddish but did not participate. He remained perfectly motionless. Suddenly he broke his silence, and said with a deep sigh, you wrangle about the interpretation of the word "Consolation"; the only consolation to us Jews would be if peace could be established between our State of Israel and the Arab countries; then we would witness the redemption of our people. I told him the crucial question is not Israel reaching terms with the Arab countries, but to come to terms with Christ. Jesus says: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And that is incomprehensible and blissful peace.

It is indeed gracious of God, who is more than just, and very merciful, that He offers salvation to all alike, and on the same terms, which are unalterable. If that word of Jesus were followed, it would solve all problems of disharmony and friction in this sin-cursed world. Unless Israel resolves to do this, she need not expect to make much progress. There is no more satisfactory method, and no more effective means, than to concentrate our energies in *personal work* among the Jewish people. Knowing that there is no change in the hostility of Jewry toward Christ and His Gospel, I thank God for the privilege of proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah among the Jewish people. What wondrous joy! His Word is Light!

Stephen D. Eckstein, Missionary
2246 E. 70 Terrace, Kansas City, Mo.

It is still not too late to enroll in Kentucky Bible College. Enrollment date is Tuesday, September 5. School opens September 5.

PAUL DEFENDS HIS GOSPEL

Galatians 2

R. H. B.

PROOF UPON PROOF

Paul is put to the sad necessity of defending to his children in the faith in Galatia the Divine authority of his gospel which he had preached to them. In chapter one he has thus far appealed to the well-known facts attending his conversion, and his subsequent movements, which all precludes the possibility of his having received his gospel from human sources. Now he proceeds to add yet more, and, if such were possible, even weightier proof.

First of all—(the Galatians must have known all about this)—there was his journey to Jerusalem, when he and Barnabas, by the wishes of the church at Antioch, went up, to settle the question concerning the circumcision of the Gentiles. (See Acts 15.) He went up at that time not only by request of the church, but “by revelation”—that is, he was so directed by the Lord Himself. And with him he took Titus, an uncircumcised Gentile brother—for a test-case as it were—into the very citadel of Jewish Christianity where “the Twelve” resided. Surely if there had been any such requirement as that Gentile Christians must be circumcised, an uncircumcised Gentile convert would not have been fellowshipped or even tolerated among the brethren at Jerusalem. They would certainly have insisted that Titus be circumcised. Did they? Far from it! No such demand was made or even suggested. How then could Judaizers come to distant Galatia and inform the Gentile brethren there that they must be circumcised? It was ridiculous. And that the Galatians would for a moment lend their ears to such teaching was a “marvel” indeed, and simply inconceivable. Paul could not understand it. (Gal. 1:6.)

Nor was this all that happened in Jerusalem at that time. So far from receiving cautions and instructions from the apostles and leaders at Jerusalem, they recognized the truth and authority of Paul's gospel which he preached among the Gentiles; and the leaders of the church in Jerusalem—“they who were reputed to be pillars”—James, Cephas, and John, not only did not attempt to teach Paul anything (v. 6) but gave him the *right hand of fellowship*. (Verses 7-9.)

PAUL OPPOSES PETER TO HIS FACE

And now another fact comes forth—a fact of tremendous bearing on this question. When Cephas (the apostle Peter) came to Antioch he became guilty there of a grave breach of conduct: he withdrew himself from the uncircumcised Gentile brethren, refusing to eat with them. This from the apostle Peter! Whatever in the world would have caused him to do such a thing as that? “When certain ones came down from James,” we are told. Now James, the Lord's brother, was the chief leader and elder in the church in Jerusalem. But this was also the same James that had counselled the Jewish brethren not to trouble them that from among the Gen-

