



Megiddo Message

*O come,
let us sing unto
the Lord!*

Vol. 77, No. 3

March, 1990

Praise, Praise!

*P*raise be to You, O Lord Most High. Who is like the Lord our God, who sits enthroned on high, who stoops to look upon the heavens and the earth?

To You we lift our humble hearts of praise, that in Your holiness You take notice of us, poor dying earthborns, and invite us into Your family. All praise to You, You who have delivered our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling.

As we stand this hour in Your presence, we are overwhelmed by the greatness of Your power, awed by the limitlessness of Your creation, humbled by the magnitude of Your mercy, and deeply grateful for Your gift of life. Without You we are nothing; without You we can do nothing. You are our life in death, our joy in sorrow, our peace in pain, our strong arm in temptation, our strength in weakness, our comfort in distress.

We rejoice, Father, in the varied lessons and experiences You have allowed during the year that is just past—both those that strengthened us, and those that showed us our deficiencies. We are especially grateful for the perfect Pattern of Your Son, who showed in real flesh and blood the perfect life actually lived, the full surrender actually made. May we set to work with greater earnestness to duplicate that pattern in the small and great events of our lives. May we say to ourselves, “I will be like Him,” and work and pray to make that resolve a reality.

We thank You, Father, for the privilege of living in the time between, the interval between His first coming and His second. Warn us of the responsibility that is ours as His servants, and may we live worthy of the high honor that is ours, and spend each day preparing for His return. May we realize that the Day of His return will be to us either a day of unspeakable delight or of desperate sorrow.

Unite our hearts with those everywhere who are one with You in purpose and in hope. And may our faces shine with the glory of our sublime hope, and our hearts continually rejoice in anticipation of the Great Day when faith shall be changed to sight and all the promises of Your Word blossom into glorious reality. In the name of Him who is our Life and Light and glorious Coming King we pray. Amen.

Megiddo means...

"a place of troops" (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon); "a place of God" (Young's Analytical Concordance). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (II Cor. 10:4-5).

We believe

—in God, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."

We believe

—in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.

We believe

—in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a Virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.

We believe

—in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.

We believe

—in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.

We believe

—in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.

We believe

—in ourselves as capable of applying in our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

We believe

—in the promise of God, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth shall be filled with His glory, His people, and His will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

Bible Quotations

Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version. Other versions are identified as follows.

NEB—New English Bible

NIV—New International Version

NASB—New American Standard Bible

RSV—Revised Standard Version

TLB—The Living Bible

JB—The Jerusalem Bible Reader's Edition

Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English

Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation

Williams—The Bible in the Language of the People

Megiddo Message

Vol.77, No. 3

March, 1990

Feature	
PRAISE, PRAISE!	2
Articles	
BRINGING BACK THE KING!	4
Are we preparing to take part in the King's reception?	
SOUND THE CANNON!	8
How to escape the doldrums	
Questions and Answers	
FOOD WHICH GIVES LIFE	12
Concerning "Precept"	13
Special Feature	
ABIB MESSAGE REFLECTIONS	14
Story	
PRESSING ON!	16
Chapter 2: Ambition and Personal Sacrifice	
Sermon	
JESUS CHRIST:	18
Was He Immaculate and Sinless from Birth?	
Article	
IN HIS NAME	24
A Serious Responsibility	
Lines to Live By	27
Cover Feature	
IF WE COULD HEAR—!	28

The MEGIDDO MESSAGE is a religious magazine devoted to the cause of Christ, and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. Official organ of the Megiddo Church, L. T. Nichols, Founder; Newton H. Payne, President and Editor; Ruth E. Sisson, Executive Editor.

The MEGIDDO MESSAGE is available in microfilm from University Microfilms, Inc., Serials Acquisitions, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

The MEGIDDO MESSAGE (USPS 338-120) is published monthly (except July) by the Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619. Second Class postage paid at Rochester, New York. SUBSCRIPTION RATE: One year, eleven issues \$2.00. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619-1697.

MEGIDDO is a way of believing and living, grounded solidly in the Bible as the reliable Word of our Creator. A total view of life, the world and the universe, it sees all events, men and nations moving together toward one God-ordained climax: the Kingdom of God on earth. This has been the plan of God since the beginning. Christ will return visibly, bodily, as King, and the governments of this world will be joined to form a totally new worldwide government. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants. This is the purpose and goal of all creation.



Bringing Back THE KING!

"Why speak ye not a word of bringing the king back?" —II Sam. 19:10.

These words are from a distressing time in the life of King David. Absalom, the king's son well beloved, had rebelled and finally suffered violent death at the hands of Joab. Forced to flee his home and his throne, David had been living in exile. Now, with Absalom gone, it was time for the king to return.

Quite naturally, David wanted to come home. But he wanted to be sure, doubly sure, that he was welcome. David was especially concerned that he be invited by his own people. He had received word from others, why not from his own?

The fact that David had not heard directly from his own people that he should return must have been embarrassing to him. To think that his own people of Judah— especially the priests and the elders— needed a reminder *from the king himself* to do what was their obvious duty!

Is there not a lesson here for us, we whose King has been so long and so far away, even at the very

throne of heaven? Shall we be silent about inviting Him back, we who claim to be His people, until He Himself reminds us by sending His own messenger?

At His first advent, Jesus was rejected. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). But when He comes the second time, there will be living, eager followers ready to welcome Him. The members of that living reception committee will be among the most honored of earth-borns. Think of having the privilege of welcoming back the King!

Are we preparing ourselves so that, if God wills, we may be part of that reception committee? Or are we among those silent ones, who know that He is coming but speak not a word of bringing back the King?

One thing certain, we need the King. We need Him who comes to bring peace on earth and good

(Continued on page 6)

With all the clash of battle which 'round the earth doth ring;
'Tis strange we hear so little of bringing back "The King!"

Though once by men rejected, He will to earth return
To right all wrong with justice: for this our spirits yearn.

The whole creation groaneth! O Lord, Thy comfort bring!
Cast out the prince of this world and give us back "The King!"

Give peace unto Jerusalem! Therein set up Thy Throne!
Come bless with joy Thy people, and bid them cease to roam.

Answer the prayer of David, the son of Jesse, Lord!
And give Thy King Thy judgments, according to Thy Word.

His judgments shall be righteous; then will the people find
A just and perfect Ruler for earth and all mankind.

He'll judge the poor with justice; and for the children care,
By crushing their oppressors, who did to hurt them dare.

From cruel deceit and violence He will their souls release;
Give joy in place of mourning, and bid all war to cease.

He shall descend like showers with blessings in their train;
And righteousness shall flourish throughout His peaceful reign.

For He shall have dominion from sea to shining sea:
And every king and people to Him shall bow the knee!

His name shall last forever, as long as lives the sun;
And men shall call Him blessed, all people Him shall own.

O blessed be the Lord God! Soon all the world shall see
His great and matchless Glory! Amen! So let it be!

—Poetic Paraphrase of Psalm 72

(Continued from page 4)

We need the
King of Glory,
Him who
comes to bring peace on
earth and good will among
men; to right earth's
wrongs and bring in ever-
lasting righteousness.

We need Him
of whom the
angel said
before His birth, "He shall
be great, and shall be
called the Son of the
Highest."

will among men. We need Him who comes to right earth's wrongs, to put down iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness.

We need the King of glory, He of whom the angel said before His birth, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

He who was prophesied to be "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father (Father of the world to come), The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6-7) is coming to reign for ever. "And of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:7).

At a time when His second advent is imminent, wouldn't it seem that every street corner would be buzzing with such a wondrous topic of conversation, that the telephone lines would be humming with it, that men and women everywhere would be discussing this momentous event! Indeed, one feels like walking into the midst of a hall where crowds are all excited about the game, or the exhibits, or the convention, or the election, or whatever their petty absorption, and shouting, "Silence all your earthy chatter! Why speak ye not a word of bringing back the King?"

Our modern world has means of communication unapproached by former generations. We can send a message around the world in seconds. Why not send the message of the coming of the King?

Statesmen and diplomats huddle the world around to plan for tomorrow. But only one plan is destined to suc-

ceed. Only one plan will unscramble the mess of today's political affairs and bring peace and prosperity, quietness and assurance worldwide.

Why is the message so important? Why be talking about His coming? Why be so concerned about God's business—when He is destined to take care of it anyway in His own time and manner?

The point is that *we must be getting ready*. This was the attitude of the early church. Though the great event was for them centuries distant, they were electrified by it. They loved the King, and looked forward to His coming. They taught it, talked of it, and lived in the light of it. Their whole concern was to be "found of him in peace, without spot and blameless"; that they might be "sincere and without offense till the day of Christ" (II Pet. 3:14; Phil. 1:10).

