

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

VOL. XXXII October, 1949 No. 9

Subduing the Earth

"Fill the earth and subdue it." - Gen. 1:28

THE MINDS of thoughtful people who do not possess the knowledge of the Divine Plan that those in Present Truth are blessed with, but yet who are prompted to look beyond the present gloomy and unsettled world situation into a more stable state of society which they visualize for the future, are troubled to a considerable degree by a condition of affairs which seems to them to constitute a grave threat to the world's future happiness. They fear, and not without good reason, that the prospective supplanting of all human labor by some form of machinery, operated for the most part by the newly discovered atomic energy, will put in the hands of many thousands of the unthinking masses a superabundance of leisure time, which in the end will prove more of a curse than a blessing to mankind. They point to the undeniable fact that in the past, fulness of bread and abundance of idleness has always resulted in an increase of vice and a general lowering of the moral standards of the community, and they fear that in this respect history will once more repeat itself and that the race will sink deeper into that morass of degeneracy toward which the animal man usually tends when the need of earning his subsistence by hard labor has ceased to exist.

The Lord's people who by his grace have been permitted to see somewhat farther ahead into the world's future than have these good people, have no such anxiety regarding the conditions that their children with the rest of the race may have to encounter. They know into whose mighty hands the welfare of the human family has been entrusted, and feel perfectly safe in regard to its future. Others, however, who have not the consolation that this faith brings, cannot but view with some dread the economic and social changes which such inevitable readjustments are bound to occasion. They foresee that the very fact that the former problems of supplying man's basic needs will be so easily solved, may in itself give rise to new ones, not the least of which will be the matter of finding pabulum for idle minds to feed upon. Hence some of the more thoughtful have already been urging an extension of college curricula for war veterans and others which include such cultural courses as may open up fascinating new channels of research which the minds of these people may pursue with profit and pleasure. All of this tends to intensify our reverence for the inscrutable and omniscient wisdom that determined even before the second generation of mankind had come into being, that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his face. (Gen.

3:19.) How much blessing was concealed in the sentence, "Cursed is the ground *for thy sake*, thorns and thistles also shall it bring forth to thee." How significant is that little word "also" in this connection, when the effects of the so-called curse are compared with the blessings spoken of in Genesis 1:28, 29. The word made all the difference between a life of ease and plenty and one of toil and hardship.

In blessing our first parents, God said, "Behold, I have given you every herb, every tree bearing fruit for food, which is upon the face of the earth." Stated otherwise, "The earth shall willingly yield all her bounty to you, my beloved son. And then, after the fall, came that sad addition to the original promise, "Thorns and thistles *also* shall it yield." How painfully true it has been, that the extraction *of* the good things of earth from among the thorns and thistles, has cost man countless hours of unremitting toil and hardship for many hundreds of years and yet has been one of his chief blessings.

But now the time for a change approaches. The cherubim with the flaming swords have seemingly stepped aside and permitted man to once more gaze into his Edenic heritage, and see the possibilities of life on this planet, spent as the Creator had intended it should be from the first. And now, when the race has been trained to benefit by that knowledge of good and evil attained through so much misery and suffering, what a blessed prospect the future presents

to the enraptured eyes of humanity-that long forfeited condition of at-one-ment with its Creator, and a blessed earthly existence passed amid Edenic peace and plenty, with the spirit of love permeating every human relationship.

"Redeem the time" was the Apostle's admonition to the Church, and now his advice becomes most timely to all, for seldom in all history has there been greater incentive for the wise expenditure of time, than exists at the present, and particularly for the youth of the world. What an admission of the utter futility of an aimless life is contained in the frequently heard expression, "to kill time." "To kill time," in other words, to shamelessly squander the opportunity given to every man to benefit himself and all humanity by devoting time to the study of the glorious heritage the Creator 'has bestowed upon the race of Adam. As human sons of God to whom has been bequeathed the most marvelous estate in the terrestrial universe, the most fascinating lines of research ever to invite the attention of students await future exploration; and when as promised in the Scriptures the blinding influence of the great Adversary has been destroyed, these open avenues to the understanding of all the conditions that govern man's earthly environment will doubtless be thoroughly investigated with pleasure and profit to the exploring mind. "Fill the earth and subdue it" were the twin admonitions given to our first parents, and it would seem that the first is already in a fair way of being accomplished, though the manner of its accomplishment leaves much to be desired. But of the admonition to harness the forces of nature to man's use, for that is what the phrase "to subdue the earth" literally means, volumes could be written.

During the last century approximately, or as the Scriptures put it, during "the day of His preparation" (Nahum 2:3) man has been permitted to unlock doors of knowledge which have been kept sealed since creation, and has at last commenced to plumb the depths of vast reservoirs of information which have always remained untapped and hidden. He is discovering that his heritage contains hitherto undreamed of possibilities, material to supply every lawful need and aspiration that the human heart could desire or even conceive of, not merely those needs that we share with the lower animals, but material that will satisfy to the fullest extent man's higher aspirations, those that set him apart and over the brute creation as an earthly image of his heavenly Creator, and crowned by his Maker with glory and honor, for it is truly written that "man shall not live by bread alone."

The most cursory examination into those things which in God's providence pertain to human existence on this planet, even when considered in the light of the mere smattering of knowledge thus far acquired by man, cannot but cause the reverent mind to appreciate the sentiments expressed by the Apostle in the words, "Oh the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." - Rom. 11:33.

To those who throughout that epoch of "rationalistic modernism" that ushered in the twentieth century were enabled to hold fast to their faith in the eternal verities of God's Word, it must be a most gratifying and even awe-inspiring spectacle to contemplate the manner in which the Creator has impressed even the most materialistic of minds with the conviction of his existence and active interest in the affairs of men. Says the noted Oxford biologist, John Scott Haldane, "Materialism, once a scientific theory, is now merely -the fatalistic creed of unthinking thousands and is nothing better than a superstition, on the same level as all other superstitions. As a scientific theory, materialism is bankrupt." The physicist Milliken says, "The physicist has had the bottom knocked out of his generalizations so completely that he has learned with job the folly of multiplying words without knowledge, as did all those who once asserted that the universe was to be interpreted -in terms of hard round soulless atoms and their motions.... The findings of physico-chemistry and astronomy during the last quarter century [written about thirty years ago] and especially during the last fifteen years have brought to light a universe of extraordinary and unexpected orderliness and of the beauty and harmony that go with order. It is the same story whether one looks out upon the island universes brought into view by modern astronomy and located definitely, some of them a million light years away, or whether he looks down into the molecular world of chemistry or through it to the electronic world of physics, or even peers inside the unbelievably small nucleus of the atom. Everywhere we catch glimpses of a God, not of caprice or whim as had been all the gods of the ancient world, but instead, a God who rules through law, a nature which can be counted on, and hence which is worth knowing and carefully studying. After all, is there any one who still talks about 'the materialism of science?' Rather does the scientist join- with the Psalmist of thousands of years ago in reverently proclaiming that 'the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork.'"

In the light of such expressions as these, coming from the lips of the most brilliant thinkers of our time, how petty and futile seem the utterances of those pseudo philosophers who glibly tell us that the progress of science means the death of religion. Just what is meant by this expression, "the progress of science"? Is it not merely the increase in the sum total of human understanding of the universe, its properties and functions, and the laws which govern them? Is it not a fact that the better understood these laws become, the greater becomes our reverence for the Law-giver? There is a certain unity, an interrelatedness about the whole of nature, which' is both simple and at the same time a most amazing mystery.