titles turn to God—that is, not to trouble them by seeking to bind circumcision and law-keeping upon them (Acts 15:19). Did he now send messengers with contrary instructions? Hardly. Those messengers from James, being intense Jews (Acts 21:20), no doubt took it upon themselves (as certain others before them had done in a similar matter, Acts 15:24) to press the eminent value and virtue (if not necessity) of circumcision upon the Gentile brethren. They had strong arguments in favor of their contention. Granting that the Gentiles were, like Abraham, saved by faith—yet, did not Abraham afterward receive circumcision, “a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had”? And was not Jesus Christ Himself circumcised, so also had been all His apostles? Circumcised believers therefore surely are of a higher pattern and standing than the uncircumcised. To super-add circumcision to faith gives the believer a place in the fellowship and the company of all the patriarchs and with Christ Himself and with the apostles and the early church of Jerusalem. That was a different plea from that of Acts 15:1 and 5, and harder to combat. It must have been some such appeal to the old prejudice and Jewish feeling of superiority that influenced Peter. At least he was afraid to stand out against those who had “come from James”—fearing what the brethren in Jerusalem and even James himself might say, Peter’s error was not one of doctrine, but like that of many another weak man, the failure to act according to the high and holy principles, which, by the Spirit, he had himself taught and preached. And many Jewish brethren—including even good old Barnabas—followed Peter’s example in drawing away from the Gentiles, as if they, the circumcised ones, were a superior sort of Christians who could not afford to associate on a common level with Gentile brethren.

Paul saw at once that the truth of the gospel itself was imperilled by this movement; and since it was a public wrong it must be publicly rebuked, in the person of the most prominent sinner in the matter—the apostle Peter. Paul “withstood him to the face,” and “before them all.” His rebuke to Peter is given in full. It extends from the middle of verse 14 (Gal. 2) through verse 21.

“If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We being Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we sought to be justified in Christ, we ourselves also were found sinners, is Christ a minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build up again those things which I destroyed, I prove myself a transgressor. For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God.”—Gal. 2:14-18.

1. First of all he here exposes Peter’s inconsistency. Peter had himself lived as the Gentiles—partaking of their food and associating with them (Acts 11:3). What now has happened that the Gentiles are no longer fit for his fellowship, and that (by action and example) he would try to compel them to come to Jewish standards?

2. Secondly—he reminds Peter that he and all the Jewish brethren and the Gentiles were alike justified by faith and therefore stood on the same level; and that (as Peter had himself taught, Acts 5: 7-11) Jewish believer swore to be saved in exactly the same way as the Gentiles. (Verses 15, 16.) That left not any room for Jewish superiority.

3. Verses 17, 18 have occasioned much discussion. The simplest meaning, as I see it, is this—that if in all our trusting in the simple gospel for salvation for Jew and Gentile, we were wrong, did the simple faith in Christ leave us as sinners? To say so is to say that Christ is a minister of sin. For obviously, if I now go back to Jewish principles for salvation—I either did wrong when I left them and (by the gospel) destroyed them; or else I am doing wrong now if I try to build them up again.

4. And now Paul sets forth his own position—which Peter can not deny, but cannot help consenting to. It is summarized in the following mighty words:

“For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.”—Gal. 2:19, 20.

Here Paul declares that through the law (that is, by the law's just verdict and sentence) he had died to the law, so that henceforth he might live unto God. (For there is no such thing as living unto God until one has first died to the law.) The question immediately arises, when, where, how, did this happen? When was death—the sentence of the law—executed upon him? The answer is given in the next verse. Not upon himself in person, but on Him who died for him and in his stead, was this death-sentence executed. When Paul was baptized into union with Christ, Christ's death became his own. (See Rom. 6:2-4.) He was crucified with Christ: it was no longer he (his old self) that lived, but henceforth only Christ lived in him; and the earthly life which he now lived, he lived in faith—“the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.” This, and not circumcision, makes up the real and true Christian life.