What we are most interested in always manages to get into our conversation. What is down in the well of the heart comes up in the bucket of our speech. When we are silent about the coming of our King, either we do not love it, or we do not care about getting ready for it—or both.

The apostle Paul looked forward to the coming of Christ because of the crowns He would be bringing—crowns both for himself and for all those who "love his appearing" (II Tim. 4:8). The apostle John wrote that "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure" (I John 3:3). And the apostle Paul wrote, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. 7:1).

Do we see what the news of bringing back the King should do *for* us—in us? It is not a static message of cold fact. It is a message vibrant with living hope, a message that should stir us through and through until our

whole concentration is on getting ready for it. Christ is coming, He who is our Judge, Conqueror and King, He to whom the scepter of earth rightly belongs (Ezek. 21:27); and every one of His servants shall be called to stand before Him. This great and blessed event could happen any time.

"Why speak ye not a word of bringing back the king?" Oh, why not? Let us indeed speak it. Let us long for it, live for it! We who claim to be of

His family, let His soon-coming be on our minds continually, and we be using all our power to get ready for Him.

For our King *will* come, whether we are looking for Him or not; whether we are ready for Him or not. And what shame upon us, if we who knew of it were so preoccupied with things at hand that we did not take time to prepare Him the heart-warming welcome He deserves!

What will He think of us if we, who profess to be members of His body, His church, have not even a word for Him?

May the message stir us to action, that our whole being may be energized and we be looking, longing, living every moment for the coming of our King.

May God help each one to get ready as members of His honored reception committee!

MM



Hail, Blessed New Year!

*Give me true courage, God—pure, brave, serene—
To meet these days,
Ready to walk, head high, with firm, sure tread,
The year's strange ways.*

*Teach me to be a steward of all things,
Owner of none;
Glad to give up my will, since Thine, my God,
Must first be done.*

*If in my mind lurk errors—sweet, false dreams—
Cleanse them away;
Shatter my dearest idol, purge my faith,
Till Thou hold sway.*

*Let me live grandly, seek the things that last,
The highest goal,
And WIN!—jewels? fame? Nay, better; when sin's past,
The crown of life!*

Sound the Cannon!



"If you wish to save your soul from the treachery of the commonplace, if you wish to save your love from the perfidy of habit: men have devised many and devious ways of keeping themselves awake and safe, but truly there is only one—eternity's 'shalt.' Let the thunder of a hundred cannons three times daily remind you to resist the thralldom of habit. Keep, as did that mighty eastern emperor, a slave who reminds you daily—keep a hundred; have a friend to tell you every time he sees you; but watch yourself lest this, too, become a habit!"

—Soren Kierkegaard

This is a New Year message about how to escape the doldrums. The wind is not blowing. Your sails are hanging limp. The ocean all around is as smooth as glass. You are going nowhere. You are in the doldrums.

This New Year message is about how to deal with the dry spells. Nothing stirs you, nothing animates you. Your life is a dull and meaningless routine day after day, day after day. You feel impotent, useless, without purpose or direction.

This New Year message is about how to slip the blahs. You are at the end of your tether. You have all this good advice, and good knowledge, and good instruction whirling in your mind, yet none of it seems appropriate. Nothing penetrates you. Nothing strikes you at the vital point to set the chords of your soul vibrating. You have heard it so many times that—alas! it no longer excites you.

This New Year message is about getting off dead center. Dead center

is, of course, a figure borrowed from a locomotive. The steam-powered piston that turns the wheel that moves the train is stuck on that critical point where the engine is actually pushing against itself and going nowhere. The problem is one of overcoming the force of inertia that has the train at a dead stop. All that is needed is for the train to *move* just a little, but that little is like moving a mountain of granite. So it is with you. You are at a standstill! Alas, you feel bound, stuck on dead center, immobilized.

Has the word of the Lord changed? NO!

Has His message changed? NO!

Has the urgency of the hour diminished? NO!—it has grown the *more* urgent.

Has the danger passed? NO!—it is more imminent than ever before.

If you have never experienced this feeling of lethargy, or if you have succeeded in putting this weakness, this indifference, this impotence behind you, thank God for your deliverance!

But let us who still encounter the dry spells, who still find ourselves sometimes in the doldrums—let this New Year be the time when we search deep into our hearts and find the cause of our lethargy. Then sound the cannon. Let the thunder of a hundred cannons three times daily remind us that we can, we must, we *will break* the power that binds us to sin and death.

Why are we not more concerned? It is simply—and tragically—this: that we have heard the keen, clear, incisive notes of the trumpet of the Lord so often and so long that alas! its warning no longer alarms us; its blast no longer disturbs our calm complacency, no longer penetrates our conscious mind. We are numb, indifferent, careless, unconcerned. Like a pleasant song the message has lulled us to a deceitful sleep. The probing themes of repentance, judgment, righteousness, and life do not move us as they should.

In one sense it is a normal human adjustment. God has provided us with

a built-in moderator which lessens the impact of the disagreeable over time. A repeated annoyance grows less annoying, so that we are able to live with it; a repeated noise becomes less troublesome. And it is well. But in the same way, a repeated warning becomes less startling.

In the things of the spirit, the things of God, sound the cannon against all such adjustment! Sound the cannon, before you fall into the pit of complacency and death. This was the mission of all of God's prophets through the ages. Let it be our mission today. Let this New Year message come like the thunder of a hundred cannons. Let it awaken you to issues as vital as your very life! Let it rouse you to *fight* the indifference that plagues you; the dryness that leaves you untouched by any evidence; the inertia that keeps you on dead center, immobilized, standing still!—when you could be moving at top speed.

A very small boy was occupied with his building blocks on the living room floor. As his father entered the room the lad said to him, "Quiet, Dad, I'm building a church." Thinking to sound out his son's understanding, the father asked, "But why do we have to be quiet in church?" The boy thought for a moment, then said, cautiously, "Because—because the people are asleep."

At this New Year, sound the cannon! Let it never be said of us that we were asleep—asleep, when watching was critical; asleep, when the stakes were life and death! Let the word of the Lord come. As the thunder of a hundred cannon three times daily *let it come*. Let it rouse, move, stir us as never before.

Imagine...

Just try to imagine the sensation of hearing *for the very first time* that someone you know is going to live forever! Then imagine hearing that

that "someone" *may be you!*

Or imagine hearing *for the very first time* that there is destiny and meaning to life, that we are not born to die; that this earth will someday shine with the light of millions and billions of happy immortals.

Or try to imagine yourself learning *for the first time* about the angels—real, animate beings to whom time is forever, who can go and come as freely as the breezes, enjoying every pleasure conceivable to the human mind. And much, much more!

Or try to picture how you would feel if hearing *for the first time* about Eternity—time without limit, days without number, life without end. Yes, it is beyond fathoming.

Of course you could push it aside in disbelief. But disbelief would be about as successful as standing in the sunlight on a bright day and saying there is no sun. When you look at the evidence, you stagger, amazed, spell-bound, astounded. You *have* to believe! The facts *demand* that you believe.

But *how* do we bring these realities with fresh newness into our hearts and lives every day? *How* do we awaken ourselves to the reality of facts which are as certain as the sunrise tomorrow morning?

New Every Morning

Sound the cannon! Sound it daily against the complacency that threatens your very life—complacency about the Word of God, complacency about your human peril, complacency about the times in which you are living.

Your Creator has spoken. Let His Word strike you with the force of a hammer blow. Let it come as did Jesus to the apostle Paul, as a blinding light from heaven. Let it sound in your ears as it did to John on the isle of Patmos, like the voice of much people in heaven, as the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many

How our hearts
yearn for the
Day of the Lord!
"Even so come, Lord
Jesus!" we plead; yet how
much we need these days,
these ordinary days, these
days that can make the
difference between eternal
gain and eternal loss.

Hold yourself
firmly
within the law of
God, allowing no turning
to the right or left. It is
the only safe course; it is
the only right course.

Resist the temptation to be satisfied with second best. Resist the temptation to think you are "good enough" as you are. God is looking for the best, the very best of which mortals are capable, and He will find it.

Tell yourself a hundred times a day that right is right, and wrong is never right.

waters, as a voice of mighty thunders. Let it come with the power of an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe! (Rev. 8:13).

Let the word of the Lord come as did the Law upon Mount Sinai, with thunders and lightnings and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud. Fear and tremble before the Lord God of heaven, for He has spoken and it shall be! "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake" (Joel 3:16). For soon, very soon, the Lord "cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity" (Isa. 26:21).

While unbelievers put far away the Day of the Lord; while the skeptics are saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming?'; the day of the Lord draws steadily nearer. Sound the cannon! Let the thunder of a hundred cannon three times daily remind you that never before has the Day been so near, or the need for watching so urgent. Our forefathers looked eagerly, imminently for that Day. Shall we do less, we who live *so much nearer* its reality?

