

Megiddo Message

A black anchor with a chain is positioned diagonally across a sandy beach. A small, light-colored seashell lies near the anchor's shank. A large, weathered piece of driftwood is in the lower right foreground. The background features several grey rocks and small green plants.

**Will Your
Anchor
Hold?**

Vol. 78, No. 7
July/August 1991

Criticism

Always A Blessing

Everyone gets criticism. Try as we may, there is no way to avoid it. There are insurance policies with many contingencies, but none for criticism.

Criticism can hurt. So often, it touches us where we are most vulnerable. Almost instantly it can change sunshine to gloom, for criticism is often disturbing.

But does it have to be? Is it possible that we can learn to benefit from criticism, that we can come to see it as a blessing and our critic as our friend, someone we would not want to be without?

First, we need to have a firm grip on ourselves. There are at least two ways of approaching life. We can take each day as it comes, and let our spirits rise or fall according to what happens. Or we can predetermine our inner climate; then whatever comes will not affect us unduly.

The latter course is, of course, the better, but it requires preparation, and an immense reserve of self-control. However, the benefits are beyond measure; for if we are in control of our inner climate—if we have committed ourselves to the control of God—no adverse wind can change it.

Great men have had more than their share of criticism, and have learned by it. The following statement attributed to Abraham Lincoln offers some sound thinking on the subject: "If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might just as well be closed for any other business. I do the best I know how, and if the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right could make no difference."

Second, we should examine a criticism objectively. After all, our critic might be saying something we

need to hear. If we immediately close our ears to it just as soon as we sense he or she is "against" us, we will lose the benefit.

When we are criticized, let us ask ourselves, Is God speaking to me through this criticism? Then we can reason further, Is this criticism wholly true? If not, is it partly true? We may find, looking more closely, that our critic has seen something we have overlooked, either wilfully or unconsciously. At the very least we should *consider* our critic's viewpoint—he might have a better idea!

We are told that Henry Ford was always ready to profit from criticism. When he heard people talking about an automobile he had made, he listened carefully. Of course they criticized! But instead of being hurt he jotted down the criticism in his notebook. In this way he gathered material for his future work.

When our conduct is questioned, let us look candidly and anxiously at ourselves and ask, Was I wrong in this? Should I modify my actions in the future? It will do us no good to overlook or excuse a wrong—if our critic saw it, so did God, and we can be sure it is carefully recorded in His book of remembrance—until we remove it by changing our way and meriting His forgiveness.

What if a criticism reaches us through a third person? And what if the critic is harsh, unkind, or obviously prejudiced? Are we insulted? Let us look at the face value of the criticism and forget the rest. What is our critic saying? Is it even partly true? Is there any way in which we can benefit from it?

If we still are uncertain, we might want to look at our critic's qualifications. In short, does the critic know what he or she is talking about? Would he be naturally prejudiced for or against us? If it is a judgment of our character, what does that person know

(Continued on page 26)

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."
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **IN LIFE** as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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 God's will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

Soon-coming events ...

THE HERALD AND THE KING

OUR PLANET will soon witness the greatest events in its history. For centuries God has been silent. But that silence will soon be broken by the arrival of Elijah the prophet, who comes to herald the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: ... lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

Then shall follow the King of kings and Lord of Lords, to begin His momentous work of transforming our world into the glorious and eternal Kingdom of God.

The Bible pictures all events, all men and all nations moving together toward this one God-ordained climax, when "the kingdoms of this world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15), a kingdom in which all will enjoy the blessings of peace, equity and prosperity. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants, bringing to reality the promise of our Lord in His prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

In this issue...

Editorial

CRITICISM: ALWAYS A BLESSING 2

Sermon

WILL YOUR ANCHOR HOLD? 4

Four anchors to use:

Faith, Patience, Prayer and Love

Sermon

MAKING FRIENDS OF GOD AND CHRIST 7

How to turn temporal resources to eternal advantage.

Feature

BLOOD: MIRACLE OF LIFE 14

Blood Used in Metonymy for the Word of God

Just as physical blood supports physical life,

so spiritual blood nourishes and supports spiritual life

Articles

HELP YOURSELF TO DEATH! 18

A temptation to resist

THE SOAP MUST BE APPLIED 19

Shelves stacked with soap won't clean up the world

Book Feature

GOD'S SPIRITUAL CREATION 20

A New Perspective on Genesis

Part Six: The Man of Genesis Receives Dominion

Playlet

WHO'S WATCHING? 24

No one lives to himself alone.

Lines to Live By 27

Poem 28

TRUE FREEDOM

Megiddo Message

July/August, 1991
Volume 78, No. 7

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 North 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.

Unsolicited manuscripts for publication are not accepted.

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; Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English; Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation; Spri—A Translation of the Old Testament Scriptures From the Original Hebrew, by Helen Spurrell.



Will Your Anchor Hold

in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift,
and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift,
or firm remain?

Four Anchors that Hold

A mighty tempest, a “northeast,” was breaking over the sea of Adria. Before it was driven a large cargo vessel with two hundred seventy-six persons aboard. The ship had been caught and could not bear up in the wind, so her crew was letting her drive helpless before the storm.

Hour after hour the storm increased in fury. The ship took such a violent battering that the next day they threw the ship’s cargo overboard. On the third day they threw the ship’s tackle overboard.

After many days without sun or stars, they gave up all hope of surviving.

Then the voice of one who had been silent through it all spoke out in clear tones: “Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.’ So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me” (Acts 27:21–25, NIV).

It was now the fourteenth day and they were still being driven before the storm, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. They sounded, and found twenty fathoms. A little further on they sounded again and found fifteen fathoms.

For fear of being broken upon the rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day. Oh, how that weary and storm-tossed crew wished, longed and waited for the breaking of day, hoping and trusting that deliverance might come!

Their anchors held, and with the first faint streak of light from the eastern horizon they beheld the distant shore.

We have been sailing over the sea of life, our tiny craft beaten and buffeted with many a storm of adversity. The midnight hour is upon us. We are nearing the shore of Eternity. What have we to hold us steady through any storm we may encounter? What have we that we can depend on through the tempests of this life and even through the coming Judgments of God, that windy storm and tempest that will sweep to destruction every mooring of evil?

God has not left us unprepared. He has not left us to drift and die. We read: "And they cast out four anchors and wished for the day." God has given us four great and powerful anchors that we can use for our stay, hope and consolation. They are near at hand. And, properly used, they are guaranteed to hold until the new Day breaks and earth's shadows flee away. There need be no loss of life.

The first is the great anchor of **FAITH**. Its metal has been fully tested. It is strong and well-pointed. It has been used through the ages by all of God's faithful mariners. It will hold in every storm. God can never take any pleasure in one who fails to use it. How quickly our Master rebuked His disciples with these words, "O ye of little faith," as they sought His help against the raging storm. They had failed to use this great anchor. Noah used it to the saving of himself and his faithful crew, while the motley, jeering throng perished. Abraham used it in many a storm; by it he visioned the City afar off whose builder and maker is God. Faith's mighty anchor saved Moses from many a destructive rock and whirlpool as he sailed the Egyptian sea. And time would fail to tell how this great anchor saved Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, David,

Samuel, and Joseph, as they passed safely through the many storms that beat upon their bark.