5. One more word, the apostle now adds: “*I do not make void the grace of God.*” Now the grace of God is God's free acceptance of us in Christ. As a principle of acceptance and salvation it is directly opposed to “works,” in the sense of human merit and desert. “If it is of grace it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” (Rom. 11:6; see also 4:4, 5; Eph. 2:8, 9.) “It is the mark of heathen religions,” said Sir Monier Williams, “that they one and all hold out salvation only to those who by works attain to it. All their devotees therefore are bent on acquiring merit.” Now if circumcision is something man must perform to make himself acceptable to God (or something he must add to make his acceptance complete)—then is the grace of God made void. If it is by works or ritual of law that righteousness is attained, then Christ died in vain. For why, if man by aught that he could do could make

himself righteous in the sight of God, why should Christ have to come down from heaven and die for us? "If we could have been saved at any less price," said Martin Luther, "what needed the Son of God to be given?"—Thus by the unfaithfulness of his course and conduct, did Peter sin against the cross of Christ and make void the grace of God. And thus did Paul uphold the claims of the free gospel against that weak apostle, to his face.

WHAT DOES GOD SAY?

How often when the word of God crosses our chosen path do we try to make something else out of it. A little girl had an aunt who was a chronic worrier. One day the girl asked her what Phil. 4:6, 7 meant. The aunt replied, "I don't know, but it certainly doesn't mean what it says."

Jacob Ditzler, a prominent Methodist preacher, and J. S. Sweeney were having a debate on the scriptural mode of baptism. Ditzler carefully showed that a secondary meaning of baptizo was "to wash or sprinkle." In reply Sweeney showed that a secondary meaning of "believe" was "to have an opinion" and of "saved" was "to be pickled." Then he gave the resulting translation of Mark 16:16: "He that has an opinion and is sprinkled shall be pickled." Then he made the application. Is our aim to see what we can *make* out of Scripture or simply to find out what God has said?

GENTLE AS A NURSE (1 Thess. 2:7)

"Could anything exhibit gentleness and kindness more perfectly than the way of a skilful nurse with her patient? And, unhappily, many people fall sick in soul. We know the usual symptoms, and how strikingly analogous they are in the physical to the spiritual realms! Loss of appetite, irritability, supersensitiveness, quickness to take offense, peevishness, nothing pleases, a dislike for work, a moping desire to keep away from the rest of the family. All these are infallible marks of the sick Christian. There certainly is a temptation to get angry with folk in such a condition, and we feel that a good shaking and some rough words might do them a lot of good. But usually gentleness pays better. (2 Tim. 2:24, 25.)"

—Selected.

MY DAY

Perhaps some simple word of mine
Has cheered some heart and made it light;
Perhaps e'en my stumbling stammering prayer
Has guided someone toward the right,
If any deed of mine has given
Some soul a clearer thought of Heaven,
If through my day what I have tried
Has found my Master satisfied,
Then I'll not call my day misspent,
But thank my God and be content.

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

CORNELIUS AND HIS VISION. Of this man's previous life we know little, except that he had entered the military service of the Roman government and that he had made much progress in his spiritual development. A man of his character would be a credit to any community, yea, to any church. Somehow he had learned of the true God and he gave Him reverence, praying to Him always. Yet he had not become a full proselyte to Judaism; he could be considered as no more than a "proselyte of the gate," and so yet outside the covenant of promise. But the Jews held him in high regard, which is no small compliment when the general attitude of Jews toward Gentiles is taken into consideration. He was a righteous man, and generous toward those in need. Not one word is said against his character; he was living up to the light he had, "doing the best he could," or as nearly so, perhaps, as any man has ever done; yet he was unsaved. Neither Nicodemus, noblest product of Judaism, nor Cornelius, finest specimen of Gentile manhood, could be saved by his own righteousness. For man's righteousness, at its best, is imperfect; "for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) Cornelius knew not the Lord Jesus; "And in none other is there salvation." (Acts 4:12.)