According to the best authorities of less than a hundred years ago, "physics consisted of six distinct, sharply separated departments, viz., mechanics, molecular physics, heat, sound, light, and electricity." The first partition between these compartments to be completely broken down was that between heat and molecular physics, when heat was found to be not a substance, as had been supposed, but merely molecular motion. The next discovery was, that radiant heat and light were not different categories of phenomena but essentially the same phenomena, that they were both waves, differing in wave length. The next great discovery, made by Maxwell and Hertz, was that electric wave phenomena are indistinguishable from light and heat, save again for wave length. All these phenomena of radiant heat, light, and electric waves, then became fused under the general heading of "wave physics," still sharply separated from "matter physics" and also

from current electricity. The next partition to go down was that between current electricity and matter physics when electric currents were found to be the motions of electrons. Only one partition then remained, that which separated wave physics from matter physics. And quite recently this too went, and matter and waves are fused together with the result that waves and matter become indistinguishable terms. Electrons are now seen to be both particles and waves, while light waves also are corpuscles. Is it likely, in view of the foregoing, that we can much longer maintain air-tight compartments separating matter from life and mind? So inquire the physicists.

And now, another finding of modern science which shows the amazing oneness and order of the whole creation: During the past quarter century man has extended his vision with most astonishing rapidity. He has "looked" inside the atom, a body one fifteen millionth the diameter of a pin head, and there found an infinitely small nucleus, one one-hundred thousandth the diameter of the atom, while arranged about this nucleus are a large number of electrons (92 in uranium), each playing its appropriate part in a symmetrical, coordinated atomic system.

He has "looked" inside that nucleus, and counted (in uranium) exactly 238 positives and 146 negatives, and he has found that if but one of these positives or negatives drops out, the atom immediately changes into something else. Studying the interplay of radiation upon these electrons both within and without the nucleus he has found everywhere the most beautiful and harmonious orderliness and system.

He has learned the way in which nature operates in producing the exceedingly complicated spectrum of a substance like iron for example, and found, to quote Summerfield, "unbelievable magic in the manner in which these complicated rules never fail in producing exactly the observed results." Again man had turned his microscope upon the living cell and found it even more complex than the atom and with many parts, each performing the function necessary to the life of the whole organism, and finally, he has pointed his great telescope at the spiral nebulae, a million light years away, and there also has found the same system and order that prevails throughout the entire universe.

PRACTICAL VALUES

There is however a type of mind that can absorb the most amazing facts about the universe in which our planet the earth is but an inconspicuous speck of matter, and then exclaim languidly, "Very interesting indeed, but of what real consequence are these accumulated facts to people living in a practical world? Have these things any real bearing upon human affairs in every day life? Does this knowledge add anything to the sum of human happiness?" To which one might reply, Most assuredly, yes. Ever under the present competitive system of capitalistic enterprise based upon a profit motive, these discoveries matter greatly, and who can tell what the future may hold for the race of man.

In a recent issue of this journal (April, 1948) an article appeared, citing the findings of Professor Hutchins of Chicago University in reference to atomic science. In it the writer draws a striking contrast between the results which would follow the proper or the improper use of man's discoveries in nuclear physics. The startling picture he draws of the consequences which would follow the prudent use by man of this mighty force placed at his disposal, cannot have failed to impress even the most casual minded of readers with its amazing implications, and this research into the possibilities of the atom stemmed directly from the discoveries the Creator has been allowing man to make in those fields we have been touching upon. While it is of course true that God's people are not particularly concerned with the possible commercial value that may attach to

these discoveries, for it matters little to us whether or not the fruits of such research fatten the purses of those who exploit them, yet if such discoveries have a definite commercial value, it is generally because their use satisfies some human need or removes some unnecessary burden of toil from human shoulders. And in this aspect of the matter we definitely *are* interested, if not for our own sakes, at least for those of our children and their contemporaries. In view of the foregoing, "Herald" readers may be interested in the contents of a letter, written some nine years ago by a commercial firm engaged in the business of extracting various gases from the air, and handling them commercially, from which we quote as follows:

"We take pleasure in sending you herewith, a complete set of luminescent tubes, each containing in the pure state, one of the elements of the air, viz., nitrogen, oxygen, argon, hydrogen, neon, helium, krypton and xenon. It seems to us worthy of note that at the beginning of this century these gaseous elements, as such, had practically no commercial value or significance. Today the estimated value of the plants and equipment that have been created either to manufacture or to use and handle these gases in industry, amounts to three hundred million dollars."

The writer of the letter might have added, that the chain of discovery that led to this result started with what has been termed, "the most useless of the sciences," to wit, astronomy; for helium, as most people now know, was first found in the sun with the aid of the spectroscope, while some years later, it was its discovery in minute amounts in our atmosphere (also by the aid of the spectroscope) that set scientists looking for the inert gases of which the letter speaks, and which later found such enormous application in the various forms of luminescent tubes, etc. Both the telephone and the radio when they first appeared were regarded as merely amusing and curious toys, while now, who could estimate their combined commercial value?

Every newly discovered item of human knowledge which adds to our understanding of the world we live in, sooner or later finds its appropriate niche in the temple of scientific fact, and then its practical application to human needs. If the first essential to the solving of a problem is a thorough understanding of the nature of the problem, then it follows that if the race is to fulfil the divine admonition to "subdue the earth" it must first learn all it can about this everlasting abode of mankind, and this seems to be the great justifying reason for the existence of any such thing as scientific research. And as for its practical application, who can fail to realize that the airplane, for example, was made possible only by the development of the internal combustion engine, which in turn owes its existence to the study of the laws governing all heat engines, viz., those of thermo dynamics, which had found application for a hundred preceding years in the steam engine, which in its turn was made possible, under what must have been divine guidance, through two hundred years study of celestial mechanics, inspired by the discovery on the part of Galileo and Newton of those laws governing force and motion, which found their application in every one of the subsequent developments. This sequence of discovery serves to make clear the relationship that exists between pure science and modern industry. The first is unquestionably the parent of the latter.

And while we are discussing the manner in which our great Creator has guided human efforts to harness to man's use the forces of nature in preparation for the coming era when the curse upon the race will have been lifted, we must not forget to glance at the wonderful subject of light. The world has been much enriched and benefited by the unselfish labors of those scientists who have made the analyses of solar and cosmic rays their specialty. Apart from the pernicious efforts of some to utilize such things as engines of frightful destruction, the students of light inform us that their subject constitutes an inexhaustible mine of interest, and amply repays the most diligent study. As previously noted in connection with the spectroscope, mankind has already received

incalculable benefits from the work of investigators in this field of research and as yet we merely stand on the threshold of this chamber of wonders.

In the Solar Spectrum, the most rapid visible rays at the violet end are produced by about twice as many waves per second as the lowest visible rays at the red end, and hence the spectrum of visible rays is spoken of as being an octave in length, because in music any note an octave higher than its counterpart is always produced by exactly twice as many vibrations as the lower note. And now it has been demonstrated that in addition to the luminous waves between the red and the violet, there are above the latter, two more octaves and in addition, a number of shorter, ultra-violet rays which it is thought constitute the surgically useful x-rays (x stands for the unknown quantity). Then, descending to the region of the infra-red, we first encounter seven octaves of dark heat waves, then five more octaves of a radiation, the character of which has not yet been determined. Still further down we come to the electromagnetic (Hertzian) waves. Of these there appear to be at least twelve octaves, and beyond these again are those waves used in wireless telegraphy, etc.