*Do not fail to use this anchor
When the billows toss and roll.
It will save you from drifting
To some dark and treacherous
shoal.*

PATIENCE is another of these strong and powerful anchors. How great has been our mental suffering at times because we would not use it! We have failed miserably to let it do its perfect work in holding our bark when the storm broke over us.

The great Eternal knew we would need it close at hand to use at a moment's notice, this grace by which we can bear affliction and calamity with constancy and calmness of mind and with a ready submission to the will of God. It is by using this trusty anchor that we possess our souls (Luke 21:19). The book of Hebrews tells us that by this anchor, in combination with the anchor of faith, we will inherit the promises (Heb. 6:12). Job used this great anchor, and in that bright eternal Morning you will find him safe and secure on that evergreen shore, along with Samuel, Moses and all the great mariners that have made a successful voyage through every storm of life.

Why have we hesitated so long to cast it out when we have seen ourselves drifting from the channel that leads to that eternal harbor?

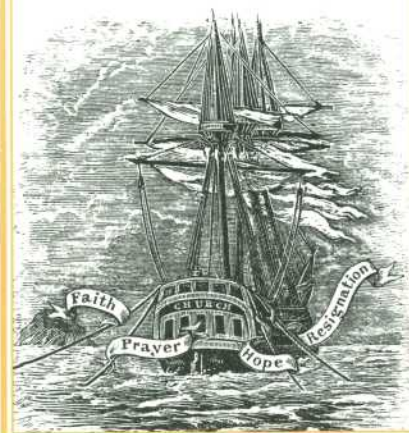
Another of the four great anchors is **PRAYER**. It will hold in the fiercest gale. The mariner who fails to use it can never expect to escape the treacherous shoals that have caused many a shipwreck upon the sands of time. It was the last great anchor our Master-Pilot used on bended knee. On that dark night He cast it overboard to stay

*Our anchor strong
will the storm withstand,
For 'tis well secured
by the Savior's hand;
Yes, the Word of God
in this heart of mine
Is an anchor safe
giving strength Divine.*

*It will firmly hold
in the straits of fear,
When the breakers have told
the reef is near;
Though the tempest rave
and the wild winds blow,
Not an angry wave
shall our bark o'erflow.*

*It will surely hold
in the floods of death,
When the waters cold
chill our latest breath;
On the rising tide
it can never fail
While our hopes abide
within the veil.*

*When our eyes behold
thro' the gath'ring night
The city of gold,
our harbor bright,
We shall anchor fast
by the heavenly shore
With the storms all past
for evermore.*



Will Your Anchor Hold?

His storm-tossed bark while the angry sea and waves roared around Him. Paul, the great mariner, advised us to use it "without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17). In time of trouble men ought to use it and not faint (Luke 18:1). The effectual use of it avails much (Jas. 5:16). At midnight Paul and Silas sang praises and used this great anchor of prayer, and God delivered (Acts 16:25). Daniel used it three times a day, and was not afraid of the king's commandment to the contrary (Dan. 6:10-13), and Gabriel, that beloved angel, stood by his side to bless.

*How often we forget,
when trouble is near;
To use this great anchor,
the anchor of prayer!*

The last great anchor to complete the four is the anchor of **LOVE**. Our voyage over the tempestuous sea of life will end in utter ruin and loss if we fail to use it. There need be no fear if we let it do its work, because "perfect love casteth out fear" (I John 4:18). How can we expect to show our deep appreciation to the Eternal if we fail to use our God-given anchor? How many a heart-rending scene, how many a bitter cry of despair, how many a wreck was stranded because when caught by the undertow they failed to use it.

When the fog and darkness settle over the deep, cast it overboard; let it hold your bark until the mists have rolled away and you catch a clearer vision of the charted sea.

Are you drifting helplessly before the storm? Why stand in jeopardy every hour, when God has provided such a stay for your soul?

The narrative reads: "They cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day." The night is now almost over; the day is about to dawn. Though the storm beats furiously, the mighty anchors of Faith and Patience, Prayer and Love will hold us steadfast until the rising Sun of Righteousness lights the shores of Eternity. MM

*Show me Thy face—
One transient gleam
Of loveliness divine
And I shall never think or dream
Of other love save Thine.
All lesser lights
Will darken quite,
All lower glories wane,
No earthly pride or selfish way
Seem beautiful again.*

*Show me Thy face—
My faith and love
Shall henceforth steadfast be,
And nothing here have power to move
My soul's serenity.
My life I give
The while I live,
With all I feel and see,
To serve Thee, blessed Sovereign, Thou
The One Reality.*

*Show me Thy face—
I shall forget
The weary days of yore;
The fretting thoughts of vain regret
Shall haunt my soul no more;
All doubts and fears
For future years
In quiet rest subside,
And naught but blest content and calm
Within my breast reside.*

*Show me Thy face—
The heaviest cross
Will then seem light to bear;
There will be gain in every loss,
And peace with every care.
With such light feet
The years will fleet,
Life seem as brief as blest,
Till I have laid life's burdens down
And entered into rest.*

*Show me Thy face—
And I shall be
In heart and mind renewed;
With wisdom, grace, and energy
To work Thy work endued.
Shine clear, though pale,
Behind the veil,
Until, the veil removed,
In perfect glory I behold
The Face of my Beloved!*

**S
H
O
W

M
E

T
H
Y

F
A
C
E**

Making Friends of God and Christ

Two Parables from JESUS



The Parable of the Unjust Steward

We can live selfishly and say, "What I have is my own and I can do as I please with it"—this is serving mammon; or we can consecrate all to God, to be used for His glory, and win His friendship. The choice is ours.

In the 16th chapter of Luke, Jesus is teaching by parable. As is typical of His parables, the lesson is not on the surface.

Many people have concluded from this parable, often called "The Unjust Steward," that Jesus taught dishonesty, or at least shrewdness. But we can be sure that such was not His intention. Jesus taught strictest honesty, uprightness in dealing, fairness and generosity, even to the extent of "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. 7:12). If the parable in Luke 16 were teaching what appears on the surface, Jesus would be clearly contradicting Himself.

When properly understood, this parable of Jesus' makes a very striking lesson by way of contrast. Jesus does not mention the justice or injustice of the characters He creates, nor does He advocate dishonesty or selfishness as a means of obtaining God's favor. Rather, He is contrasting the good sense of a steward of this world in extricating himself from a dilemma, with the stupidity with which the Christian disciple sometimes meets an opportunity for a prize so outstanding as eternal life. Here is the core of the parable: *If the steward was so quick to assess a bad situation and take steps to remedy it and make a place for himself in this world's economy, should not the earnest life-seeker apply much greater diligence—for a much greater reward!*

Jesus' parable has two characters: a master, or property owner, and a servant who is responsible for the management of his master's property. As the parable opens, the master has just accused his manager—justly or unjustly, we are not told—of "squandering his property." The master demands a written statement of his accounts so that he can see how the manager has been conducting his business—because, he says, "you cannot be manager any longer" (Luke 16:2, NIV).

Immediately the manager senses the peril of his situation. He is about to lose his job, and along with it all his security in this world.

Making Friends of God and Christ

What will he do? He is not strong enough to dig, he has too much self-respect to beg.