A Promise From Heaven

This is a promise from heaven, it is no dream of the night. It is a promise as sure as the succession of day and night.

One of these days the great Prophet will suddenly be in our midst, and the fulfillment of all that God has promised shall have begun. One of these days we shall see the heavens open and the great King descending in all His celestial glory with a myriad of His angels.

One of these days our sleeping brothers and sisters in Christ will be alive and among us!

One of these days... and who knows *which day* it will be... God's long silence will be broken, broken for ever! Never again will we know the days

that are now. Never again will we have the opportunity that is now; the quiet, ordinary days so favorable to the development of courage and character.

How our hearts yearn and long for that Day! "Even so come, Lord Jesus!" we plead; yet as the words escape our lips we catch our breath as we realize how much *we need these days*, these ordinary days, these days that can make the difference between eternal gain and eternal loss. How priceless they will seem when we look back upon them!

Then sound the cannon against any idle parleying with sin. Tell yourself a hundred times a day that right is right, and wrong is *never* right—for you or anyone else—so why take any chances? Why play with that which you know well enough will cause you grief? Why insist on holding to that which will surely bring you to eternal ruin?

Sound the cannon against the bitterness, the resentments, the jealousies, the grudges that are holding you back. Let go the desire to appear what you are not. Let go the hardheaded resistance to reality that hinders you.

Sound the cannon against unbelief. Let go that stubborn refusal to believe what has been proven a hundred, nay a thousand times. Say to yourself, I *know* Christ is coming. I *know* I am accountable. I *know* I will reap just according as I sow. I *know* the end of sin and folly. I *know* the end of doing as I please, of satisfying my own carnal cravings. I *know* the end of self-seeking, self-pleasing, self-gratifying. Then *why* do I persist in it?

But the old familiar way, our sinful habit, is so easy, so comfortable, so satisfying to the old man within us.

Oh, sound the cannon! Break off your sins by righteousness. Hold yourself firmly within the law of God, allowing no turning to the right or left. It is the only safe course; it is the only right course.

Against Complacency

Sound the cannon! Sound it against the danger of complacency, complacency about ourselves. It is dangerous; it is deadly. But we do not see it that way naturally. We have lived so close to ourselves so long that we have become quite comfortable with what we are. True, we are not all we should be, but neither are we that bad. We can easily cite a dozen sins we have not committed.

To all such thinking sound the cannon, for *any* law broken and unrepented of will effectively separate us from God—and life!

Sound the cannon. Let its thunder awake you to the sins that beset. Oh, the danger of falling asleep at this last, late hour! Oh, the dreadful state of being still dead *in sin* when we could be alive and working *for God*! Just think of the tragedy of missing the great future God has planned for us—and the great work He is doing all around us—just because we were too complacent, self-absorbed, self-satisfied.

Sound the cannon to keep you watching every day, every hour, every moment, lest that subtle serpent-like self within control you, dominate you, strangle you! How can you afford to ignore the slightest touch of sin, when you are serving a God who is absolutely pure, absolutely true, absolutely fair and right!

Sound the cannon! Let it remind you again and again to resist, resist, resist! Resist the temptation to be satisfied with second best. Resist the temptation to think you are “good enough” as you are. God is looking for the best, the very best of which mortals are capable, and He will *find* it. When we are satisfied with anything less, we show that we are satisfied to die and be no more.

Sound the cannon against an attitude of complacency to the world around you. You are every day, every hour

threatened by insidious indifference. It is more deadly than the fires of persecution, more deadly than the stake or the rack. In an age of tolerance when no one threatens, defies, or forbids us, how grave the danger of falling asleep—to our eternal peril. Sound the cannon, let it thunder in your mind lest you slip into willfulness and spiritual unconcern, and finally death.

Sound the cannon against a comfortable settling down in that which is easy, pleasant, and near at hand. Do not allow yourself to be satisfied with things as they are, or yourself as you are. You know you are not what you should be. This is no time to *talk* about it—this is the time to *act* upon it! Sound the cannon each time you are tempted to take it easy, to relax, to say whatever comes into your mind, or to let your thoughts drift to things at hand. Let it remind you daily that you are fighting a battle, and it is a battle you must either win, or die. And if you would win *you must keep fighting*.

Sound the cannon against that insensitivity that plagues the soul. Someone has called it “cardiosclerosis,” hardening of the heart, and how easy it is to contract this disease. How easy it is to go through the motions, as it were; to maintain an acceptable outward appearance while our heart remains untouched, unmoved by the deep and wonderful things of God. Watch out! Sound the cannon! Realize that your heart, your mind, your affections, your will—your whole being—is not yours but *God’s*. How dare you let it become hardened to His loving appeals?

Sound the cannon! Let the thunder of a hundred cannons three times a day remind you to resist the thralldom of habit, resist the threat of the commonplace. Realize anew each day the inconceivable vastness of the reward

(Continued on page 13)

Hold yourself firmly within the law of God, allowing no turning to the right or left. It is the only safe course; it is the only right course.

Let it never be said of us that we were asleep—*asleep, when watching was critical; asleep, when the stakes were life and death!*

Food Which Gives Life

"In St. John 6, verse 51, Jesus says, 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven...and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' Can you explain it? What did He mean by the 'bread that he gives is his flesh'? Does He mean His literal life? Or does He mean His life as an example of His teachings? I can't quite figure it out. Thank you."

In the sixth chapter of John, Jesus is preaching an extended sermon, the subject of which might be called "Food Which Gives Life." In this chapter He pictures Himself as the One dispensing this special life imparting nourishment, which He symbolizes as "meat," "bread," and "flesh." All are symbolic of the divine knowledge or wisdom of God. Just as physical food is necessary to sustain physical life, so this spiritual food is vital to one's spiritual—and eternal—life.

In verse 27 He calls this food "meat": "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." Jesus pictured Himself as dispensing this spiritual "meat" which "endureth unto everlasting life." Both by His exemplary life and by His teachings He was offering them this "meat."

His next simile is with bread. He makes a comparison with the manna which "Our fathers did eat...in the desert," saying that the bread which Moses gave could sustain only natural life. By contrast, the spiritual bread He is offering is the "true bread from heaven," the "bread of God," which "giveth life unto the world" (vs. 31-33).

We should notice that throughout the chapter His analogies are drawn from the eating of food and the life which it imparts, both being used in a spiritual sense. What He was giving was not His literal life but spiritual food which, eaten, would impart life. Hence He said of Himself, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (v. 35).

He says again in verse 48, "I am that bread of life." He

did not mean that He Himself was literally the bread of life but He personified the words of life by living them so completely in His own life that they became part of Him. He was the bread of life in the form of a living being, active and working. It was the spiritual Christ, the true knowledge of God living in Him which was the "bread of life," "the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die" (v. 50).

In verse 51 He says it again: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven," again speaking of the spiritual Christ, His teachings, the life-giving words He spoke. He continues in this verse to state that "the bread which I give is my flesh"—something to be eaten, not Himself to die—"which I will give for the life of the world." This nourishing bread, as He said earlier, is so potent that if "a man eat thereof, he shall not die" (v. 50). It is the same bread that "giveth life unto the world" (v. 33). There is not the slightest allusion to His death in these passages.

Verse 52 shows that the Jews understood Him. They said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus answered clearly, again using the analogy of life-supporting food in a spiritual sense: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life"—no one would attempt to take this passage as signifying anything literal. If the "eating" is spiritual, the flesh of the Son of man must also be spiritual, and so must His blood be spiritual, if we follow Paul's rule given in I Cor. 2:13, comparing "spiritual things with spiritual."

Jesus continues, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." He is speaking of "flesh" and "blood" far more significant than the natural, for here is flesh and blood which gives "eternal life."

Verse 56: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

Then in verse 57 He clarifies the whole, stating that the relationship between His disciples and Himself is the same as that which existed between Himself and His

Father: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." We live by eating Christ in the same way that He lived by eating of God. All is spiritual. And this special eating gives life: "He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (v. 58).

We cannot assume that all His hearers understood all, but they understood enough to know that it was not an "easy" message. There was something they themselves were obligated to do, hence their "murmurings" (vs. 41-43), their being offended (vs. 61-62) and many of His own disciples turning back and walking no more with Him (vs. 66-67).

When some called it a "hard saying"—more than they wanted to hear—Jesus responded with more explanation: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh [literal] profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." What is the meaning of all these symbols He has been using, this "meat" and "bread" and "flesh"? All symbolize His "words,...they are spirit and they are life." His *words* are the vital, life-giving substance.