And so goes the march of progress in man's efforts to learn more concerning this earthly environment which is destined to be the everlasting abode of the human race. The last quarter century has witnessed such giant strides in this direction, largely occasioned, it is sad to say, by the exigencies of two great wars, that the adult of the present day is further advanced from his grandfather in terms of scientific knowledge, than that grandfather was from the flood. Had man's conquest over his own fallen tendencies kept pace with his ever-increasing control over nature's forces, then indeed there would seem to be little occasion for the use of the rod of iron which the Word implies will be necessary to prepare human hearts for the blessings of the Kingdom of Messiah.

- J. R. Hughes.

"God Seeketh Such"

PART 3

"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshipers." - John 4:23, R. V.

IN our discussion thus far of the conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well the trend of thought has been leading upwards to the consideration of two outstanding things: the first, the personality and purpose of Almighty God; the second, that true-hearted devotion and unfeigned reverence which is his due from all who by him through his Son, have been redeemed and reconciled at such amazing cost. As regards the personality of God, there is much we cannot hope to say, for there must always be a gulf -- impassable and incomprehensible -- between the finite and the Infinite. But there is quite enough of his purposes revealed to awake devotional response in every appreciative heart. And we may take it as a certainty, on the strength of our Lord's own words, that it is this sincere, devotional response which a gracious loving" Father "seeks" from those who love his name. We should mark that phrase, "the Father seeketh," and take note of the emphasis laid thereon by the lips of our blessed Lord. It is as though God were coming out of his long retirement into which he withdrew when sin came in, so that he might now begin to make search for pious souls, whose hearts could be transformed as into golden altars before the Lord, from which the real myrrh and cassia of the true incense of devotion and praise could arise as fragrance sweet before his Face. God has become a "seeker of that little "something" which a responsive child may have to "give." There is more delightful pleasure to him in our acquisition and exercise of that worshipful response, than in any other acquisition which we, in this present life, can attain.

It is not to be expected that the hitherto uninstructed woman at the well could comprehend or understand all that the words of Jesus would imply, for it was of the deep things of God he spake. Notwithstanding that lack of comprehension on her part however, Jesus did not hesitate to state "the truth, the whole truth, on that momentous theme, and to show how that profound devotion to God must be accounted to stand at the very pinnacle of all Christian experience, at once the most desirable by God: and the most satisfactory to the child.

But though these words were addressed, initially, to an uncomprehending mind, they were not lost, for by some means, they were at length communicated to John, and as treasure rich and rare, had been stored up in his godly mind, till, here in his mature old, age, heneeded them as evidence of his beloved Master's Messiahship, so that thereby he could convince his "little children" of that fact.

And, exactly as Jesus had thrown the full weight of his emphasis upon a worshipful response to a Father's love, so John also sought to re-emphasize the same thing in his later day -- and shall we not also say for our day too? At the risk of repeating our. selves it is necessary to say that John insisted again and yet. again that the fervent heart response of every child is the one outstanding object of the Father's search among the sons of men. Initially he seeks and calls the "men," then he woos and seeks the worship of those men, and in this devoted attitude he finds infinite delight. We should take careful note of this, for it is on the heart, and not so much the head, that the blessing of the Lord is always said to rest. Though God gives his truth to enlighten and illuminate our minds, it is not the wide range of our understanding, nor yet the crystal clarity of our comprehension that alone can win us full approval from our God. We may have been blessed with these and yet fail to use them to his praise. A wider knowledge may seem very necessary to

some (who possess the keener analytical type of mind), but even then it must never be taken as "the end" in itself. At its best, it can be considered only as a means to the end, as a "means" by which truth can find its way down into the deeper levels of the personality. God "seeketh" not intellectuality and brilliance of mind, otherwise he would not have chosen the weak, the outcast, and the things that "are not" (1 Cor. 1:26-29) as the object of his care. Even though this very context indicates the need for sufficient knowledge to understand how Jesus can become the Savior of the world, and that includes one's own need of him as a personal Savior too, it still shows that it is the responsive outflow of grateful appreciative hearts that is most precious and desirable in his sight.

What then is this most desirable state of heart, and how may it be acquired and maintained? For an answer to that we must scan the words of Jesus very carefully and note with care his points of contrast and emphasis. "Woman, believe me," Jesus said in his very illuminating reply, "the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: 'we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for such the Father seeketh to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Three things stand out for special consideration in that passage, while in addition there are several emphatic words which call for attention too. 'The three outstanding things are: (a) the old worship; (b) the new worship; and, (c) the Object of that worship. Among the emphatic words are: (a) "now," "and now is"; (b) "true," "the true worshipers"; and (c) "must," "must worship him."

Of the Samaritan system of worship Jesus had no good or extenuating thing to say. It was offered in ignorance and was altogether misdirected in its purpose. It had not been instituted or authorized by God, nor had it been accepted by him. Even at its best it had been but a mutilated caricature of worship and had had for its foundation and warranty nothing more than a very incomplete copy of the Pentateuch, and for its priestly service a system introduced by an unfaithful priest of Israel whom Nehemiah "chased" and expelled from Jerusalem. (Neh. 13:28.) As to their claim to descent from "Father Jacob," this arose out of the intermarriage of certain renegade Jews with the peoples which had been introduced by the King of Assyria into the vacant land. (See 2 Kings 17:33-41.) Intermarriage on a considerable scale had occurred in the years between the return from Babylon and Nehemiah's purge. "Ye worship ye know not what" was a just assessment of their position before the Most High. Jesus did not say they were better to worship in ignorance than not to worship at all! That was not true, even for those rudimentary times.

Of the Jewish worship Jesus had one very commendatory thing to say-it was performed with some degree of understanding, for, said he, "Salvation is of the Jews." Not that the Jews in general understood the full implications of that statement, but some of their far-seeing Prophets had foreseen and foretold the coming of that salvation, for indeed, it was not a salvation *for* the Jews alone, but "through" (or "out of") the Jews of which Jesus spake; the same salvation, which amplified and more fully explained, had led the Samaritan citizens to believe on Jesus as the coming "Savior of the world." The word used by Jesus is "Ek" -- and means not merely "of," but "out of," and is in this case almost equivalent to "through." It indicates a salvation which having first embraced the Jew, flows out from them till it embraces the "world." Of this salvation the Prophets had spoken repeatedly and assuringly, knowing that God would yet honor his pledge to Abraham, and bless all the nations through his Seed.

The obvious purport of Jesus' words was that the Jewish worship was related to an incipient phase of the Divine Plan, and was based upon clear and precise revelation from God. They had had far more than a mutilated copy of the Decalogue as their source of instruction, consequently with each additional prophetic declaration—those of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and all the minor Prophets—their understanding was carried onward to wider horizons and clearer expectation than that of the Samaritan. Consequently their "worship," elementary though it was, was associated with a "Plan" which envisaged redemption for the whole wide world.

Hence that old worship at Jerusalem had not been void or purposeless, but had "shadowed" and outlined a great far reaching objective as the ages passed to view.