He immediately decides that his best course of action is to make friends of some who will be able to help him through his plight. But he must act quickly, because he has already been dismissed. So he starts once to take the necessary steps to make these friends.

Was the Steward Unjust?

What is often questioned is the manager's method of making these friends. He calls in each of his master's debtors and settles each

lord by his quick settlement.

In any case, the quick settlements were a great success, winning him the favor both of his lord and of his lord's debtors. Far from feeling shorted by the manager's settlements, the master praised him "because he had done wisely," or as it has been rendered, "because he acted with shrewd business sense."

Then Jesus immediately makes the lesson He intends to teach: "for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8).

When the manager saw a threatening situation, he did not stall or debate the issue or waste precious time in indecision. He *immediately* took action to win the friendship of some whom he thought could help him. He called in his lord's debtors and *urged* them: "Sit down quickly, and write fifty," and so on. *Right then* was the time to act.

The Lesson

As Christians we are all in the position of this manager. We are presently in charge of our Master's property. Nothing we have is our very own. We have no long-term claim upon anything; all belongs to God. Looking ahead, we are fast approaching a point of change (we more imminently than any who have lived before us). At best our position is temporary and will soon be taken from us, either by the ending of our natural life or, more especially for us, by the arrival of our Lord. When that Day comes—and it is imminent—we shall need friends, the *right* friends, those who can give us something eternal. Why are we not doing something about it *right now*? Why are we so slow to realize our present precarious position and *take action to save ourselves*? Why are we—who have all eternity at stake!—so slow to believe, so slow to do that which is

in our own best interest? Why are we not thinking, planning every moment what we can do with the property He has entrusted to our care so that we can count on His help in the time of trouble that is about to strike?

That is the lesson Jesus wanted to force home upon our minds. Why are not you, the children of light, as wise as the children of this world, they who have by comparison so small an interest to save? Why are not you—who have all eternity in prospect—not as diligent to do all in your power to gain the crown before you, as they who seek only a place in this world?

The statesman, the career person, the financier, the student, the industrialist—all are looking ahead, planning, to see what they can gain for themselves in this short life; but you many times are careless, indifferent in securing your *eternal* interests!

Personal Responsibility

Jesus continues by teaching positive personal responsibility for what we have (verse 9): "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends (by means of) the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations"; or as it reads in the Williams Translation: "So I tell you, make friends by the right use of your money,...so that when it fails, your friends may welcome you to the eternal dwellings." Notice that Jesus does not say *if* it fails but "*when* it fails." Anything we have in this world, our possessions, even life itself, *will* fail; it is only a matter of time; and who are the friends we shall need then? Those who can welcome us to "eternal dwellings," God and Christ.

The phrase "that when ye fail" may be taken two ways, according to the original Greek, but either

All that we have now belongs to the Lord. It is not our own, and we must use it as belonging to Him, as He directs.

account at a substantial discount. Each of the debtors is, naturally, pleased.

How could he do this? It may be that the servant settled for the actual balances owed—the manager let each debtor state the balance owed, and did not contest it. Normally, the manager would have stated the amount owed—and probably have included a share for himself. Another possibility is this property manager worked on a basis of "shares" and perhaps collected the full "share" that belonged to his lord, taking for himself only the "goodwill" of the debtor—which was his whole intent. Thus he was not really being unfaithful to his

makes a suitable point. 1) It may be rendered: "that when it fails," referring to the mammon of unrighteousness. Or 2) it may be rendered, "that when ye die"—the point is the same. When we die, the mammon of unrighteousness is no longer of any value to us.

In either eventuality, we shall need to have used the mammon of unrighteousness—our resources and possibilities in this world—to our best spiritual advantage, so that when it fails—as it surely will—then they (the friends we have made, God and Christ) will be able to give us that which is *eternal*: "They will receive you into everlasting habitations."

Money in itself is neither righteous or unrighteous. It gets its moral or spiritual quality from the one who handles it. In the hands of one, it is a weight to drag him down. He hoards it, misuses it, or spends it for his personal gratification; in the hands of another, it is a rung to lift him up. He uses the mammon of unrighteousness in such a way that it makes him a friend of Jesus, and a friend of God.

Jesus confirms His point of personal responsibility for what we have in verse 10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Our first duty is to be faithful in "that which is least," i.e., the little we have now, our money, our time, our energy, our talents, our interests, our physical and mental capabilities, the small things we are able to do. If we are faithful in the use of all these—which are not really ours but only *loaned* to us—then God will give us that which is truly great, that which is our own; for as Jesus says in the next verse:

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust

the true riches?" (v. 11). If we are not faithful in making proper use of the little we have now, how can we think He will trust us with that which is so much greater—and eternal!

School yourself in the virtues of absolute honesty now. Realize you will have to give account for the use you make of the little you have now.

All that we have now belongs to the Lord. It is not our own, and we must use it as belonging to Him, as He directs. We must think of this when we spend our money, when we use our time, when we give our energy or interest to anything. We must be always asking, Is this to the glory of God? Is this making the best use of the resources God has entrusted to my care? Is this something God wants me to do? How can I use this to make God my friend?

We are only stewards, whether it be our land or houses, wealth, or any talents we may possess. All comes from God and belongs to Him. As He said speaking through the Psalmist, "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 50:9–10, 12). If we are not faithful in that which belongs to the Lord, can we think He is going to give us that which is truly our own?

Today we enjoy that which we can call our own. We want to own our home. We feel better if there is no mortgage on the farm we operate; and if sensible, we want to own the car we drive and not be endlessly in debt to a financing company. But most of all, if looking ahead, we want to be making sure our eternal existence, something we can actually own and that can never

be taken from us; but God will give this only to His friends. He will give to every faithful one this earth as an everlasting possession, plus riches and honor and glory such as "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man" to imagine (I Cor. 2:9).

ONE Master, ONE Dominant Interest

Then continuing in Luke 16, Jesus reinforces His point again, "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (v. 13). We can have only one controlling interest. We can set our affections on the things we have in this world, and live for them, make them our master; or we can have God for our master and by the right use of "mammon" build our friendship with Him.

We can live selfishly and say, "What I have is my own and I can do as I please with it"—this is serving mammon; or we can consecrate it all to God, to be used for His glory, and win His friendship. The choice is ours.

The Pharisees understood Jesus' point. We read (verse 14): "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him." They liked to think that what they had was their own and they could do with it as they pleased and still have God for their friend. But Jesus said, Not so.

To make the lesson even deeper, Jesus went on to tell them another parable. In this parable He showed the *end* of it all. In this parable He contrasted the end of a life spent serving self with the end of a life of self-sacrifice and making the right use of the mammon of unrighteousness.



The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

You might ask, How do we know this is a parable and not an actual occurrence? Many religious people believe it is historical, that it is not a parable. But it was Jesus' habit to teach by means of parable. As we read in Mark 4:34, "Without a parable spake he not unto them."

Also, there are several points in the narrative which show definitely that this is a parable. If it were historical, then Jesus would not be the firstfruits unto life—Lazarus would be; and we read definitely that Jesus is the firstfruits (I Cor. 15:23). Again, if the narrative were historical, what about such figures of speech as "Abraham's bosom," the "tip of (one's) finger" which, dipped in water, was to cool one's flaming torment? And where is the "great gulf"? No, we must follow Paul's principle in I Cor. 2:13, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." If one part is figurative, the entire narrative must be.