Peter himself understood, according to his own statement to Jesus in reply to Jesus' question, "Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (vs. 66-68). Notice Peter says to Jesus, "Thou hast the *words*"—whether called "flesh," or "bread," or "meat"—that will give "eternal life." His *words* were His all-important gift to them.

It was the words of Jesus' teaching, the wisdom of God, that came down from heaven, not Jesus Himself. And it was these words, this wisdom—not His literal life—that He was giving to the world so that they might have life. Through Him they could have vital life-giving food, which they could eat—and live.

Concerning "Precept"

"I was looking in the Bible Encyclopedia for the meaning of the word 'precept' but could not find it. Webster's Dictionary says it is 'a rule of conduct.' Is this fairly accurate in the Bible sense?"

In the Bible the word precept is used seldom, except in the plural form, in which it occurs 21 times in Psalm 119. Here the Psalmist alternates among a variety of words: "testimonies," "commandments," "statutes," "law," "judgments," "precepts," all of which are more or less equivalent terms for Divine ordinances or decrees, God's exalted rule of conduct for His children. Psalm 119 is widely recognized as a Hebrew poem, richly styled, written to show the highest reverence and honor to God and His law, and this fact may account for the varied terminology. MM

Sound the Cannon!

(Continued from page 11)

God has set before you. Realize anew each day the perfect beauty of the holiness, the righteousness, the purity He requires of you. Realize anew each day the awfulness of sin—your sin, my sin, any sin—whether it be a wrong motive, or a harsh reply, or a hurt feeling. Be sensitive to the slightest touch of sin. Realize that sin, *any* sin, sets up a fatal barrier between you and God, and if allowed to remain will effectively cut you off from His presence, His help, His protection—forever!

In this last, late hour let us be growing more and more sensitive to our own spiritual needs, and more alert to our spiritual possibilities. Whatever we are doing, sound the cannon! Don't let a single hour slip by unused. Realize that it is *now or never*. This is our only chance.

Let us keep our hearts warm and our affections fixed on the things which God has promised. Through days that are ordinary, or dull, or commonplace, keep the fires of the spirit burning. God is working now, just as surely as He worked in days gone by. His methods and His instruments are different, but the work is the same; and when the time is right, all the great things He has promised will come to pass, just as He has said. Soon, very soon, we shall see the results of that work openly, either to our supreme delight or to our indescribable sorrow. Either we will join in the songs of the righteous, or we will be crying "My leanness, my leanness" because we did not use the opportunities that were literally heaped upon us.

Oh, sound the cannon! The apostle Paul gave the same message to his son-in-the-faith Timothy when he wrote, "Stir up the gift that is in you." Yes, stir it up. Let not the embers die; underneath the ashes there is still fire that can produce light and heat. But the fire must be stoked, blown upon, fed some kindling. Keep that fire alive. Feed it daily. Don't let your spiritual disciplines become mere habit. Keep your conscience tender, your enthusiasm flaming, your fervor for the things God has promised at white heat. Let the pain of sin be real and awakening.

Let not our passion welter into habit; let not our energetic, progressive Christian living degenerate into a lifeless meeting of necessities, with little or no thrust for things divine. When any such spirit threatens, sound the cannon! Sound it against the temptation to ignore or excuse any evil within! Let the thunder of a hundred cannons three times daily remind us not to overlook the prophecies of God which are fulfilling all around us. Sound the cannon against the temptation to remain as we are, insensitive, dull, indifferent to our own eternal welfare. Sound the cannon! Sound it again and again this New Year.

It is our only hope.

MM

Abib Message

Reflections

April 15, 1923

RETROSPECTION

THE rapidity with which the events of nations, communities, and those of our individual lives are transpiring, renders the task of keeping track of these events and the passage of time almost an impossible one. Each succeeding year goes swifter than its predecessor and appears to bring with it a greater weight of care and responsibilities, which will, if not guarded against, carry us into the whirlpool of the world's restlessness. But the New Year dawns, and standing between the old year and the new it would be a favorable opportunity to check up, to take a retrospective view of the twelve months of the closing year and confront ourselves with solemn and vital questions—Have I made spiritual onward progress? Have I spent more time reading and meditating on God's Word than on the daily papers? Have I done unto others as I would be done by? Have I always been kind, true and helpful to those with whom I have come in contact? Have I done all that could be done as far as privileges and circumstances would allow me? In fact, have I walked worthy of the vocation to which I have been called, seeking to sink self and exalt the Truth of the Living God? Have I been a murmurer and a complainer, or have I taken joyfully whatever has come my way? These and many other questions we could profitably ask ourselves and, answering them in godly fear, step into the new year with gratitude and joy in our hearts to embrace its opportunities and make it the best year of our lives.

As we behold the condition of the nations and read of perplexity and fear filling the hearts of both wise men and rulers, we know that the time of which the multitude of the heavenly host sang so many hundred years ago on the day which we commemorate is nearing fulfillment—when He of whom the angels sang will "come again" to establish peace on earth and good will toward men. Let us read and meditate more during the coming year and, like Mary who took time to sit at Jesus' feet listening to his words, make choice of that good part which shall not be taken away from us.

Has gone, and with it many a glorious throng
Of happy dreams. Its mark is on each brow,
Its shadow in each heart. In its swift course,
It waved its sceptre o'er the beautiful--
And they are not. It laid its pallid hand
Upon the strong man-- and the haughty form
Is fallen, and the flashing eye is dim.
It trod the hall of revelry, where thronged
The bright and joyous-- and the tearful wail
Of stricken ones is heard, where erst the song
And reckless shout resounded.

Fierce spirit of the glass and scythe! -- what power
Can stay him in his silent course, or melt
His iron heart to pity? On, still on
He presses, and forever... But Time
Knows not the weight of sleep or weariness,
And night's deep darkness has no chain to bind
His rushing pinions."

While the precious moments, of which hours, days, months
and years are composed, have slipped into eternity, we know
they have gone beyond recall; but if we use the moments still
allotted us in fashioning our lives according to the Word of
God, "redeeming the time," as the apostle Paul exhorts, "be-
cause the days are evil," there lies before us an Eternity of
Time, with glories such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,
neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which
God hath prepared for them that love him." -- I. Cor. 2:9.

March, 1917

In the gloaming of an evening
Of a day long past and gone,
Eager eyes were watching, waiting,
For a sign the year was done.

It was springtime in Judea,
Verdure crowned the hillsides fair;
In the fields the grain was waving;
Sweetest perfume filled the air.

See! upon the distant hillside
Watchfires glowing here and there,
Telling they have seen the crescent
Of the new moon gleaming fair.

And the watchers in the valley
Turn and say, "The year is done.
They have seen the new moon Abib.
Now the New Year has begun."

April 15, 1923



CHRIST IS COMING AS THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

THE SECOND ADVENT OF THE MESSIAH. HIS SOON COMING KINGDOM WILL BE ESTABLISHED ON EARTH. THROUGH HIS MIGHTY POWER HE WILL INAUGURATE EVERLASTING PEACE. WHAT WILL BE THE DESTINY OF THE NATIONS?

IF OUR HEARTS COULD at all times be running over with the songs he sends in the dark night,—but do you realize that you are living in the dark night. You remember our Lord declared unto those who believed what he taught, "Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. 5:14. And Peter, after having listened to the voice of Jesus for so long a time, after having been with him in his ministry throughout Jerusalem, and Judea, and Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth, declared, "We have more, a sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."—II. Pet. 1:19. He not only left this on our mind, but said, "Ye are the light of the world."

CHRISTMAS GLEANINGS

BALMY SPRING-LIKE weather ushered in the anniversary of the Savior's birth, and on the evening of March 28th, the beginning of the 1st of Abib, long before the time appointed for the commencement of the Christmas exercises, every available seat in the Megiddo Church was occupied, many people standing in the vestibule and even to the steps. To our regret it was reported that as large a crowd were obliged to turn away as found admittance to the church. It was a very attentive and seemingly appreciative audience that listened for two and one half hours to an attractive program composed of band and orchestra selections, duets, solos, declamations, recitations, and a brief pithy address by our pastor.

May 16, 1922

If you and I wish to know anything about the unfathomable future of eternity which we have never penetrated, never passed over into, we must pay attention to what these "holy men of old" spake. And if we do not believe what they have spoken, there will be no morning for us. There is a long, dark night, and also a glorious morning coming, but if you or I—or any other man—do not speak according to what God said through the holy law, according to what God said through the holy

Friday evening, March 23d, we meet to honor the birth of our Lord and coming King, Jesus. We meet to celebrate the nativity of the only being who ever stepped into the arena of life and caused the count of centuries to cease, and from whose birth for over eighteen hundred years our time is dated. We meet to honor the greatest personage whose deeds of worth were ever chronicled by pen of man. He was great in power of thought, so that gracious, life-giving words could flow like pearls from his lips. He was great in all the elements of character: great in quick and keen perception; great in rare and beautiful combination of talents. Though born to be a King, yet to the humblest petitioner he ever lent a listening ear. He was at all times brave to defend truth and bold to denounce error, though life and death hung in the balance.