But, as other Scriptures indicate, because of the weakness of the flesh and the ineffectiveness of animal sacrifice to take away sin, a change of procedure was proposed. A new and better Covenant, to supersede that Old Mosaic Covenant, had been announced, under which the former objective of preparing "a people for a purpose" will be realized. Thus a people who had failed to attain to its call under the Mosaic system, in former days, would, in a better day and under "better things," achieve its destiny and become the channel of grace, on the earth, to all the nations of the world. But before that fuller destiny could be achieved in and by Israel, another phase of the Divine Plan had to operate, under which all "true" worshipers would worship God "in spirit and in truth."

To get a right appreciation of those two words we will need to compare one of them (truth) with a former statement made by John. That statement is "The Law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.) Was there then no "truth" in the world till Jesus came? Was everything that preceded his coming rightly labeled as "false"? Did John set the "truth" as it came by Jesus over against what was palpably false? And the answer to that would be, Certainly not!

The system that came by Moses was instituted and ordained of God; it rested upon his authority and sanction; it was he who at sundry times and in divers manners had spoken unto the fathers by the Prophets. That system, ordained for its own times and purposes, bore the imprint of the Hand of God, equally with other parts of the Divine Plan and therefore could not be "false." We must seek some other co-relative term therefore, to set over against "the truth" in this context. What is true of that old system of service and worship is that it was only shadowy and typical -- not the "real" thing -- and therefore could not bring in salvation to men. The "Law" system that came by Moses was "shadowy," elementary, and ceremonial; the grace and truth system that came by Jesus was "real," advanced, and has but little ritual. But even that old system served its purpose in educating the pious son of Israel in the simpler rudiments of holiness, righteousness, and purity.

The word "truth" in our text (as well as in John 1:17) stands for what is "real" and "substantial," and relates to the real things, the actual things, the "better things" by which actual redemption would be brought about. And the "true" worshipers are those "real" worshipers who worship in the spirit of that redemptive Plan.

Again John said of Jesus that he was "full of grace and truth." Of course, in every spoken word he spake the "truth," but speaking, or not speaking, he *was* "the truth." In himself he was "The Truth" in its essential reality and substantiality. Actually and precisely he was "the Lamb of God" (slain by intention from before the foundation of the world) who was, in very deed and fact, to take away "the sin of the world." As John explained to his converts in another place, "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." (1 John 2:2.) In other words he was the "truth," because he was the real and actual Savior of men. He came as the "substantial" sacrifice to replace those that had served as mere shadows and types.

The new worship must therefore be associated with the real things of God. It does not belong to the elementary or ritualistic state of things. Otherwise its worshipers could be no more "true worshipers" than Aaron's sons or Israel's citizens had been. The "old" worship had been sensory, external, and of "the hand"; the "new" must be spiritual, internal, and of "the heart." "Jehovah worship" had been limited to both time and place; "Father-worship" must be universal and independent of time and place. This needs no Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim, no ceremonial priesthood, or chanting acolyte, no attendance at appointed place or participation in ordered rite. This is of the "heart" and of all the deep springs of life. It must express sincere approval of, and devotion to a purpose which has God's everlasting intentions in view. In its exercise it will still be a contribution towards the world's salvation (as was the old Mosaic system) but on a *real* and *better* plane.

Why is this so? Why "must" it be so? Essentially and practically it must be so because God is in it in a new and fuller revelation, and because, with God, the time of the "reality" is come! He is to be now as a "Father" to "sons"; as an everywhere manifest "spirit" to his worshipers. Hence to account for the great change that is taking place, Jesus said, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

"God is a spirit"? What does that imply? Are we to think of him as formless, impersonal, and impalpable? Not by any means. He is represented as having "location," for Jesus went to sit at his right hand; angels go into and leave his ineffable presence. He is represented as having form and substance, for Jesus in his exaltation became "the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance." (Heb. 1:3.) We need not, however, waste time and space in seeking to show that spirit beings (on any plane) do not necessarily bear resemblance to men in structure or substance. There may be some slight evidence to show what a spirit being *is not*. It has not flesh and bones. (Luke 24:39.) Flesh and blood cannot enter into that heavenly resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:50.) But there is very little to show exactly *what it is*. Perhaps the poet, Milton, expresses all that can confidently be said when he writes:

"For spirits as they please
Can either sex assume, or both, so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure;
Nor tied or manacled with joint or limb
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous *flesh*; but in the shape they choose
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure
Can execute their very purposes."

The truth of it all is that we cannot understand what the essential qualities of any spirit being are, even on the lowest planes. That being so, what can we say of the divine plane?

In the Greek the original text reads, "God is spirit," but it is obvious that Jesus spoke of his Father from the standpoint of his personality, for he goes on to say, "They that worship *him* must worship *him* in spirit and in truth." It is necessary in the English version to supply the indefinite article and say "God is a spirit," thus introducing more definitely the idea of his personality. And yet in its special setting here, it is not the thought of the personality itself that is dominant, but that of a personality expressing itself in predetermined activity, and drawing other lesser personalities up into the orbit of its own activity. The Greek word "*pneuma*," in its first or primary meaning indicates "wind"; then by secondary derivation "breath," but atmospheric air is neither "wind" nor "breath" when not in motion or activity. Arising out of this primary thought,

therefore, we have the thought of a divine activity in progress, working out its schemes and purposes.

Behind the fact of the divine personality thus stated, we must also see that divine personality expressing itself in the outworking of its purposes. For surely we can never think of God, our own gracious Father, as of some sleeping Buddha passively sunk in eternal repose, nor even as some unheeding Baal, absent on some distant journey. It is because he is God Most High, "the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," who is expressing himself in all the varied activities associated with his Plan that he can command the worship which he "seeks."

Running as a scarlet thread through the words of Jesus at the well, and later also in his conversations with the hospitable Samaritans themselves, was the thought of a divine salvation to be accomplished; a salvation which, in its sweep, first embraces and wins the Jews (and Israel) and then flows onwards through them, till it at last embraces the whole wide world. That Jesus had enlarged upon this theme is obvious from the Samaritans' remarks when they affirmed "We know that this is indeed the Savior of the world." He who at the onset had claimed, in the woman's hearing, to be the "Christ," (Israel's long expected Messiah), now stood confessed by the citizens as "the Savior of the world."

This conception exactly expresses God's purpose and activity towards men in the "real" redemptive work he has now introduced into the world. With the ancient people regathered and restored, and made the nucleus of the new government of the earth, all the "ends of the earth" will look unto Israel's God, and through Israel's King find life, peace, and happiness forevermore.

This, then, is the nature and scope of the activity implied and expressed in the statement that "God is a spirit." It implies that God, as a divine non-corporeal being, as the unfathomed Source and Director of all that is holy, just, and good, is actively engaged in the expression and employment of all his inherent powers (an expression of his own deeper self) in promoting and executing a most gracious and unmerited plan of redemption, with Jesus, his own appointed "Lamb" as its center and mainspring, in order to set salvation full and free before "whosoever will," of all "the families of the earth" who will accept and take of his proffered grace..