Those who believe the parable to be a real occurrence also believe that the soul is immortal, that after death we continue to be conscious, though without a body. This creates other problems. Lazarus and the rich man are clearly able to see and know each other, converse and reason after they have died. Are disembodied souls or spirits—not having eyes, or ears, or a brain—able to carry on such "normal" activities?

No, the entire narrative is another parable which Jesus created to teach the same great truth He had just taught in the Parable of the Steward, this time with emphasis on the *end* of the life spent seeking the wrong goals, making the wrong use of one's resources in this world.

Again the story has two characters, this time a "rich man" and a "beggar" whom Jesus names "Lazarus." We shall find that these two individuals represent two classes among those who know God and agree to serve Him, faithful and unfaithful.

The "rich" man does not necessarily indicate rich in houses and lands or monetary wealth. One can also be rich in his own estimation. By the simile of the "rich man" is pictured those who are self-satisfied, who feel that they have all that they want. Revelation 3:17 tells about this type of riches. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." They are those who think they are all right. They like to hear the sound of the Gospel, like to think that the Kingdom of God is coming on the earth, but do not realize their own need to prepare for it.

Jesus is not speaking here of those who know not the plan of God; He is speaking of those like Judas, who was covetous and wanted money; like Cain, who slew his brother Abel; like Solomon, who was led away by the loves and interests of this world; like Demas, who loved this present world and forsook the way. They did not realize their true spiritual condition. They did not realize, like the property manager in the previous parable, that they were in a perilous state and needed to take quick action. They were blind to their true status with God.

Now returning to the parable of Jesus, the beggar named Lazarus desired "to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table" (Luke 16:21). Let us observe that the rich man and the beggar both ate from the

same table. But one made God his friend, the other did not. Lazarus wanted to eat every crumb, every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; but the rich man wanted to take only what he liked. He thought he could have his own way in many things and still reap the great reward; but Lazarus was hungry for every "crumb."

That word "crumb" is significant. It pictures the small things, the things we would not naturally be concerned about. The rich man says, "I'm going to sow to the flesh, do as I please while I have the opportunity. This is my life, and I want to get everything I can out of it." But Lazarus says, "I want the future reward, I want the joy, I want that home that will be eternal, and I know I must keep every command

***Jesus did NOT teach
that the wicked suffer
eternally in a literal
place of torment.***

of God to obtain it." He was willing to eat every crumb that fell from the rich man's table.

Lazarus was willing to concern himself about the little, seemingly insignificant things. Many people think it unnecessary to concern themselves about little things; a little pride, a little dishonesty, a little malice, a little impatience, a little envy. And the religious world tell us Christ did the work for us anyway, so we do not need to be overly concerned about small defects in our character. But such is not God's way.

Lazarus, the beggar, sat at the rich man's gate, full of sores,

"Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." Were they literal sores? If we have a literal sore we go to the doctor and get it healed. But here the Bible reveals a different kind of sores.

Let us turn to Psalm 38 for a description of these sores. "For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness" (vs. 4-5). Here is a man getting angry; he has a bad sore. Here are those who are jealous; they have sores. Here is a covetous one, trying to grab every dollar within reach. Here are men and women proud, self-centered, and vain. Such have terrible sores that must be healed before they can have God's favor.

Now Lazarus realized that he had these sores, and he wanted to get them healed. But the rich man, representing those who are unfaithful to God, do not want to think about sores. It hurts their ego even to admit to themselves that they have any sores. They do not want the "excellent oil" that has to be applied to get the sores healed (Ps.

141:5). They are not willing to accept reproofs. The rich man says, "I will worry about that later. Right now I'm going to do as I please, and let the future take care of itself."

But Lazarus realized he had these sores and was willing to have the law of God applied to heal them.

"Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." Do you think these are literal dogs? Remember that if we would understand a parable we must compare "spiritual things with spiritual." We cannot have a symbolic rich man and a symbolic Lazarus, or literal dogs to lick spiritual sores.

What are the dogs? They may be the trials which those in opposition to God bring upon believers. Philippians 3:1-2 speaks of these dogs: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision." Evil workers, men and women of evil dispositions, those opposed to the truth, are dogs in a Biblical

sense. And how do they "lick" spiritual sores and thus help to heal them? By the trials they bring upon those trying to serve God.

We may be thrown into difficult circumstances, surrounded by people who do not understand us, who seem never to consult our taste or opinion, who always oppose us and put us in the background; who answer a pleasant greeting with a snarl, and pick flaws with us however hard we may try to do right. This is one way the dogs lick our sores of hurtful feelings, and heal them.

King David showed that he knew how to handle such irritations when at the time of Absalom's rebellion Shimei came out to meet the King as he was fleeing from Absalom, and cursed. David's answer to his officers who wanted to behead Shimei was: "Let him alone, let him curse away!...Perhaps the Eternal may look upon my grief and repay me with kindness for this cursing of me today" (II Sam. 16:11-12, Moffatt). David was looking for the good that he could derive from taking graciously the mistreatment of another.

Let Us Pray

O God, Thou who art the Creator of all beauty and loveliness, and who causest the heart of man to sing for joy, we are deeply grateful for all the beauty and loveliness that are part of our lives. Keep us attuned to them, and make us aware of them constantly. For the beauty of form and sound, of voice and instrument, of music and nature, we thank Thee. For the gift of expression and the power to create which Thou hast planted within us we express our debt.

Help us to use these gifts to us for the edification and inspiration of Thy children, and for Thy glory. Cause us to understand that in praise and worship we put them to their noblest use.

Grant, Father, that we may always keep the vision of the future glory and beauty that can be ours ever shining vividly before our mind's eye, as a constant stimulus to right living. Help us to keep climbing higher. May we never be satisfied with ourselves as we are. May we be so dissatisfied with the ugliness of our old nature that we will make an untiring effort to reform our ways, become the new creature such as Thou wilt desire to own and bless, and save eternally.

Help us like the steward in Jesus' parable to be realistic, to see where our own best interests lie and act decisively, quickly, realizing that our present position in this world cannot long remain. And may we be diligent to make a proper use of everything Thou hast entrusted to us, realizing it is all Thine and that we will be called to account for the use we have made of it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Making Friends of God and Christ

After Death, What?

Continuing with Jesus' parable we read in verse 22, "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." The faithful of past ages compose that beggar. Paul is part of that beggar, along with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Daniel, and all who walked in the footsteps of the Master, all who obeyed God. They invested their lives in God's service, hence made Christ and God their friends; and ultimately they shall be carried into the bosom of Abraham.

What is the bosom of Abraham? It is symbolic of "a place of felicity and bliss." But *when* do the angels

***Now is the time to
get over on the side
of Jesus. It will be too
late when the
Judgment sits.***

carry them to this place? Are they carried the moment they die?

Here are two events pictured: 1) they die; and 2) they are carried by the angels to the father of the faithful. But do these events happen simultaneously?