But the heart of Cornelius was open to more truth; he would gladly receive more light upon his way. And God saw to it that he had this additional light. It was on the day preceding that of Peter's vision on the housetop at Joppa. Cornelius was keeping the ninth hour of prayer (according to Jewish custom), when an angel of God appeared to him in a vision. His prayers and his alms (so the angel declared) had gone up for a memorial before God. Will the Lord hear the prayer of an unsaved person? Here, in part at least, is the answer! (See also verse 31.) Let no one dare to discourage *anyone* from praying to God! Only, let it be understood that "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination." (Prov. 28:9.) But a man whose ear is open to God's truth, no matter what his condition at the moment, let him pray, and God will hear. For what was Cornelius praying? We would like to know; but whatever his petition, he received the best that God has for any man. "Send to Joppa and fetch . . . Peter, who shall speak unto thee words whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." (Acts 11:13-14.) The angel vanished; promptly Cornelius dispatched the two house-hold servants and the devout soldier to Joppa with full instructions.

PETER ARRIVES AT THE HOME OF CORNELIUS. On the third day after his vision of the angel Cornelius, having called his kinsmen and his near friends (evidently he desired to share this great blessing with others), was expectantly waiting for the return of his messengers with Peter. What emotions must have stirred in the heart of the apostle as he and his companions approached the city? Had he been

tempted to flee, like Jonah, from this strange task? Perhaps he recalled the prophet's experience! If so, he would be reminded that even in those former times the Lord was concerned about people of other nations. But whatever thoughts passed through his mind, he pressed resolutely on. Prudently he was taking with him six Jewish brethren from Joppa. In this he was taking "thought for things honorable in the sight of all men." For these men could, and did, serve as witnesses concerning what took place in the home of Cornelius. (See Acts 11:12.) At last the journey came to an end, and these two men, the Roman officer and the Hebrew apostle, stood face to face. Cornelius thought of Peter (and rightly so) as a representative of God; surely, then, he was worthy of the greatest honor. So he did him obeisance, even as he probably would have done his Emperor or some other great dignitary. But Peter would have none of it. "Stand up; I myself am also a man." He was no pope; he would not speak to Cornelius as to an inferior being, but simply as man to man. And that is as it should be.

As they talked together, they entered the room where the kinsmen and friends of Cornelius were waiting. Peter explained why he was doing something unlawful for a Jew to do; then he asked why he had been sent for. Did he not already have the information? Perhaps he wanted it in fuller detail; or perhaps he wanted to hear it from the mouth of Cornelius himself. It may be, too, that he was thinking of those six Jewish brethren; it would be good for them to hear the story first-hand. Briefly Cornelius related the details of the vision and closed with these impressive words: "Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord." What an audience that was to preach to! What an inspiration it would be to any gospel preacher to be assured that every one in his presence was ready to receive anything he presented from the Word of God! That is perhaps the greatest thing to be said about Cornelius: that he was committed unreservedly to walk in the light as he received it, and that he had exerted such an influence over his household and his close friends that they too were of the same mind.

PETER'S SERMON AND THE OUTCOME OF THIS MISSION. The apostle introduced his message with the statement, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." He had thought He was; now he is thoroughly convinced that it is otherwise. No matter what a man's nationality is, if he fears God and works righteousness, he is acceptable. Those were words to bring joy to the hearts of those present. The word was indeed first sent to the children of Israel; but Jesus Christ is Lord of all, and now it has come to them. He spoke of the personal ministry of Jesus; he proclaimed His death and resurrection, and declared Him the one ordained of God as the judge of the living and the dead. But there is the assurance of remission of sins to those who believe on Him. Thus Peter preached the same gospel to these Gentiles that he had preached to his own countrymen; he indeed made no distinction. And suddenly the Lord's approval of this whole proceeding was made manifest; even

as Peter was beginning his address (11:15), "the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word."