And inasmuch as God, the great eternal *spirit*, must express himself in such purpose and activity, so must those who find acquaintance with this omnipotent directive force, also be drawn into the same sphere of service and activity. Even though *his* gracious purpose can, as yet, be seen only "in part," it is so wide and deep and wonderful that it tends to draw into its vortex all whose hearts lean Godward in this present life. Turning up to him, as the flower to the sun, these pious seekers after truth are attracted and energized by the spirit (influence) of him who "is a spirit," and become thereafter dominated and controlled by him, for his own ends and purposes. All the deep forces of their personalities are attracted, gripped, and held fast by the persuasive, drawing magnetism of his own desirable personality, and life for them, under his control, can then be one unending round of wonder, love, and praise.

Thus it is that in the "real" work of God -- the work in which God reveals himself in all that is distinctively Godlike and divine -- the children of the Father can find ground and cause to worship him "in spirit and in truth." Always there is that before them which is majestic and sublime, inciting them to praise; inviting their surrender and cooperation in the Plan. Always, everywhere, the recollection of his excellent greatness and of his unmerited mercy sets the music of their hearts ascending to the skies. Prompted by the spirit and influence of him who is the Author of it all, each child of God can worship the worthy Father with all his heart and soul in the service of the great "reality." It requires no trick or artifice of man, nor spell of lofty dome, nor

chant of intoning choir to awake the music of their soul. He alone can awake the depths and constrain all that is within them to bless and praise his holy Name.

It is from such as these that the Father "seeks" affection and praise. As Creator and Sustainer *of* things he might justly command the works of his hands to yield him praise. Were he of dictator or sheik-like disposition, he might require his Court to extol his virtues and thus be insured that his excellences were made known.

But as a loving Father he comes forth in benevolent and unmerited grace to woo and win the affections of his sons, and by linking their hearts to his great purposes assures himself of their devotion and worship forevermore. He "seeks" their worship by what he does, by what he is accomplishing for them and for all mankind. In return they worship him "in spirit and in truth" by their surrender to cooperate with him in the outworking of that selfsame Plan.

-T. Holmes, Eng.

The Place Where Two Seas Met

Acts 27:41

Have you come to the place "where two seas met,"
And your boat is fast in the ground --
A place where you hear no sound but the waves
As they foam and lash and pound?
Then listen and hear what the angel said
As he spoke to Paul on the sea:
"Fear not, for lo, thy God shall save
All those who are sailing with thee."

Have you (fasted for many a day and night
As the storm broke over the deep?
Are you faint and fearful, dismayed and sad,
Unable the vigil to keep?
Then rise in the hour of your deepest *gloom*
And partake of the life giving Bread;
Your strength shall return, though the seas mount high
And the clouds hang low overhead.

"A night and *a* day in the deep," you say,
And there'll be a "loss of the boat"?
No doubt but the tempest is rough and wild,
But the pieces of board still float;
And you'll not sink if you trust in God
For He'll be parting the wave;
His Arm will reach out to buoy you up --
His Arm that is "mighty to save."

With the coming of day the land shall appear. --
Perhaps but an island at best --
But after the tempest and "violence of waves"
It's a haven of comfort and rest.
Around you shall gather the kindest friends
Who will kindle a heart-warming flame;
And the thought of the "place where two seas met"
Shall be praise to JEHOVAH's NAME.

-- *Nellie Florence Jolly.*

The Question Box

THE BARREN FIG-TREE

Question:

Will you please discuss the Barren Fig-tree incident - Matthew 21:18-22; Mark 11:12-14, 20-25?

In your discussion kindly answer the following questions:

1. Mark 11:13 states that "the time of figs was not yet." Notwithstanding this, its condemnation was evidently because it had no fruit. Please explain.
2. Did this barren fig-tree represent the Jewish nation?
3. If this fig-tree did represent the Jewish nation, how are we to reconcile the words of our Lord in Matthew 21:19 and Mark 11:14 that no fruit should grow on it henceforth *for ever*, with the general teaching of the Scriptures that Israel is yet to be restored?
4. When the disciples noted the withering effect of our Lord's condemnation of the tree, and called his attention to it, he replied: "Have faith in God." While we realize it is always proper to have faith in God, what was there in the circumstances which made his counsel especially appropriate to the disciples then?

Answer:

The first question certainly calls for an answer. On its surface this incident represents our Lord as acting unjustly. On the one hand it was not the time of the year when figs should be expected; while, on the other hand, the tree is condemned for not having any.

To avoid this difficulty which all admit, most scholars conclude that Mark meant something it is quite certain he did not say. They interpret his statement that "it was not the time of figs" to mean that it was not the season for gathering figs, or that the season for gathering figs had not yet passed. This view is advanced by Barnes in his New Testament Notes. A similar view, given by Pearce, is quoted approvingly by Wilson in the Emphatic Diaglott, in an elaborate footnote on Mark 11:13.

This view, as we see it, simply reverses what Mark says. He says the time of figs was not yet; they say, in effect, that it was. And, of course, if it was, the question as to the conduct of our Lord is solved.

Such a viewpoint, however, is certainly not supported in the word-for-word translation of the Emphatic Diaglott, nor even in the translation given in the right hand margin. Moreover, none of the other translations we have consulted differ in meaning from that given in the Authorized Version. The American Revised Version puts it in these words: "It was not the season of figs."

Furthermore, the context proves the accuracy of Mark's statement, for when our Lord came to this fig-tree, it was just before the Passover -- that is to say; in the spring of the year. According to competent testimony it would not be until late May or early June that the season for ripe figs would begin.

In view of these considerations it seems clear that the solution of the problem must be sought in another direction.

To begin with it will be helpful, if we have not already done so, to acquaint ourselves with the manner in which figs grow. According to an article in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, the branches of the fig-tree are straggled and naked in winter, but when the rains are nearly or quite over, small green knobs appear at the ends of the twigs. These are the young fruits -- the green figs. They are thus named in Canticles 2:13. The fruit, then, appears first, before the leaves appear. (This point, by the way, is correctly noted in the Diaglott footnote, previously mentioned.) Next the leaf-bud expands and the new pale green leaves soon more or less overshadow the little figs. When this occurs it is a sign that summer is not far away. To this familiar sign our Lord referred in Matthew 24:32, when he said:

"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh."

With these facts before us let us return to the Barren Fig-tree incident. "It was not the season of figs" Mark tells us. It was also *too early for fig-leaves*, and that is the point generally overlooked. At that time of year neither leaves nor fruit were naturally to be looked for on a fig tree. This particular tree, however, unlike all the other fig-trees did have leaves, *and therefore*, should have had fruit. Jesus, hungry, saw in the distance a surprising thing-surprising at that time of year -- a fig-tree in full leaf, as Weymouth renders it. (Mark 11:13.) Since he was hungry, and since, notwithstanding the time of year, this fig-tree was so advanced, he went to see, to quote once more from Weymouth, "whether perhaps he could find some figs on it. When however he came to it, he found *nothing but leaves*."

It was not the season for figs, but this tree, by putting forth leaves, claimed, so to speak, to be something more than other fig-trees; claimed, indeed, (since we have seen that in the fig-tree the fruit appears before the leaves) to have fruit on it. This remarkable fig-tree, in the attitude of false pride, may we say, vaunted itself, claimed to be in advance of other fig-trees, and challenged the passer-by that he should come and refresh himself with its fruit. Yet, when the Lord accepted the challenge, and drew near, it proved to be but as the others, without fruit. It was, in fact, in a far worse state than the others; for they doubtless had young fruits which needed only the heat of the summer to ripen them, whereas this one had *nothing but leaves*.