In Mark 13:26-27 we are told *when* the angels will carry these faithful ones. We find that it is when Christ comes. He will send His angels to gather them: "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." The dead sleep in the

grave until the resurrection morning; then Christ will send His angels to gather them to Judgment. Then the faithful among them are going to be gathered into the bosom of Abraham.

Hebrews 11 tells clearly when the righteous will be rewarded. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and many others are named, and we are given a passing glimpse of their virtues. Then verse 13 reads, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." And the chapter closes with: "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (vs. 39-40). All are going to be rewarded together. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the faithful ones who compose this "Lazarus" are sleeping until the resurrection morning. Then Christ will send His messengers or angels to gather them together into Abraham's bosom, but not at the time of their death.

The last part of Luke 16:22 and verse 23 read, "The rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lifted up his eyes..." The Douay Version gives a better division of the verses—the division into verses is the work of translators. "And the rich man also died, and was buried in hell." The Greek word for "hell" is *hades*, meaning "the grave."

Our Common Version reads, "And in hell he lifted up his eyes." How could one lift up his eyes when in the grave, where he does not know anything? "The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not any thing" (Eccl. 9:5). The Greek word *hades* translated "hell" in Luke 16 is translated "grave" in I Cor. 15:55. The idea of eternal torment is not found among its definitions.

The rich man "lifted up his eyes, being in torments." When is the rich man in torment? Between the time the rich man dies and is "buried in hell" and the time when he "lifted up his eyes," Christ has returned and the resurrection has occurred. At that time he sees the reward he could have had. It is the plight which all of the unfaithful covenant-makers will experience. They choose to sow to the flesh as they please during their day of probation, but when they are resurrected and realize what they could have had, they will be in torment. This is the situation pictured by Jesus in Luke 13:25 and 28, "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are.... There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." This is the time when the rich man will be in torments. He is not in torments the moment he dies, or during death's slumber, but after the resurrection, after the Judgment, when he realizes what he has lost.

The time when he "lifts up his eyes, being in torments" and "seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" is after the Judgment, when he realizes what the faithful have gained and what he has lost. It is then that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The rich man would not eat the "crumbs," and when brought face to face with the consequences of his sinful life he will cry, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this

flame" (16:24). The amount of literal water that a man could carry on the tip of his finger would not go far to relieve the sufferings of one in the torments of literal fire. But finger, water, flame and tongue are all figurative. The "rich man" is in torment when he sees Abraham and Lazarus, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and he himself shut out. And there is little—or nothing—that the righteous can do to ease that torment. Now he would like to partake of the water of life, which he esteemed so lightly during his lifetime; but it is too late.

If after knowing the way of God you continue to sow to the flesh, to do as you please, instead of taking up your cross, do you not think that you will be sorrowful when you see the faithful in the Kingdom of God and "you yourselves thrust out"? The rich man implores, Send Lazarus that he may bring me water—the water Jesus spoke of to the woman of Samaria when He said, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). The time has come when the rich man would like to have some of this water, but it is too late.

What is Abraham's reply to the rich man? Abraham is represented as saying, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (v. 25). Now Jesus is making the lesson of the parable. He says to those who sought the paltry satisfactions of this world, who did as they pleased with the mammon of unrighteousness instead of using it to make God their friend, "You received your good things during your life-

time. You did as you pleased. You did not want to sacrifice, you did not want to deny yourself. But Lazarus' name was cast out as evil. He had all manner of falsehoods told about him, yet he ate every crumb that fell from the rich man's table."

In this parable Jesus brings us down to the Judgment scene, to teach us a lesson, to show us what we want to avoid. One class worked out their salvation and have reaped unspeakable bliss; the others sowed to the flesh, did as they pleased, and are now in torments.

Then we read in verse 26: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." It will not be a small gulf but a "great gulf." The decision of the Judge has been rendered, and it is final, placing an impassable barrier between the two classes. The faithful, represented by Lazarus, have been rewarded with life everlasting, and the unfaithful have received their sentence of death. The great gulf, the separation, is fixed and final.

Throughout the day of salvation, wheat and tares, righteous and wicked, grow together. They work side by side. But after the Judgment there is a separation, and it is unchangeable. So Jesus says to the rich man, in effect, "You cannot come over where Lazarus is. You had your own way, did what you pleased, now you must reap your reward."

Now is the time to get over on the side of Jesus. It will be too late when the Judgment sits. You cannot be made over into a new creature in a minute, a week, or a month. You must be doing it every day.

Now another situation is represented in the parable. The rich man asks that Lazarus might be sent to his father's house, so that they may be spared his fate (vs. 27-28). This part of the parable reveals another aspect of the Divine plan. When Christ returns, only His servants, the covenant-makers from Adam to His second coming, will be called to Judgment. At that time the world at large are still ignorant of approaching events. But after the Judgment, the age-lasting Gospel will be broadcast worldwide, and all will have opportunity to submit and be saved.

It is of this latter group that the rich man speaks. Let them be warned, he says, lest they come into this place of torment.

What does Abraham reply? "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." The rich man knows that they will not give heed to these. He says, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." This statement by the rich man shows definitely that *the resurrection has taken place*: "If one went unto them from the dead." But Abraham replies again, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." How hard and impenitent is the human heart. Only few, very few will hear and be persuaded.

Let us make to ourselves friends by a proper use of the mammon of unrighteousness that has been entrusted to us, that when life's short day is spent, Christ and God may be our friends and receive us into their everlasting habitations.

The mammon of unrighteousness in the hands of the faithful Christian steward may be minted into the coinage of heaven and invested in those interests which will make for eternal security. MM

Blood: Miracle of Life



Physical Blood

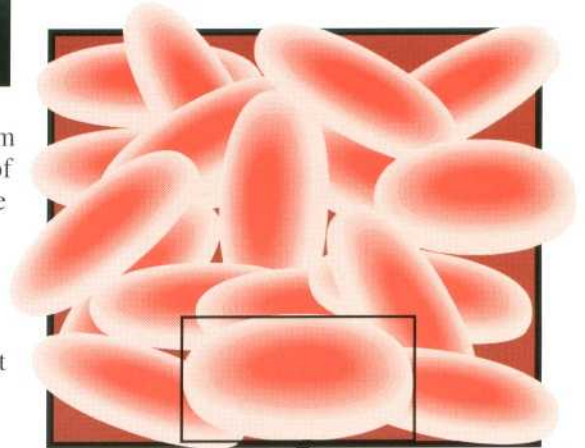
Do we ever stop to think about the wonderment of God's creation and the complexity of the life God has given us—and offer heartfelt thanks to our Creator?

We come and go day after day, we work and eat and sleep with scarcely a thought of the intricate processes that are happening every second in our bodies to sustain life. Our bodies are wonder-working "machines," displaying a marvel of design far beyond our ability to comprehend, a continual living testimony to the workmanship of our Creator. Medical doctors and scientists have labored for decades even to *discover* the secrets of life. And there is still more to learn.

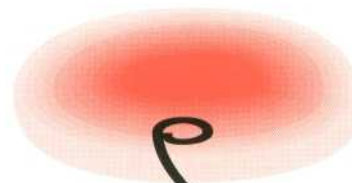
One of the complex designs within us is the miracle of blood. This veritable river of life flows constantly in our blood vessels as long as we live, whether we are awake or asleep, without a conscious thought or direction from us. We didn't design it, we cannot duplicate it, we can scarcely discover what makes it work. Yet every one of the more than 5 billion persons on the earth is blessed with a supply of this miraculous, life-sustaining substance.