Are not these reasons that we should know and honor his nativity? Yet there are greater reasons. We honor a Washington, a Lincoln, for what they have done; but their life's history ended. But Jesus only began to bless; the greater blessings were promised for a future day. As under the law the high priest went into the most holy place and came forth to bless the people, so Christ, our great High Priest, has entered Heaven, the real most holy place, and will come forth to bless all who accept and keep his righteous law; for, as truly as he ever trod this earth, he is coming the second time, to fulfill the angelic promise, "peace on earth, good will toward men," and cause earth's troubles to be hushed in the calm of universal peace.

March, 1917



Chapter 2

Ambition and Personal Sacrifice

Narrator:

Rumor has it that the Apostle has been released after two years' house arrest. There is also a more ominous report that the Emperor Nero is about to move against the Christians, making them the scapegoat for the recent disastrous fire in Rome.

But first, a flashback of six months, and we see the great missionary "in his own hired house," guarded by a soldier, who sits in a corner, uncomprehending and silent. Paul wears a light chain attached to his wrists. The furnishings are simple: a table, chairs, and a lampstand. Paul, his hair and beard now quite gray, is seated across the table from Lucius, a richly-dressed young Roman patrician, a convert to the Way. The young man's face is serious, even sad; the two men are in earnest conversation. The problem is

AMBITION AND PERSONAL SACRIFICE

Paul: You ran well for a season, Lucius; what is the hindrance now?

Lucius: It is just this, sir: the Way is narrow, but I expected that. It contains discipline, but as a Roman I can take that. Even welcome it. But it also calls for a great deal of personal sacrifice.

Paul: Can you not also make that? It is only a matter of exchanging the poorer for the better.

Lucius: I know we are supposed to look at it that way, but try as I will, I can't avoid the question, Is it really worth it?

Paul: (Quickly, with deep conviction) It *is*. It is worth anything, if we look to the end. What is it, Lucius my son, that you find so difficult to give up?

Lucius: It is the things I have—or can have...and that is where it hurts. A man can willingly give up the things he does not have and is not likely to have. The poor can renounce money, but I have it. The unpopular can give up the friends they do not have, but I have hosts of them—or did have until I became a Christian. The incapable and uneducated can easily turn their backs on ambition, but I have education. I have talent. I know I can make money. I have been offered a government post which has a brilliant future, if I will conform to the State religion, at least outwardly. The obscure have no such problems. The old can resist the lure of opportunity, for their lives are behind them. But I am young; everything is ahead of me.

Paul: In other words, you figure that this thing hits you harder than it does most people.

Lucius: Well, to be truthful, yes.

Paul: Look, Lucius, whatever you do, don't ever start feeling sorry for yourself. It's the very worst thing you can do. Now I don't blame you for counting the cost. That is just what our Lord told us to do. But don't get the idea that you are being charged a higher price just because you have it. You don't know the other man's problems and the sacrifices he makes. Where much is given, much is required, and where little

is given, little is required; but it all adds up to the same total—your all. The poor widow who cast in her two mites made more of a sacrifice than the rich who kept something for themselves, because she gave *all* she had. Much or little, the Way calls for a full surrender, a complete sacrifice. It's a challenge. If you can't go through with it, I would suggest you not start. I thought you were man enough to measure up to the task, Lucius; don't make me mistaken.

Lucius: But what do we get in return?

Paul: The disciples asked that question, and you remember what Jesus answered?

Lucius: Yes...a hundredfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. But that was spoken to fishermen and peasants, men who had nothing—no possessions and no prospects.

Paul: That's what *you* think. Remember what I told you, that all things are relative. It was their *all* they left, and though it was little it was as precious to them as your all is to you!

Lucius: Well, I suppose you could look at it that way.

Paul: Now let's look at your problems one by one. You have money. That's good, if you make the right use of it. Money brings its own problems. To many—and you have known them—it has been a curse. I, too, came from a well-to-do family, and for my change of heart I was disinherited. Yet I survived the blow, and have managed to make a living with my hands—which wouldn't hurt you if you had to do it. I also learned the lesson to give money its proper place in life but no more. There are many things it cannot give, as you will learn to your sorrow as you grow older, if you put your trust in it.

You have talent and ability. That is good. The church needs you. Is it not better to burn yourself out in such a Cause as this than to waste your talents in the vain pursuit of pleasure and worldly honor, which so soon pass away? Is it not better to live for Christ and for others—

Lucius: (reverently) As you are doing.

Paul: (with rapt enthusiasm) As I find my highest pleasure in doing, or striving to do. To me, the Christian life has been more than rewarding. I wouldn't for the world go back to the old, selfish way of life if I could...and I could. I could compromise and perhaps gain my freedom, but what would I gain in the long run?

You have had popularity, and could have it again;

but what is more fickle than popularity? I know it exhilarates the old man and feeds the vanity, but how long does it last? Who has more popularity than Nero's favorites, but where are they? Who is the favorite of today? Who of yesterday? They change so fast one can hardly learn their names before they are gone. Is that the kind of popularity you crave? For my part, I prefer the approval of God and of Jesus Christ and the angels, and the fellowship of God's children on earth.

You have position. So had I. I was an honor student under the great Rabban Gamaliel. That doesn't mean anything to you, but to a Jew it does. I was in line for a seat in the Sanhedrin, the highest council of the Jews. My prospects were bright. I was already a leader of the most radical and violent faction of the Pharisees, so violent that I persecuted the Church of Christ. But when I saw my awful mistake, I turned my back on it all and became in their eyes the offscouring of all creation. Why? Because I believed that Christ would give me much more, far higher honors, honors that will be everlasting. The new prospect was so far ahead of the old that I chose the better.

Lucius: I wish I could have some of your faith.

Paul: I much more, Lucius. I wish I could give it to you, but every man must develop his own faith and work out his own salvation. I can only point you to the evidence.

You have youth. So had I. I was young when I entered the Way, and I praise God for the early start I made. He has done so much for me, my only regret is that I have only one lifetime to give Him. But you will find, as I have, that youth will not last. It gets away with breathless speed, and then where are you? What have you done with the years? Have you been just a successful Roman, or have you built a noble character worthy of being carried over into the world to come?

Lucius: (rising) But I also have my people to think of. I shrink from hurting them. The family name, and all that sort of thing, you know. Ours is a proud family.

Paul: I had the same problem, perhaps even more so, for nowhere is the family tie and family pride stronger than among the Jews. But consider, as I did. This is a matter of life and death—for us, personally and individually. It is every man for himself. When death

(Continued on page 26)

JESUS CHRIST:

Was He Immaculate and Sinless from Birth?

By the Rev. L. T. Nichols, January 1, 1905

We read in our Scripture lesson (Hebrews 5) about Christ, that "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." He learned obedience just as we must learn it.

It is widely believed throughout Christendom that there is something mysterious about Christ, that He was immaculate and sinless from birth; that He was God Himself and suffered and died in your room and stead.

Do I believe Christ ever sinned? Yes I do. He cried and kicked, no doubt, like any other child. But He was not the great sinner we have been. There is such a thing as sinning *outside of* law, and sinning *under* law. Christ never sinned *under* the law; Christ never sinned after He learned the law. We have been told that Christ was God and never could do anything wrong; but He did, He did many things wrong, no doubt. How do I know? Because I have a "thus saith the Lord."

Turn with me to the 7th chapter of Isaiah, and we read, "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good" (v. 15).

Was the Prophet talking about Jesus?

There is not the slightest question, for Matthew, speaking of the birth of the Christ child, says: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet" and he quotes the prophecy from Isaiah 7:14 (Matt. 1:22-23).

What was the prophecy of Isaiah? Let us read it, beginning with Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good."

16th verse: "For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good,..."—there would be a time when, like every other child, He would not know right from wrong; knowledge was not all infused instantly into Christ; He had to learn, just as every other child of God must learn. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord"—*all*, no exceptions (Isa. 54:13). And Christ was surely a child of God.

God works by law. Christ had to eat the "butter and honey," this bread of heaven, the wondrous words of truth, and acquire knowledge before He could know evil from good. He had to be educated and instructed to

know what was right. Mary and Joseph taught Him, and when necessary they reprimanded Him. But when it was made known to Him that a thing was wrong, He never disobeyed in that again. Here He is far ahead of us.