The fault of this tree, then, was not that in the spring of the year it had no ripe fruit, but that, having none, not even green figs, it had clothed itself abundantly with leaves, with the foliage which, according to the natural order of the tree's development, gave a pledge and a promise that fruit would be found *on* it, if sought. In the circumstances our Lord's conduct is vindicated; the tree was justly condemned.

2. We come now to the second question: "Did this barren fig-tree represent the Jewish nation? To our understanding it did, and this is the view held by most scholars.

In support of this view we offer three considerations:

(1) The fig-tree is used in the Old Testament as representing Israel. - Joel 1:7.

(2) The parable of the fig-tree given by Jesus in Luke 13:6-9 undoubtedly was intended to apply to Israel.

(3) It accurately symbolized Israel's condition. In itself the fig-tree was neither good nor bad, morally. When, therefore, Christ condemned it for its deception, he did not attribute moral responsibilities to it, but he did attribute to it a fitness for representing moral qualities. And the sin of Israel was exactly that which the tree symbolized. The true fruit of that people, prior to our Lord's first advent, would have been to admit its absolute inability to produce fruit apart from their coming Messiah, to have presented itself before God bare and naked and empty altogether. But this was exactly what Israel refused to do. Other nations might have nothing' to boast of, but for themselves they claimed much. And yet, on close inspection, the substance of righteousness was as much lacking in their case as in that of the Gentiles, as Paul so abundantly demonstrates in the second chapter of Romans. Since the characteristics of the barren fig-tree so faithfully represented those of Israel, we think we are justified in believing they were intended to do so.

3. Our third question is answered by reference to better translations. While the fig-tree itself was withered "for ever," this was not to be in the case of Israel. The word translated "for ever" really means "to the end of the age," and is so rendered in the Diaglott and other translations. As St. Paul explains, it is only until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, that blindness in part is happened to Israel-thereafter there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and thus all Israel shall be saved. (Isa. 59:20; Rom. 11:2,5, 26.) A day will come, indeed, when Israel which now says, "I am a dry tree" (Isa. 56:3), shall consent to that word of its true Lord, which of old it denied: "From Me is thy fruit found." (Hos. 14:8.) It shall then be arrayed with the richest foliage and fruit of all the trees of the field. That time is near, very near, we think. May we once again quote our Lord's words: "Now learn a parable" (it is more accurately trans. lated "the" parable) ; "Now learn *the* parable of the fig-tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh; so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." (Matt. 24:32, 33.) If this be true for Israel, what message has it for the Church?

4. We come now to the fourth and last question. The explanation of our Lord's words, "Have faith in God" is to be found in the astonishment which the disciples manifested at the rapidity with which the Lord's sentence was executed. From the account in Matthew it appears that the withering began almost as soon as the Lord spoke. It was, however, on the following morning, as we learn from Mark, that the disciples specially noticed its condition. "Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst *is* withered away." It was as though they had said one to another: "Did you notice the instant effect yesterday, just when our Lord spoke? The leaves seemed to droop in a moment. But who would have thought that the withering would have been so complete in a single day? Verily, he speaks and it is done. How great, how thorough, how marvelous is his power!"

He will not let the occasion go without its further lesson. What he had done, they might do, and more. "Have faith in God." Faith in God would place them in relation with the same power which he wielded, so that they might do mightier things even than this at which they marveled so much. Listen to his words in the next verse:

"Verily I say unto you: Whosoever shall say to this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe ,that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall have it."

Faith has already removed greater mountains than the Mount of Olives on which our Lord and his disciples were then standing; and many more shall it yet lift aloft and fling far out of sight *in* ;the depths of the sea. What mountains of obstacles and obstructions! what mountains of prejudices! what mountains of accumulated evil habits! what "hills of *difficulty*," apparently insurmountable-

inner, outer, social, political, spiritual, has faith tossed, and is faith still tossing, away! It is the Almighty God in whom our faith is to rest. If the removal of Olivet itself is needed, or of any other mountain, material or spiritual, he *is* still ready and able to put his finger on its summit, when it will leap from its very socket.

Of course this marvelous promise is conditional. But it is not too large for God to perform. It has always been fulfilled and always will be, if the conditions are met. If our wills are truly, immersed into *the* will of God, so that his will becomes truly our will, we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. (John 15:7.) And greater works than Jesus did (including the miracle of withering the fig-tree) shall we do. - John 14:12.

This lesson was for the disciples then; it has been *for* the whole Church since; it belongs to us today. "Have faith in God."

- P. L. Read

Greetings from Germany

Dear Brethren in the Lord:
Loving Greetings in the dear Name.

Please find herewith a brief report of our recent visit to Germany, together with some observations and suggestions arising therefrom. In substance these latter are much the same that have been prepared for our British friends, although written especially for you. Therein we have tried to assure all our American brethren of the deep, warm love of our German friends for all their brethren everywhere—a fact to which we can bear a ready testimony. They do not seem to know, when, out of their scanty store, they have done enough for those who visit them. It has been good to be with them, an experience we shall not easily forget. But we will let the report speak for itself.

With our warmest love to all, we are, as ever
Yours in Him,
H. E. Nadal and T. Holmes.

Believing that some record of our recent trip to Germany would be of interest to our American brethren, we herewith present for their consideration a very brief report, together with some observations and conclusions which we brought away from that greatly impoverished land.

Many were the messages of love entrusted to our care by brethren in America and all over the British Isles. It gave us special joy to pass these messages along. Many also were the greetings in return, entrusted to us for our brethren here at home. Had we read these messages in detail to our German brethren the reading must have absorbed not less than a full hour of their (and our) time. Likewise should we seek to set their reciprocal greetings—out in full, the list would encroach upon far too much printer's space. We brought greetings from the young brethren in Germany to our young ones at home; from the sisters there to our sisters here; and in a very special sense from all brethren over there to all brethren at home and in—America too, in the words of Ephesians 3:16-19. This was the Whitsuntide Convention greeting to all brethren everywhere, and we must beg our readers to accept this text (for reasons of space) as the sum and substance of a very wide array of texts. It constitutes a very fitting summary indeed for all the loving things the German brethren wished us to say to all brethren everywhere.

Our visit to the British Zone was all too short—many more Classes being omitted from our itinerary than were visited. Although we had the pleasure of meeting brethren from these unvisited Classes at the Whitsuntide Convention, one and all seemed just a wee bit disappointed that we could not find time to call and share their fellowship. "When will you be coming over again?" was a question frequently asked. "When will you be coming to the American Zone?" was also asked by brethren from those southern regions; while one lone brother from the Russian Zone, speaking for his brethren there, showed how eager they were for a visit to the Eastern Zone.

It would be a pleasure to record the details of our journeyings and to tell of happy contacts with certain brethren (somewhat better known by reason of their correspondence with one or other of our monthly magazines) and with certain Classes also along our way. There would be much to

tell, and' many touching little incidents to relate, but, because publication space is limited, what to us is a far more important side of things must have first place, so that brethren overseas may understand something of the limitations and handicaps under which our German brethren bravely attempt to maintain fellowship from day to day. That we esteemed it a privilege to visit these German friends need scarcely to be said. That it was a very happy time we gladly testify. To see these beloved friends, so recently released from restrictive decrees, rejoicing together in the Lord, was an experience new to us, an experience long to be remembered. We have never known the withering effect upon the soul of that forbidding word "*verboten*" -- "*verboten*" to do this, and "*verboten*" to do that! 'These dear brethren have! For the majority of these dear souls twelve arid years lay behind; for some those years carried prison memories; for all they carried recollections of the loss of study-books and Bibles, and of the authorities' prohibition of Christian fellowship.