The "life of the flesh is in the blood," said the ancient inspired writer (Lev. 17:11). Modern Science confirms that this is true. God knew, long before we humans figured it out, that blood is the sustainer of the body's life. Every second,

every hour, this crimson stream courses through the vessels of our bodies, completing a route of some 60,000 miles every day, nourishing, cleansing, carrying food and oxygen to every cell in our body—can we not honor the Creator that designed all this?



Each of us has some 25,000,000,000,000 red blood cells in our body.



Red Blood Cell

Each red blood cell contains 270,000,000 hemoglobin molecules.

Each hemoglobin molecule consists of 4 elaborately entwined strands of a protein substance (composed of about 570 amino acids). In the middle of each strand is a heme, a tiny disk in the middle of which is a single iron atom which carries oxygen by "piggyback" to the needy tissues.



Hemoglobin Molecule



Heme

Let's look just a little closer at this miracle substance. Our bodies contain about 100 trillion cells, all

All scientific data is from *The Incredible Machine*, Copyright 1986 by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C. 20036.

doing their various God-designed jobs. (How much is a trillion? A trillion seconds would take us forward in time from the year 1991 to the year 33991!)

Of the 100 trillion cells in our bodies, about 25 trillion are the red blood cells that float in our blood. So many red blood cells crowd our blood stream that if these red cells could be laid tightly one against another, they would make a string that would reach all the way around the earth and six thousand miles besides!

Now let's look closer at one of these red blood cells. Shaped like a cushion, the cell consists primarily of water and a red protein called hemoglobin. Hemoglobin gives the cell its red color and its remarkable oxygen-carrying ability. Each red blood cell does not contain one or two or even a dozen hemoglobin molecules but 270 million!

What makes a hemoglobin molecule able to carry oxygen? Each hemoglobin molecule, with its more than 10,000 atoms, consists of 4 elaborately twined strands of protein (a substance that contains more than 570 amino acids). In the middle of each strand is a heme, a tiny disk of carbon, hydrogen and nitrogen atoms, and in the middle of each heme is a single iron atom. This atom of iron makes the heme act as a magnet, grabbing up oxygen and carrying it to the tissues where it is needed, then releasing the oxygen—and just in proportion to the need!

Where do these remarkable red blood cells originate? Day and night, year after year, as long as we live, our bone marrow is constantly producing them. Each red blood cell lives only about four months (during which time it makes about 75,000 trips through the body), then it dies, and is replaced by a new red blood cell. This process goes on very rapidly. In a single second we lose about 3 million red blood cells, and our bone marrow produces an equivalent number to replace them.

Even more rapid is the production of hemoglobin to fill these cells. It has been calculated that in a single second the human body produces about 500 trillion hemoglobin molecules, the tiny vehicles that carry the breath of life to our cells!

Can't we exclaim with the Psalmist, "Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom" (Ps. 145:3, NIV)?



Spiritual Blood

Wasn't Jesus choosing the very most appropriate symbol when He chose the term "blood" to communicate to us the vitality, the living power, the wonderful life-sustaining quality of His message? For in it is life, yes, the very life of life—*eternal* life!

And can we wonder that He made this very special blood the fundamental condition of spiritual life? He even went so far as to say, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). Only as we eat His spiritual flesh and drink His spiritual, life-imparting "blood" can we have life. Again He said, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" (v. 56).

When The Bible Speaks of Blood...

Let us consider the meaning of the word "blood" as the Scriptures use it in this symbolic sense.

The vital relationship of blood to life makes it especially meaningful in Scriptural phraseology as a figure or symbol of that which is vital to spiritual life. Just as literal blood supports physical life, so *spiritual blood* supports *spiritual life*. What can we learn about the nature of this spiritual "blood"?

Blood Used in Metonymy for the Word

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a common term is used in place of a less common term (concept or idea) to convey a meaning which might be otherwise obscure. By the association, the less common term is more easily understood.

What, according to the Bible, is the lifeblood of the

spiritual life? What is it that performs for the spiritual life what physical blood does for physical life?

In the Bible, the term "blood" is used in metonymy for the "Word," or wisdom, or life-giving knowledge of God. In this way, the potency and power of the Word of God and its vital relationship to spiritual life is emphasized. Just as physical blood cleanses, quickens, and supports physical life, so the Word of God supports spiritual life.

Jesus described His Word, His teaching, His wisdom, as this all-important, life-supporting substance (John 6:63). This Word, acting as *spiritual blood*, does the following:

◆ *It cleanses.* Said Jesus: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).

◆ *It quickens, or makes alive.* The Psalmist com-

mented on this power of the Divine word: "Thy word hath quickened me" (Ps. 119:50).

◆ *It gives light and understanding*, two requisites of spiritual well-being. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Ps. 119:130).

◆ *It sustains life*. The apostle Paul understood this special power of the Word to support spiritual life. We read, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I

Just as literal blood supports physical life, so spiritual blood supports spiritual life.

preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain" (I Cor. 15:1-2).

This symbolic use of the term "blood" is common in Scripture. Jesus Himself used it when He said to His hearers, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). His "flesh" and "blood" were vital to "life." But no one thinks Jesus was teaching cannibalism. And no one thinks He was speaking to people who were literally dead because they had not yet eaten that which would bring them into a state of "life." The "flesh," the "blood," and the "life" of which He spoke were all spiritual. He was using "flesh and blood" in metonymy for His message, His words, His teachings, and in this

way showing how vital they are to spiritual life. Because these people were not "eating" His symbolic "flesh" and "drinking" His symbolic "blood," they were, spiritually speaking, dead: "Ye have no life in you."

What are His flesh and blood? Jesus Himself answered the question clearly: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." His words were the flesh and blood capable of supporting spiritual life.

Why did Jesus compare His words, His heavenly message, to flesh and blood? Because His words, His teaching, the Word of God, are to the spiritual life what flesh and blood is to natural life. They are *absolutely necessary*! Without them, "ye have no life in you." In other words, without them you are *dead*.

Blood = Life, and Loss of Blood = Death

The Scriptures also use the term blood in another sense. Because blood is vital to life, it is sometimes used as the equivalent of life. The loss of blood is equivalent to the loss of life, or death.

Who, of all people on the face of the earth, should have known better what blood meant to life than the Jews, after the many years of offering animal sacrifices. By using this terminology Jesus was able to convey a lesson to them in terms they could understand. They knew what happened to an animal when its blood was drained from its veins—its life ended. Its life indeed was in the blood.

When the term "blood" is used in Scripture as the equivalent of life, then the loss of blood (shed-

ding of blood) means death, both in a literal or symbolic sense. Let us look first at the literal.

The Scriptures may speak of a loss of literal life as "blood," with an implied sense of guilt upon the one responsible. (The forceful taking of another's life was condemned from the very earliest times—see Gen. 4:6-14.) This use of blood occurs in Rom. 3:15, "Their feet are swift to shed blood." Again in Luke 11:51, "From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias," meaning the death of these righteous men of God. Or as Pilate declared, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person" (Matt. 27:24), meaning that he did not wish to be guilty of taking the life of Christ. Each of these texts uses "blood" in the sense of a life taken, with guilt upon the one responsible.