Jesus Had to Learn

We are told about one time He disobeyed in Luke 2:41-43. "Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it." Here He was, only a boy twelve years old, and He lingered behind His parents. They had gone a day's journey before they discovered He was not with them. When night came, they missed their little boy Jesus. They went around from tent to tent, searching for Him, but to no avail. So they had to retrace their steps to the city; and after another day's journey back to Jerusalem and searching for Him for three days, they found Him in the temple, confounding the doctors. "And all that heard him were astonished at

his understanding and answers."

"And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." And He said unto them, "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" If a boy talked that way when I was young, they would say he was saucy. He was in the wrong; He was not in subjection to His parents. His mother's words, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?" show her mind, and she was instructed. The Scripture principle is, "Children obey your parents in the Lord," and Jesus had not done this. He was so taken up with the wonderful wisdom of His Father that He ran before He was sent, and did not realize He was breaking the law by staying behind. But He never did it again. We read that "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them."

We never hear anything more about Him until He began His public ministry at the age of thirty. After He was instructed, He obeyed; He was content to remain in the background, working at the carpenter's trade until it was time for Him to begin His ministry. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Then, when the right time had come, He went out into the world, prepared to be an example for His followers to imitate.

A Sinless Christ

How then can Jesus be said to be sinless? Because He sinned before He knew the law, and those sins were not held against Him; for "sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). It is the same with us. Our past sins will be obliterated once we learn the law; but then we must keep going right on in the footsteps of our Master and cleanse from our iniquities un-

til we are pure, even as He is pure (I John 3:3). This is the teaching of the Scriptures.

Is the Bible true? If not, let us put it on the shelf and let it lie there, for it is no more to us than any production of man. But we are satisfied it *is* true, it is the grandest Book in the world; and we believe its teachings. Would God choose for His associates through the ages to come those who were lacking in interest, or reverence? or those who were low and groveling? Most assuredly not. He will choose only the meek and lowly, the pure and holy, the undefiled who walk in the law of the Lord, who follow closely the pattern given by the great captain of our salvation, Jesus.

Oh, the word of the Lord grows more wonderful to me every day! We did not drink in the deep spiritual meaning of Christ's sacrifice at first; but now we can grasp what we did not see before. I am glad I began to study these things when I was young. The Bible was the dearest Book on earth to me. I spent many sleepless nights thinking over these things when I was a boy. One point came out at a time, until they grew wonderful.

It would seem that the wonderful knowledge of God, shining ever brighter and brighter before our minds, would stir us up. We have an abundance of evidence, a fountain of evidence whose pure water of life is ever flowing; and if we drink of it continually we will all "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

In the days of old God sent angels to confirm what His spokesmen proclaimed. Moses had angelic care guiding him through the Egyptian darkness; we have been deprived of any open aid. In the days of our Master, angels came to confirm what was proclaimed; but here was your speaker

with the early education of a mother with ministerial training founded on the traditions of men; and, oh, how many long, dark tunnels I had to go through before I could get a glimmer of light. Very early I threw away the old idea that Christ was immaculate from birth and died in our room and stead; I could not believe such. I threw it away because Peter said He died leaving us an example that we should follow in His footsteps; and Paul told us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

I got a glimmer of light, and then I saw men as trees walking; still there was a long tunnel to get through before I came into the full blaze of light and saw what the sacrifice of Christ really was. I had not the ability back there to move away the objections, I grew into it by slow development. But every bit of rubbish I cast aside made it brighter. "The path of the just is as a shining light that grows brighter and brighter unto the perfect day." And it now has such a light and brilliance that I think the perfect day must be very nigh.

It was easy for the believers to accept Paul's message as true, as from an angel of God; in this day and age

God will choose
for His eternal
associates only
the meek and lowly,
the pure and holy,
who follow closely the
pattern given by
Jesus, the great cap-
tain of our salvation.

I have given you
an example.”
*If Jesus had been
immaculate and spot-
less with nothing to
overcome, how could
He have been an exam-
ple to us?*

it seems much harder. We have not the Holy Spirit power, nor any angelic visitants to direct our steps; but we have a vast amount of evidence demonstrating beyond all doubt that there is One in whom we can put confidence, One in whom we can trust.

Let us humble ourselves before God and “walk not in the counsel of the ungodly”—this we can do; but the big work is not to counsel with the ungodly right in our own hearts but let the testimonies of the High and Lofty God be our counselors.

“Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?” (Prov. 22:20-21).

Is it not worth more than gold or silver, or anything else of this short fleeting life to have these wonderful testimonies of the living God for our counselors? “Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counselors” (Ps. 119:24). Then when someone tells you Christ was immaculate and sinless from birth, not only without sin but the very God Himself, you will be able to go to these “counselors” and show them the evidence from the divine storehouse.

Let us go to some of them today, so that you may know the “certainty of the words of truth.”

Jesus Immaculate from Birth?

To begin with, let us talk about the idea, so widely extant, that Christ was God Himself and by His birth was sinless and immaculate. As a witness that this teaching is false, let us bring the apostle Paul upon the stand. Now Paul should be good authority, for as he traveled on his way to Damascus with papers to apprehend the Christians, there appeared a bright light from heaven above the light of the noon-day, and from its effulgence a voice sounded forth, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and witness.... Delivering thee from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light.” Shall we not believe the word of one who received his knowledge direct from our Master, who came from the high courts of heaven, where He had been learning from the angels after He had ascended to the Father?

And what does Paul say about our Savior’s birth?

Turn to Galatians 4:4, and we read, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” Had He pre-existed from all eternity past? Was He co-equal and co-eternal with the Father? No, we find here that He was born of a woman; and could He have had an existence before His birth? could He exist before His mother out of whom He was made existed? Most certainly not.

Now turn with me to the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and we can read a little more of the evidence. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same” (Heb. 2:14). Ah; He was flesh and blood; that cannot mean He was God, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven.

To rivet it beyond all dispute and

doubt we read in the sixteenth verse: “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” Well, the author wants us to be sure we get the right understanding of this subject, and he had already told us Jesus was made lower than the angels, so now he goes over it again (verse 17):

“Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

In all things He was made like His brethren; so He would not have been sinless by reason of birth; and neither was He, for in the next verse we read, “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” Now, what is temptation? James tells us that “every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.” What does that teach us? It plainly teaches that the same desires of the natural mind beset the pathway of our Master that troubled His brethren. Temptation is not sin; but “when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.”

This is where our Master is far, far ahead of us. Although at the age of twelve His desire to go out into this dark world and instruct them in the way of salvation led Him to an act of insubordination, after He was instructed, He was always in subjection to His parents. He had to eat the butter and honey, that He might know to refuse the evil and choose the good; and once He knew, He never transgressed; while we have transgressed many times after we know what the law requires of us.

Why Sinless?

Our lesson tells us, “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” He never had His own way, He died daily.

What was this suffering, this death? Was it to become a sacrifice for the sins of the world? God had no pleasure in literal sacrifices and offerings, for they ...“never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect” (Heb. 10:1).

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.” This is why he declares, “In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.” Literal sacrifice could never take away sin. He is quoting the fortieth Psalm, and the Psalmist in speaking these same words tells what sacrifice *does* take away sin: “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart” (Ps. 40:8). This tells the real sacrifice Jesus made, the sacrifice of His will to do the will of His Father, and do it with delight. This also tells us why Jesus never sinned: He kept this law ever in mind. “Yea, thy law is within my heart.” The Psalmist said this again in Psalm 119:11, “Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” That is how He could resist every temptation, because He was always ready the law in His heart, saying to Him “It is written.”

Jesus' Achievement

Do we see now how Jesus achieved this matchless record, how He never disobeyed the Father after He knew what the law of God required of Him?

And then to think anyone would say that the Almighty, who is so full of love, mercy and justice, would take His only begotten Son, pure and undefiled, and offer Him for a human sacrifice in order to appease His wrath for what Adam's transgression brought on us all! How contrary to all the principles of divine love and mercy! How contrary to the plain Bible teaching that every man shall be put to death “for his own sin” (Ezek. 18:2, 20).

“Even As I Also Overcame”

Let us now go to the Fountainhead and see what Jesus Himself said about this subject. After He had returned from heaven and put Paul into the ministry; after He had spent still more time learning of the Father and of the mighty angels on high, He was so much interested in those who were to be the heirs of salvation that He sent back another message to us, and in this message He declares, in language too plain for us to make any mistake, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Rev. 3:21).

Almost every church teaches that Christ was born into the world immaculate and spotless. But the Bible declares that He was born into the world with a nature like ours; that He had to overcome just as we must overcome. “He that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne”—overcometh in *some* things? No, he must overcome *even as I also overcame*. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.” He never transgressed, and before He knew the law sin was not held against Him; hence He is said to be without sin.