This was the same gift that the apostles received on the day of Pentecost, bestowed in the same manner and accompanied by the same sign. But there was this difference: those upon whom the Spirit fell on Pentecost were already disciples of Jesus and had been for quite some time; these were just then hearing the gospel and were yet unbaptized. It is said of the Samaritan converts, too, that they received the Holy Spirit; but it was not until Peter and John came down from Jerusalem and laid their hands upon them. Yet they were already baptized believers. (Acts 8:14-17.) So it was also with the twelve men of Ephesus: "And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19:6.) What may we learn from these facts? For one thing, that the Spirit is not limited to any one plan of action. In all Christians the Spirit of God dwells (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19); indeed, if we have not the spirit of Christ (and the context here shows clearly that the Holy Spirit is meant), we are none of His. (Rom. 8:9.) But there is nothing to indicate that He must always come in the same manner, or be accompanied with the same sign, as in these instances mentioned. These appear to have been exceptional cases, even for those days; special methods used because of extraordinary circumstances. Nor did all speak in tongues. (1 Cor. 12:30.) And the time was to come when this gift, and others, would cease. (1 Cor. 13:8.)

What was the purpose, then, of this extraordinary manifestation of the Spirit at Caesarea? Perhaps we cannot answer fully; but we can see very clearly an important purpose that it served. There were those six Jewish brethren from Joppa, greatly perplexed and disturbed, we can scarcely doubt, by Peter's course. And when the Spirit fell upon those Gentiles and they spoke with tongues, these brethren were filled with amazement. To whom else was Peter speaking when he said, "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" And why should he ask that question? If we had a record of the conversations that took place on the way to Caesarea, we would probably have the answer. Most likely there were expressions of misgivings, even protestations perhaps; and when they entered the house of Cornelius, these brethren would naturally still be beset with doubt. But now they are silenced; they can protest no more. And when Peter was later called up to defend himself before the other apostles and brethren in Judea, when they contended with him because he had gone in to men uncircumcised and had eaten with them, he expounded the matter unto them in order, and then clinched his argument with the question: "If then God gave them the like gift as He did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" They were also fully convinced; and "they held their peace and glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.'" (Acts 11:1-18.)

But in Peter's question, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized," there is something else implied that should not be overlooked. It is highly suggestive of the importance which these Christian men attached to baptism. For why should any one there object to the Gentiles' being baptized unless it was a matter of deep significance—unless, indeed, it was the act of faith by which they became identified as members of the Christian communion? Another point that should not be overlooked: there was no suggestion that, because the Holy Spirit had fallen upon these Gentiles, there was no need of their being baptized in water. Quite the contrary is true: "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name (by the authority) of Jesus Christ." Those who believe and are baptized have the promise of the Spirit; and these who, in this extraordinary instance, received the Spirit before baptism were required to submit to this ordinance even as the rest.

So to the Gentiles the same gospel was preached, and the same commandments given, as to the Jews; and there was no distinction. At last the apostles, after hearing the experience of Peter, were ready to acknowledge this truth. Perhaps in former days they had repeated the prayer which is found in the Jewish Talmud: "Oh God, I thank Thee that I am not a Gentile, that I am not a slave, that I am not a woman." But no longer was there place for such expressions of proud disdain. On the other hand, they were to understand that "there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28.)

THE ATONEMENT WINS

"We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness."—1 Cor. 1:23.

Martin Luther preached this doctrine of atoning blood to slumbering Europe, and Europe awoke from the dead. Amid all his defences of the divine sovereignty Calvin never ignored or belittled the atonement. Cowper sang of it among the water lilies of the Ouse. Spurgeon thundered this glorious doctrine of Christ crucified into the ears of peer and peasant with a voice like the sound of many waters. John Bunyan made the cross the starting-point to the celestial city. Moody's bells all chimed to the keynote of Calvary. Gipsy Smith strings all his pearls on the red cord of the atonement. No man can expect evangelistic success who does not preach redemption through the blood.—T. L. Cuyler.

Linton, Ind.: "We in Linton enjoyed a great feast of good things through Brother E. L. Jorgenson's visit with us the last of May and first of June. His emphasis on the singing gave us an insight and appreciation of spiritual music that I wish all the brethren could share. The music of the church can mean so much; on the other hand, in some cases, it can mean so little. Brother Jorgenson continued in a week of gospel preaching after singing for three nights and having a fine song rally on Lord's day afternoon.

"For some time we have devoted the last Lord's day evening in the month to gospel singing. These services have been very well attended, with fine cooperation."—Waldo Hoar.