Blood may also be shed, i.e., life taken or given up, in a spiritual sense. It is blood which every true child of God must shed. It is the blood of the old nature, the "old man" of the flesh, one's natural ways, and the result is death in a spiritual sense, the death of the old nature, the "old man," the old "self." It is the sacrificing of one's inner desires, ambitions, will, etc.,—that which is as dear as life itself.

This shedding of spiritual blood, and the resulting death of "self," was a frequent subject in the Epistles of Paul. Indeed, it is the most serious aspect of the Christian life, which results in the complete transformation from the old creature to the new (Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 5:17). Even Christ was not exempt from this spiritual shedding of blood. He, too, had to "die to sin." In fact, Christ set the pattern for all who would come after Him. "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God" (Rom. 6:10).

In every life that pleases God, this blood of the old self must be shed, a life must be given up, a death must be suffered. Paul spoke of the process as being "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20). Again he spoke of "crucifying the flesh": "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). He also spoke of it as being "dead": "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3); and "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Col. 3:5, RSV). Again he spoke of it as being "dead to the world": "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using)" (Col. 2:20-22).

Each of these verses pictures the complete giving up of the sinful life.

The writer of the book of Hebrews spoke of this death when he said, "without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Again he said to his brethren, speaking of the spiritual death which they were even then in the process of executing, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4). This text indicates clearly the nature of the "blood" to be shed. It is blood shed by "striving against sin." (This text shows also that *each individual* must "resist unto blood," not that Christ's sacrifice covers all.)

The book of Revelation describes this same self-sacrifice using another term for death: beheading. The removing of the head signifies in a spiritual sense the giving up of one's will, opinions, ideas, thoughts. The Revelator saw under the altar "the souls of them that were beheaded for the

witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). They had shed the blood of the old nature, had given up themselves totally, in a spiritual sense. (This total self-sacrifice could—and did sometimes—include a surrender of physical life, rather than deny one's faith. This was true of Christ and many others during the early centuries.)

The putting to death of the old life, the giving up of our own ways, the pouring out of our lifeblood, is the spiritual sacrifice which is required of each servant of God. It is precisely this crucifixion of the old life which allows the new life to thrive. Obedience to the Word of God means death to every part of the old nature. "Without the shedding of blood (the lifeblood of the old nature) is no remission" (Heb. 12:4).

The apostle Paul frequently pictured the Christian life as a life-and-death struggle, a battle of flesh against spirit, of the old against the new. He spoke of his own struggle against sin as a fight and a death. He said, and meaningfully, "I die daily" (I Cor. 15:31). Again he wrote to the Galatians (Gal. 6:14): "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

It is a contest of "flesh" against "spirit," the old life against the new (Gal. 5:16), with the result that "ye cannot do the things that ye would" (v. 17). Each must present his own body a "living sacrifice," spiritually speaking, "holy, acceptable unto God, which is [our] reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1-2).

The ultimate of that "offering" of our bodies as a living sacrifice is



Blood (physical)

- nourishes
- cleanses
- feeds and sustains physical life



Blood (symbol of the Word or knowledge of God)

- nourishes
- cleanses
- feeds and sustains spiritual life

that the offering be perfect, without spot or blemish. In this way our individual offering of ourselves becomes a "type" of the sacrifices made under the old law.

No description of the Christian life could be more meaningful. No contrast could be more vivid than that between a state of death and a state of life; or between blood that supports life and blood that is shed.

When blood is used in this same sense, the words *a full surrender* or *a living sacrifice* may be substituted, as in Hebrews 12:4, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving

(Continued on page 25)



Help Yourself to **DEATH!**

The Conquistadors had worn out their welcome in the city of Mexico. The death of their principal hostage, the Emperor Montezuma, had ended the truce, and a full scale revolt was brewing.

To avoid being trapped, Cortes decided to evacuate the city, which was built on an island in a wide lake. The only approach being a long narrow causeway, the retreat was certain to be perilous and could easily become disastrous. The dark rainy night of June 30, 1520, was chosen for the attempt.

Before the departure, Cortes opened to his soldiers the vast stores of gold, silver and jewels, stolen and extorted from the natives. "They are yours for the taking," he told them, "as much as you wish. But remember," he added, "he who travels lightest, travels safest." Their eyes dazzled by the lavish display, the men hesitated between greed and common sense. With many of them avarice prevailed. It was dangerous, they knew. Yet here was all this gold and after all, gold was what they had come for! They would take the risk. With trembling hands they loaded themselves down.

The events which followed have

marked this night in Spanish history as the *triste noche*, the dreadful night. The dreaded assault came and in force. Their only portable bridge for the gaps in the causeway wedged and became useless at the first crossing. Beset from both sides by hordes of natives in canoes, they fought their way foot by bloody foot. Poorly armed but reckless of their lives, the native warriors, by sheer force of numbers, hurled many of the detested invaders from the slippery embankment. And many a luckless Conquistador, covered with armor and burdened with gold, gold once so dazzling and desirable but now an accursed destroying thing, sank to his death in the black water, with the words of his commander ringing in his ears, "Remember, he who travels lightest, travels safest."

In obedience to the Word of the Captain of our salvation, we are fleeing out of Babylon, the city of confusion. The sole avenue of escape is narrow and difficult. The foe is alert, and the perils which lurk in the surrounding darkness and storm are as real as those of that awful night long ago. The temptation may be strong to carry with us some of the treasures of the

doomed city. And our Captain gives us that privilege, if we have no better judgment—but with a solemn warning that they will prove our undoing: "He who travels lightest, travels safest."

In spite of this caution, many who have enlisted in His army have stubbornly burdened themselves with the evils enumerated in Mark 7 and Galatians 5, blindly ignoring the magnitude of the danger. But when they come to the swelling of Jordan, these glittering treasures, however attractive, will suddenly lose all their seeming value and become a millstone around their neck, drowning them in everlasting destruction.

The evils of our nature cannot be dropped in a moment at the last. Now is the time to leave them behind, once and for all, with never a regret. Even the smallest weight of sin is too much. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us," the writer to the Hebrews exhorts, "and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1). Again we read, "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

How much wiser to travel light—and arrive safe! MM

The story has been told of a certain street preacher who, as he was trying to impress his message on his listeners, was interrupted by a heckler's shouting, "You ministers have been preaching the gospel for nearly two thousand years and the world is still not converted." To this the preacher replied, "We've had soap longer than two thousand years, and people still are dirty."

People are not made clean by lectures on soap, or by shelves neatly packed with the product. To be effective, the soap must be applied. Just to have soap available will not cleanse us; only the daily use of it makes us clean. And so it is with the Word of God. We may have it laid before us time after time, but unless we *apply* it, it will never cleanse us from evil.

We have to wash to be clean, scrubbed, cleansed from every evil of the flesh. Jesus Himself told us what is the effective cleansing agent. He says in John 15:3, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Here is the soap, the cleanser that will remove all impurity and filth.