I don't believe in an immaculate Jesus; I don't believe in a spotless One born into the world; but I believe in One who was made in all points as we are, who was tempted in all things as we are, but in every temptation was an overcomer.

Jesus not only sent back this message to us telling us plainly that He was subject to the same temptations as His brethren, but before He ascended to heaven, in the days of His ministry (and how short was His individual career!) He was very explicit

and told us in unmistakable terms that His birth cut no figure whatever. In Luke 11 we find recorded the account of His conversation with a certain woman who had been listening to Him while He answered some who questioned him about the power by which He cast the unclean spirit out of the man who was dumb. She thought that His mother was worthy of a special blessing simply because she was His mother (Luke 11:27). What did Jesus say about it? Read verse 28:

“But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” “Yea rather,” He says—here is something far ahead, something more important than His birth of the Virgin Mary. He says, “My birth didn't give me immortality and sinlessness, I had to hear the word of God and keep it. I had to learn of my Father and be subject to His will. Neither He nor anyone else has any honor simply by right of birth. Forty Virgin Marys couldn't give you eternal life; it is character God is seeking, and then He will bestow the blessing. Jesus said in the plainest of terms, “Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.”

Hearing and keeping Jesus' word

**“Christ in you
the hope of
glory” (Col.
1:27). The personal
Christ cannot be in
you, but His words,
His teachings can be in
your heart and guide
you in every act of life.**

Jesus, My Perfect Pattern

Jesus had to overcome. I have to overcome.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:21)

Jesus suffered, being tempted. That is why He is able to help me when I am tempted.

"For inasmuch as He has suffered Himself by being tempted, He is able to give immediate help to any that are tempted." (Hebrews 2:18, Williams)

Jesus had to learn to obey by the things which He suffered. I, too, have to learn obedience through suffering.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:8-9)

Jesus had to suffer. I am called to follow in his steps.

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps." (1 Pet. 2:21)

Jesus died to sin. I also must die to sin, never letting it reign over me.

"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." (Rom. 6:10-11)

Jesus had to learn to choose between good and evil; so must I learn.

"Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." (Isa. 7:15)

Jesus had to be taught the knowledge of God. I too must be taught of the Lord.

"All [God's] children shall be taught of the Lord." (Isa. 54:13)

will give us eternal life. Our evil propensities keep leading us astray; but if we overcome them, there is virtue to us, just as there was to Jesus. He hinges an eternity of existence, all our future joy and happiness and comfort, on hearing and keeping the word of God; and the blessing comes in no other way, either to Christ the head or to any member of His body the church.

There was no more efficacy in Jesus'

natural birth than in yours or mine. His Father was pleased with Him because He obeyed, because He submitted to the will of His Father; and He is a most noble example to us by thus doing; but pray tell, if He had been immaculate and spotless with nothing to overcome, how would He have been an example to us?

How beautiful the thought! Now I can honor my Master vastly more than ever I could before; for it is a thousand

times more virtue to Him to endure temptation, than to be a mere machine made to do just so with no volition of its own. Now we can see why Jesus said when tempted, "It is written." He had prepared Himself to be able to resist temptation, just as we have to resist. Now we can see why He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"—because this is how He lived. He had to eat this

divine knowledge, had to keep it in mind, just as we have to.

"The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (Ps. 34:10). No, every good thing is theirs; all these great and precious promises will be fulfilled to those who eat this word of God. Ps. 84:11 reads, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield"—He gives us both light and protection. "The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." He will feed you with "the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock" (Ps. 81:16).

Turn over to Jeremiah, and read where he declares, "Thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Every holy man of old had to eat the bread of heaven, this word of the all-wise and omnipotent God. So did our Master, and so must we, or there is no salvation for us.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ" (Heb. 13:20-21). What? This blood of the everlasting covenant is what brought Christ from the dead; and it will bring every member of His body from the dead, too. What is this blood of the everlasting covenant? We read something about it in the preceding chapter. "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). We must let the Word of God work in us.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." We have something to do; we

must look to Him and contemplate how patiently He "endured such contradiction of sinners against himself." It will give us strength and courage to press on; otherwise we might be "wearied and faint in our minds."

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4). Here is the blood of the everlasting covenant. We have to resist "unto blood, striving against sin." Here is the meaning of the blood. It is the giving up of ourselves, fighting against sin, putting to death the "old man" of sin within us. This is the blood of the everlasting covenant that brought Jesus to life again, and it will bring us to life, too, if we do as He did, die to sin as He died (Rom 6:10-11).

✓ "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 2:6-7).

You have received this blessed truth and now your hearts must be "knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God and the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (vs. 2-3). "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3:4). This knowledge of God is the "mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations;... which is Christ in you the hope of glory" (Col. 1:26-27).

Not the literal Christ, but His truth, this bread of heaven, this blood of the everlasting covenant. This is how you can be "in Christ," and Christ can be in you.

The Bible teaches three Christs; the personal, the man Christ Jesus; the church, His body, of which the personal Christ is the head; and the spiritual Christ the wisdom of God. The individual Christ had to learn of the

spiritual Christ, had to acquire the wisdom of God, just as we must.

The personal Christ cannot be in you, but His words, His teachings can be in your heart and guide you in every act of life. And when this spiritual Christ has crowded out every bit of the old man, you will be a new creature, "a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use."

No individual will do the works of Jesus unless he believes that Jesus was not born sinless but had to learn obedience just as we must learn. This is why He is the bread from heaven. He did not leave us in a fog or mist but made it plain. He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me"—this Me, this I, "this bread that came down from heaven." "Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever" (John 6:58). Oh, here is bread that will perpetuate your existence. Can't you afford to eat this bread?

God has made the bread, and He doesn't allow us to dabble in it. He requires us to eat it just as He has prepared it, and do what it says.

You must eat this bread from heaven, His flesh, to be saved. He says (57th
(Continued on page 26)

God has prepared the bread, and He doesn't allow us to dabble in it. He requires us to eat it just as He has made it, and do what it says.

In His Name

A Serious Responsibility

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17).

We are—without exception—to act and speak as He would act and speak, on His behalf. All the time we are going "on the record" as His spokespersons.

To act or speak in the name of another person is a serious responsibility. It means that one is obligated to properly represent the attitudes, purposes, and intentions of the one in whose name he or she speaks. There must be no slanting, shading or covering. One must properly present the facts as they are.

If such is the duty of one human being speaking in the name of another, think of the obligation of speaking in the name of God!

Legally speaking, we are familiar with such actions as granting "power of attorney," appointing a guardian for a child, or selecting an executor for one's estate. But these responsibilities are very limited in scope and time. Only in very specific situations does one exercise a power of attorney. And as an executor, one's tasks are clearly defined by the court.

Do we realize the weight of the responsibility that accompanies any speaking or acting in the name of Christ?

Peter gave expression to this thought when he wrote: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11).

The apostle Paul said it broadly in

his letter to the Colossians: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." He left no loopholes, no escapes, no openings for question. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed" covers, literally, everything! No action can be exempt from this duty.

Again Paul wrote to the Corinthians urging them to glorify God in all of life, including what they ate or drank, "or whatsoever ye do." "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

As believers we represent Christ. We are His "letters of commendation." We speak as His "ambassadors," resident in this society on His behalf. All of these figures of speech suggest a continuous and comprehensive representation of Christ. We are—without exception—to act and speak as He would act and speak, on His behalf. All the time we are going "on the record" as His spokespeople.

What does this mean? What does it mean to speak and act in the name of the Lord Jesus?

When I think about it, I am challenged by the assignment. For example, consider:

—If I am to speak every word in the name of Christ, I must not speak any words which I cannot imagine Christ uttering, or use any tone or inflection of voice that would be out of character for Him.

—Before speaking, or making a decision, or taking any action, I must reflect on what I plan to say, to make sure I can say it in Christ's name, as His ambassador, as His spokesperson. I must say nothing that could not have come from His lips.

—I must be able to pray without hesitation or shame for Christ to bless and prosper whatever I propose to do—that is part of acting in Christ's name, as Christ acted in God's name.

—I must check the attitude that prompts me to act. What values am I about to embody? What intentions gave me motivation? Whose purposes will be served? This question is critical, if I am speaking or acting in His name.

—Whatever the subject, I must ask myself the question: Can Christ's name be associated with this?

Imagine the dishonor we do Him if by our words or deeds we drag His holy name in the dust!

These are rigorous and intimidating criteria—the more so because we have no license to use them selectively or occasionally. They are a must.

This is no mere power of attorney, or guardianship, or limited assignment as executor for Christ. Our identification with Him is comprehensive and all-inclusive, the only limit being that which our mortal condition dictates. "Whatever ye do, do all"—all must be done in the name of Christ, as His representative.