But now, like exiles of a former day, they feel that God has done great things for them, of which they are most demonstratively glad. It was good indeed for us to witness and to share in their happy fellowship and to catch some added inspiration from their joy of heart.

The Whitsuntide Convention at Bunde, in Westphalia, is the only one, as yet, that can be arranged in that greatly straitened land. Consequently long expectation and keen realization reach here their highest pitch of satisfaction and joy. Only here, once in the course of a whole year, can these now released, but hungry souls find vent for full and free emotional release from all the dry and drab surroundings of their daily round and common task. Need we wonder that enthusiasm ran high as brothers, long separated from those of like precious faith, shared together once more the good things of the Lord's providing?

The messages of love the American and British brethren sent contributed in some degree to intensify this emotional release. To be assured that even in those darker days, when war divided our peoples and governments, nothing of these devastating things had separated us and them at the Throne of Grace, was a message that went right home to their hearts. That they, and we, were "one" in the Lord, even then, exactly as we are "one" today, was a word of comfort to each and all. The whole assembly (some 750 strong) was moved most visibly by the messages of love.

This was the common experience in the smaller gatherings too-the "tens" and "fifties" were rejoicing at the restoration of their fellowship, with none today to act as "spy or "informer" about their gatherings. They were "brethren" once again; they had "brethren" too beyond the sea - -that was the thing that made them glad. They were children together, with us, of the one Father, redeemed by the one Savior's precious blood, and *that* linked their hearts in "one," with all who loved the precious Name!

On this side of things our joy was rich indeed and we would fain have left our record there. But as our eyes wandered over audiences (large and small) we saw things that told of loss, privation, and want. (Our German friends may not *have* wished us to take note of these things, nor even now to write of them. Right bravely do they face up to this sense of loss, and give thanks to Him whose Hand bestows either little or much. But we feel duty bound to speak, and hope thereby to solicit help and awaken new response to meet their need.

It is not now for food and clothes we solicit help, though the need for these material things still exists. Along these lines, compared with six months ago, some slight improvement is taking place. But even so, compared with our British or American standards of supply, supplies of food fall far below the level of nutritional safety. Everywhere, to an observant eye, the signs of malnutrition can be seen. ' The foods most needed are the fats and the protein substances; the

starchy foods being proportionately much in excess, due largely to potatoes being one of the staple foods upon which the German people must feed.

In the matter of clothing, underwear for both sexes is pre-eminently required, though need for outer garments also has not been fully satisfied. Textiles and footwear are now coupon-free, but prices are high and only the well-to-do can buy.

Our visit to these brethren, both in convention and class, has brought home to us another need. There is a lack of books requisite for worship and praise. During the Hitler regime, or the later blitz, many brethren lost their whole stock of books -- Bibles, Volumes, Song-books, Lexicons -- everything. Some, though not all, have now obtained a Bible again, and are thus equipped with the all important Book. Few possess Volumes (Volume I in particular) in their own tongue; while song-books (Zions-lieder) are also scarce. Some Classes are almost restricted to the use of a dozen hymns, typed, duplicated and distributed by a few zealous hearts to meet their devotional needs. To us, as English brethren, accustomed to the use of our splendid range of hymns and songs, it seemed passing strange to think that for many of our German friends -- these manuals of devotion were simply "not there" -- they do not exist. Again, with our own book shelves well stocked, it gave us queer feelings to see empty shelves; to realize that the means for close study and research work do not abound. It leaves one with a sense of desolation pervading heart and mind to run up against such evident lack of essential things. We simply cannot conceive what we ourselves would feel if we went to our bookcase and our books were "not there" -- if a spacious void existed where our books should be! And to see four persons singing the high praises of God from one book (or one sheet) brings one face to face with a need we British or American brethren have never known. But, in spite of these too obvious handicaps a deep spiritual thankfulness abounds, as brethren share with brethren readily of their scanty store. Perhaps our German brethren, in a new gladness of heart, do not sense any lack, for long deprivation may have accustomed them to do without many things. But, being visitors (and British), this state of things could not escape our eye.

What can we do about it? To -ship supplies of our English (or American) hymn books would not meet their need, for, in the first place, the German collection of hymns is not the same as our own, some found in their "Zions-lieder" not being found in ours, and many found in ours not being included in theirs. Moreover, any songbook intended for their use must of necessity be in the German tongue.

That last remark applies also with equal force to any copies of Volume I (or any other helps) that may be supplied. One can become really aware of language handicaps only when face to face with a situation like this.

At the present time it appears to be a sheer impossibility for our German brethren to satisfy that need. Money is another thing that is simply "not there" in any general sense. For the major part the tiny dribble that keeps a semi-starvation dietary going from day to day is all that is available. To print a "Lieder" so that each brother and sister may possess a copy of their own, seems beyond the range of present possibility. That is Problem No. 1 we have brought home to think about! Supplies of Volume I (and other study helps) constitutes Problem No. 2.

How -can these two particular problems be solved? At the present time we cannot say -- we have come home to think about them, and to ask others to think about them too. And in cases like this, it is better to pray about it first till the Great Provider points the answer and the way.

Another obvious necessity for our German friends is a monthly magazine suitably published in their own tongue. A tiny few receive copies of our British "Bible Students Monthly," or the "Herald" or some other of the American magazines. Some also receive copies of a paper emanating from Switzerland. But there is no periodical available for the general body of these brethren-perhaps some two thousand strong! How shall our German brethren obtain the benefits accruing from the monthly visit of some suitably and sympathetically edited magazine? Here are a few side lights of the situation:

(a) No periodical produced in Britain or America stands the faintest chance of meeting such requirement, because --

(1) Such periodical must be in the German language.

(2) The controversial points of British-American discussion are not live issues in Germany today.

(3) Radio programs or any other form of "witness" boosting are absolutely impossible in Germany.

(4) Only brethren who have shared the experiences and suffered the losses common to all, can mold and lead (under God's guidance) the reshaping of religious thought over there. Rebuilding must start from the foundations again -- a colossal task -- and only those who have experienced the demolitions of the past can understand and undertake the reconstruction of the fellowship.

(b) No periodical may be published in Germany without the consent and license of the occupying powers.

(1) Applications hitherto made for permission to print and publish a periodical have consistently been opposed by a powerful Catholic Church (and we believe, by other churches too).

(2) To attempt to publish a periodical without regard to the sanction of the occupying powers would almost inevitably result in the canceling of the registration (by the "Religious Control") of the "Free Bible Communion" and its erasure from the list of religious bodies authorized to meet for public worship.

(c) As a condition for the issue of a permit to purchase a printing press and to publish a periodical, the occupying authority requires a deposit of 5000 marks (about 1600 dollars in American currency) as a guarantee of good faith; a sum which would be liable to forfeiture in case of allegations of non-compliance being proved against them. (5000 marks would be the equivalent of a prince's ransom in Germany today.)

Paper is scarce, and under government control.

(d) The only present means (apart from the Swiss publication) for providing for the spiritual needs of perhaps two thousand hungry souls, are: (1) Two brethren's efforts working conjointly as translators.