There is nothing nebulous about our orders. The Scriptures acquaint us with a very practical, down-to-earth Master who was direct and explicit in His commands. His ethic was without question specific and direct. Both by precept and example He demon-

strated His way of speaking and living. The Scriptures make the criteria very concrete.

To represent Christ is a big order. But isn't it, too, a marvelous privilege, a right that far outweighs the accompanying responsibility—in view of the reward Christ has offered! For if we act rightly and truly in His name,

as His representatives, He will eventually share with us all the wealth of His Father's house! This will be the outcome of it all, for we have His sure promise:

"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:24). MM

Abib Calendar

The Bible New Year:

Abib 1—from sundown March 27 through sundown March 28. Abib was the first month of the Hebrew year as God told Moses to measure time (Ex. 12:2;13:4). On the first of Abib the tabernacle was set up. Abib is the "spring" and "sprouting month" in Israel. How fitting a time for our Perfect Example and coming King to have been born!

The New Passover:

Abib 13—sundown April 8. The Jewish Passover was on the fourteenth of Abib. Jesus instituted the New Passover on the thirteenth, of which He said, "This do, in remembrance of me."

Christ's Resurrection:

Abib 15—morning of April 11. In Christ's resurrection lies our assurance that we too may someday triumph over death and gain real life.

The Ascension of Christ:

Forty days after the Resurrection—May 20. This was the last time Jesus was seen among men, until the great day when He shall come again. On that day some nineteen hundred years ago, He was "taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9-11).

Pentecost:

Fifty days after the Resurrection—May 30. This was a day the apostles never forgot—Israel had been observing it for centuries. But to the New Testament Church it meant great power to do a great work for God.

Pressing On!

(Continued from page 17)

comes, to them or to you, what can your people do for you? Can they give you life beyond the grave? Can they give you eternal health and happiness?

Lucius: (thoughtfully) I see. It seems to be all a matter of present or future values.

Paul: Exactly. According to your faith, be it unto you. Who are our true relatives? What did Jesus say? "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother." It is a family which never fails or disappoints you. I have found it a better way; you can find it so, too.

Lucius: (with a sigh) It is not an easy decision—for me, at least. Perhaps I can work it out, with your help.... But I have wondered what I would do if persecution should arise. Anything can happen nowadays. Could I stand disgrace, the physical tortures,

perhaps a violent death? It's a question we may have to face some day, and I don't know...

Paul: Very true, Lucius. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, in some form. But we all face death in some form at some time. Rome honors its soldiers who suffer and die so that some corrupt politicians may gain power and a few landlords be enriched. Those who have fallen never know of their honors. But for the soldiers of Jesus Christ who suffer for their faith, even to death, the promised glory will be theirs to enjoy for ever and ever. What is a moment of suffering and scorn when we know that God and the angels are watching? It is a prospect which I face far more immediately than you (holds up his chain), and from which I cannot escape. Yet as I look back over my life and consider the glorious prospect ahead, I ask myself, Where is the sacrifice? All this—and the Kingdom, too?

(*He places his arm around the young man's shoulders affectionately as the curtain falls.*)

Next month: *HOPELESSNESS*

Jesus Christ

(Continued from page 23)

verse): "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." And what is His meat? "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). This was our Lord's meat, and this must be our meat. This will enable us to overcome as He overcame and then when He comes we will be granted the privilege of sitting with Him on His throne. No others will have this honor.

Now, beloved brethren and friends, I think you should be able to say with me that Christ was not born into the world without sin, but that He had to overcome just as you and I have to overcome; and that by thus offering His body a living sacrifice, He became the noble and elevating example for us to follow. All I am interested in is that you may follow Him in this

and gain that exceeding great reward He has promised every faithful one.

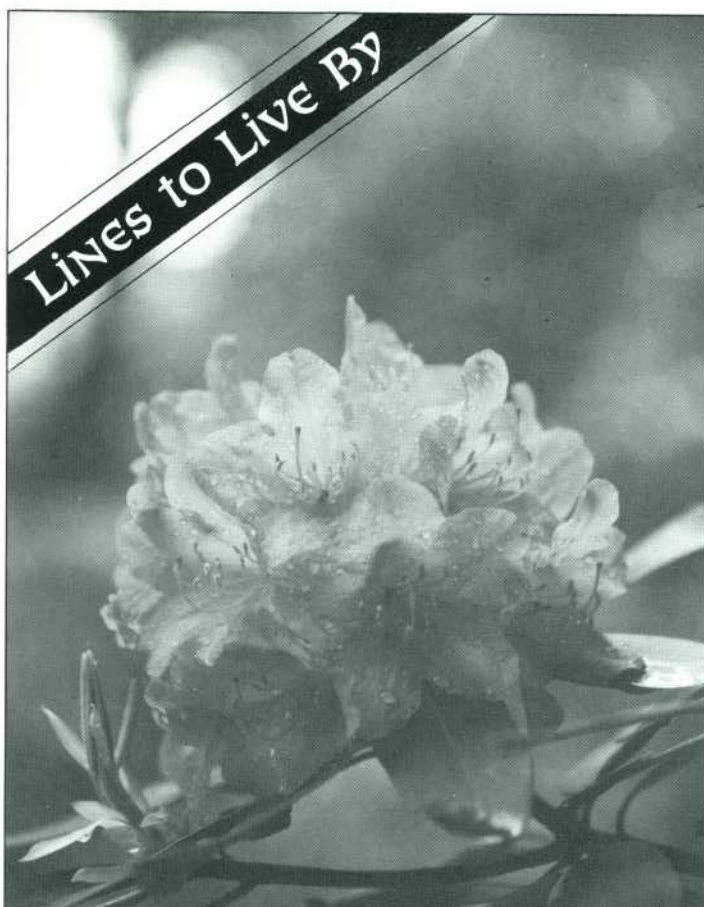
Let us join our hearts and hands together and accomplish this great work that we may be able to pass the pearly gates and enjoy the more than wonderful blessings which will be "exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think."

Let us work harder than ever before to gain this wonderful prize; for we *know*—there is no question about it—we know the prize is absolutely cer-

tain to all who remember His commandments to do them. And on the other hand, if we do not keep them we know we will reap destruction, for destruction is sure to all workers of iniquity (Matt. 7:24-27).

May God be with us, and may these lessons make a lasting impression on our minds, that we may be found every moment serving our Maker, so it may be our happy lot to enjoy each other's company with our Master through the long ages of eternity. Amen. MM

*We cannot understand, sometimes,
Why things do happen so,
Nor why the way is often rough
That we are called to go.
But in the meadow's sunlight
Or through the mountains cleft,
Hold Him gently by the hand
And know His will is best.*



*O Lord, I pray
That for this day
I may not swerve
By foot or hand
From Thy command:
Not to be served, but to serve.*

*This, too, I pray,
That for this day
No love of ease
Nor pride prevent
My good intent:
Not to be pleased, but to please.*

*And if I may,
I'd have this day
Strength from above
To set my heart
In heavenly art:
Not to be loved, but to love.*

Face tomorrow in the confidence of that trust which carries God with it, and so place your whole future in the hand of God.

TODAY

My life is a gift from God given me, not in years, but one day at a time. Today is the day the Lord has given me, and He planned it to be the most important day of my life. Yesterday is gone, never to return. I must not worry about it, but leave it in the hands of God. Tomorrow and all that it holds is God's secret, and its coming is not assured.

Only this day is mine. Each day arranged by God with infinite wisdom and goodness is His gift, His act of love for me. In thanksgiving I will offer Him every day the gift of myself—my prayers, my works, my joys and my sufferings. Dear Lord, accept my offering graciously.

It is a good thing to rejoice in the Lord. Even when you fall into divers temptations, reckon it joy and delight, and God will make your reckoning good.

Do you suppose your heavenly Father will let you carry the banner of His victory and His gladness on to the front of the battle, and then coolly stand back and see you captured or beaten back by the enemy? NEVER! His Word of Truth will sustain you in your bold advance, and fill your heart with gladness and praise, and you will find your heart all exhilarated and refreshed by the fullness within.

Lord, teach me to rejoice in Thee, and to "rejoice evermore."



If We Could Hear—!

*Who knows but what the angels now and then
With glorious music flood the midnight air
As once they did to catch the shepherds where
They sat and dreamed and talked of things, and men,
And sheep, and no doubt ills and habits, when
By some strange marvel delicate and rare
For that one instant tuned to heaven they were
And heard what man has never heard again.*

*By some strange method could we only find
The true vibrations suited to our ears,
As is the thing called radio designed,
We, too, might catch the music of the spheres
And in that holy moment of surprise
Pick up God's program from the midnight skies!*