(2) One typewriter (or perhaps two). (3) One duplicator.

These three connected links are the only means at present available to meet a colossal need. But even so, we were delighted to learn that though these slender means are already over worked, it

has been decided to reprint for the benefit of the young brethren in Germany the contents of each issue of the English young brethren's "Messenger."

We also learned that a brother in Luneberg (Brother Burmeister) has, at his third application, received a permit to publish matter in booklet form. *The permit does not apply to a periodical.* The benefits, accruing from this may come to be seen at a later time.

In view of all this range of circumstance we think we are on safe ground in concluding and asserting that all attempts to feed and nourish the whole fellowship of German brethren, in its present reconstructive state of mind, must originate and be carried through from within Germany itself. Outside brethren do not understand all that twelve destructive years have done to the former fellowship. It was broken down, dissipated, and left scattered like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision. But the Hand of God is bringing these separated remnants in touch again, "bone to its bone," and is reclothing them with flesh, and infusing his spirit into the reviving structure. Should over zealous writers of controversial literature flood this land with papers, pamphlets or books, they would be calculated to do grievous injury to these recuperating souls. We think it not unfair to these brethren to say that they are not (on the whole) ready for the controversial provender circulating overseas. The preparation and dissemination of spiritual food for the whole German Brotherhood would be far better left in the care of their own best and saintliest minds. They, at least, would understand and be able to supply spiritual nourishment suited to the present stage of convalescence and recovery. A core or nucleus of such saintly minds most certainly exists, which is doing most commendable work in drawing the scattered elements together and sending out short exhortations and appeals to them all to draw more closely together again. And surely the rank and file of our German brethren would rally much more readily to the guidance and leadership of their chosen Elders (who have shared the nightmare experience of twelve years) than to any attempt of leadership or direction from without. Friendly aid, by wise counsel and correspondence on really vital things, could do much to relay the foundation truths,, while the intruding of controversial themes could endanger recovery. One of the best gifts from overseas, if it could be made, would be an adequate supply of Volume I in the German tongue -- another would be a modest issue of the whole (or part) of their "Zions-lieder," also in their own tongue.

For ourselves, we shall count our many blessings time and time again, after what we have seen. When we open our own hymn book to join in praise, we shall thank God for the privilege; when we turn to our stock of study helps in moments of research, we shall give thanks that we have the opportunity. And most surely we shall show more gratitude that our range of Bibles and versions is so wide and varied. By the mercies of God our lot has fallen among those who "have." We have seen a little of what it mean's to be among those who "have not," and our hearts ache for our German friends in consequence. We would wish to do something to level things out a bit, if our Father would, point the way. Perhaps a kindly Providence will supply these needs in its own time and way, but we deemed it advisable that you should know what follows when dictators hold sway, and when war brings defeat. The least we can do is to bear up these brethren at the Throne of Grace, that God, who knoweth best, shall bless them as he sees fit.

Meantime we wish you all to know that an appreciation almost too deep for words exists beyond the North Sea for what has been done, and that daily they pray the Lord to bless you in return.

Yours in the Lord,
H. E. Nadal and T. Holmes, England

Dear Brethren in Christ:

The set of "Scripture Studies" arrived safely and I have had many blessed hours while studying them. Of course it will take quite a time to read the volumes carefully

On Whitsuntide I was blessed in taking part in the general convention of the Free Bible Students in Kirch lengern and Bunde. I got a free journey to the convention; otherwise I should not have had the money for the trip. As the brethren expected two brothers from England, Brother Nadal and Brother Holmes, I was asked to act as interpreter during the convention. It was my pleasure to do so. Of course I had a very busy time. The brethren from England did not understand any German, so I had to translate all the little private conversations as well as the discourses. We had a very blessed time indeed. About 600 brethren, from all parts of Germany, were assembled in the great hall at Bunde. In all the discourses we heard, the brethren were emphasizing the "oneness" in Christ. Indeed, there was nothing, no difference of understanding of any doctrine, etc., which could separate us. We felt the spirit of the first Pentecost, the holy spirit, among us. It was so touching to see the English brethren shaking hands with the German, to bear all the words of love and understanding. I saw many tears in the eyes of the brethren, tears of joy and emotion. And when I was standing beside Brother Nadal, who was serving in the Love Feast, I could not translate all the words of comfort and love without tears in my own eyes. I shall never forget the blessed hours of this convention.

Now I have to give you some news which may surprise you. By chance I came in touch with relatives of my neighbor who are living in Buenos Aires, Argentine. As I was looking for a chance to emigrate anywhere, they offered me a good position and, good pay in their own firm. And now arrangements are being made for my passage to Argentine. Because of the enormous cost for the passage, I have to go without my family first. I do not know how long I will have to leave my wife and son alone in Germany. Actually they are never alone, the Lord will protect them and, they have still my mother and other relatives. . . . May I ask you for your further interest in my family when I shall be abroad. You know what it means to leave a family in the present German conditions. I can do it only with my trust in the Lord. He would never have given me the chance of emigration if it would not be for the best. Please continue to send your "Herald."
. . .

I do not yet know, the date of my departure. I think it will, take some two or three months until everything is clear, maybe earlier. Anyway, I will let you know when I "break up my tent" in Germany

Praying the Lord's blessing upon you. I remain, with my best wishes, and warm Christian love to you all,

Your brother by his grace,
K. G. S. and Family -- Germany

Interesting Selections

How to Listen to a Discourse

Don't be a criticizing listener.

Don't be alert to mistakes in grammar, gestures, facts.

Don't load up with mistakes, and unload on others.

Don't be a "heresy hound," like the Pharisees, "to catch him."

Don't be a sermon fitter -- thinking of others whom it would fit.

Don't be a sermon taster -- a self-appointed critic, artist.

Don't **assume** you must agree with everything.

The discourse is meant for you -- not to, entertain. The aim is to help you become a better person, to grow.

Listen with a mind prepared with prayer and expectation.

Listen with a sympathetic mind, an open mind.

Listen with an humble mind, assuming the speaker is better than you.

Listen expecting to have your prejudices corrected.

Suggest thoughts, texts, subjects which would help you.

No discourse is quite what the speaker hoped.

A discourse, conceived in prayer, heard in an atmosphere of prayer, with open, sympathetic,, humble, cooperative minds, watered with the spirit, will bless many fold.

- *Religious Digest.*

I Have the Best There Is

1. I have a Guide-book, outlining the Way of Life.
2. I have a Director who supervises the journey, making all things work together for good.
3. I have the "Bread of Life" on which I feed along the journey -- the most satisfactory bread -- ever eaten.
4. I have the "Water of Life" to drink along the way, fully satisfying my thirst at all times.
5. I have a Companion in travel, whose tender sympathy and comforting words console me and reassure me, while He explains the glory of the journey.
6. I have all the entertainment en: route any one could ask or wish -- great joy in my heart; singing in my soul; melody in my mind; peace unsurpassed; rhythm in my running; and victory as my goal.
7. I have many expectant Watchers awaiting me at the end of the Way. I was lost in sin but am saved by grace. My Father is expecting me, also his beloved Son, who will confess me before the Father and his angels, who also await my arrival. And my fellow-runners of this race will greet me and shout "Hallelujah" when I get Home.

- *A Happy Old Saint-Selected.*