Naturally, moving about in the dusty walks of life, we are unclean, subjected to all the filth and dirt to which human nature is prone; but apply the soap; let the Word of God dwell in the human heart and we will become clean through and through.

The unclean state was common to all of us. We first learned to realize that we must all get the obvious dirt out, the lying, the stealing, the filthy talking, the worldliness of dress and mad pleasure seeking. These we may have long ago flooded away, but how inclined we are to think that the little cracks and crevices are not so important. But the little jestings, the jokings, the foolish talking will not pass by the

The



Must Be Applied

eye of the Great Inspector any more than some greater spot of the flesh.

A current grocery item for the laundry is advertised as being efficient for the removal of more than "the dirt you can see." It activates and removes more subtle soil—"the dirt you can smell." The manufacturers assert that "it washes deep to the heart of every fiber. You get the look of clean...the smell of clean—and it lasts."

Such a purifying cleaners for character has been advertised from ancient times in the Book of God. It purifies the heart of man, the deepest fiber on earth which, the Prophet says, is "deeper than all else" and "utterly corrupt"—that *unseen dirt* that smells to heaven! But if we *apply* this cleansing Word, it will be made clean and sweet, emitting "a sweet smell... well pleasing to God."

Everyone has besetments to overcome, some harder to remove than others, but we must not grow weary of this washing. Apply the soap, the Word of God, and you can cleanse away every evil. Let us rub this "soap" vigorously into our lives, let us use it continually. Remember, it is only by application that we can obtain results.

Are we like the little girl who

went on a vacation trip and gathered up all the little bars of soap from the motels in which she stayed? She thought they were so nice and smelled so sweet that she would bring them home to keep just to smell and look at. That, we say, is the way of the child, but what of us? We who have been called into this way of life surely cannot say that we have not been given an abundant supply of soap—this Word of God. What are we doing with it? Are we applying it, or do we pile it neatly on the shelf for a more convenient season? When we go to the house of God week after week, and Sunday after Sunday, do we just collect striking bits of truth, jotting them down in our notebooks for storage, or do we take it home to apply? Let us grasp them, keep them in our hearts, and carry them out in our daily lives.

Time is quickly speeding away. Now is the time for washing. Let us bend to the work with zeal to accomplish it.

Washing is like praying. We must do it "without ceasing" until the Day of Christ, when we shall stand before Him in garments of what kind? Soiled and spotted—or clean and white?

MM

God's Spiritual Creation

The Man of Genesis Receives Dominion

When at Christ's return the members of (Christ and His saints) the one composite man God has been making have all received the change from mortality to immortality and are all made fully in the image of God, then the next phase of Genesis 1:26 shall be fulfilled: "Let them have dominion."

The promise of future dominion as introduced in Genesis is repeated and amplified numerous times in the Scriptures. In Jesus' parable of the Talents, when depicting the final Day of reckoning, He represents the Judge as saying to a loyal steward, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Matt. 25:21). Here is God's recompense for fidelity: future rulership.

Now who or what will this one perfect, composite man have dominion over? In the allegory of creation, the promise reads: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

The Psalmist paraphrases this promise as follows: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?...Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and what-

soever passeth through the paths of the seas" (Ps. 8:4, 6-8).

Hebrews 2 repeats this same text and confirms the hope that "all things" shall one day be put under the feet (the control, supremacy, authority) of the man made in God's image. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." God will leave nothing that is not put under Him..

God has not planned that the world to come shall be under the direction of the angels. Verses 5-8 tell us: "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; (a little while inferior to the angels, marginal reference). Thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." I am speaking of a future time, says the Divinely inspired author. It is the "world to come whereof we speak."

Dominion Over Beasts

But what are Christ and His saints to have dominion over? Our higher instincts would move us to rebel at the prospect of having dominion over literal sheep, oxen, and beasts of the fields; the birds of the air and fish of the seas. We would dismiss the idea as too inappropriate ever to have emanated from God who is the Source of all

wisdom and knowledge. Artists have conceived this to signify that the wild beasts of the animal kingdom—the lion, the bear, the wolf—shall in the future become docile and submit to the leading of a little child. Again, that Utopian state is represented by a beautiful garden in which a happy child is caressing the king of beasts, now grown meek and mild as a lamb.

But better things are in store for the saints of God than educating lions, or charming snakes, or taming wolves, or exercising supremacy over weasels and woodchucks. How could reasoning men and women be compelled to live the higher life of self-sacrifice with no stronger incentive than a future dominion over the animal creation?

In the Bible, people are called such animals as their natures suggest, whether good or bad; no more expressive means of describing human nature could have been employed. By reason of his intellect, man is a step above the beast. But when he abuses his passions, he sinks to the level of the beast, and—sadly—often below. The stubborn person is described as mulish; the filthy and sensual as swinelike; the brawny, muscular man is said to have the strength of an ox.

We find the same usage in the Scriptures. Men and women of a gentle, yielding disposition are likened to sheep. Others who imitate the craft and subtlety of serpents are thus designated. A brief survey of Bible animals will aid in defining those of Genesis.

FOXES: Jesus said of the sly and wicked Herod. "Go ye, and tell that fox..." (Luke 13:32). The false prophets of Israel were like "foxes in the deserts" (Ezek. 13:4).

WOLVES: Jesus warned against "false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt.

7:15)—fierce, destructive, yet cloaking their hostile intention with a hypocritical, friendly manner. Paul prophesied of "grievous wolves" who would make havoc of the Lord's true flock until the Apostasy should be complete (Acts 20:29-30).

LIONS: The Psalmist was among "lions,...even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword" (Ps. 57:4).

SERPENTS: The scribes and Pharisees were rightly pronounced "ser-

Better things are in store for the saints of God than educating lions, or charming snakes.

pents," a "generation of vipers" (Matt. 3:7).

DOGS: "Dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me" (Ps. 22:16). Spurious teachers are compared to "dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber,...greedy dogs" (Isa. 56:10-11). Inside the gold-paved-street City of God no dogs shall be found, no workers of evil; all are "outside" (Rev. 22:15).

FISH: Jesus called the apostles to be "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19).

SHEEP: Jesus addresses His humble followers as His sheep: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:27-28). Jesus spoke of Himself as "the good

shepherd, and [I] know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10:14).

Jesus' parable in Matthew 25 pictures the separation of the sheep and the goats, or the faithful and unfaithful servants. "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:33).

FLOCKS: "Ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men" (Ezek.

When the man of Genesis is created in the mental, moral and physical likeness of God, he is ready for worldwide dominion.

34:31). God's flocks are His people.

When the man of Genesis is created in the mental, moral and physical likeness of God, he is ready for worldwide dominion over fish, fowl, cattle and creeping things. However, many evil beasts which roam the earth today—men and women possessed of the baser animal instincts—would never come into subjection to Christ and the saints. Such are to be eliminated at the onset, as we read in Ezek. 34:25, "I...will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land." The destruction of the evil beasts is accomplished by means of the Battle of Armageddon. The beasts which remain must be tamed, brought into subjection to Divine law and lose their beastly characteristics, as we read in Hosea 2:18: "And in that day will I make a covenant for them

with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." So rigidly will the law be enforced that no open manifestation of evil will be permitted. Wrangling between individuals and nations, the moral degradation which is the curse of this present age, and every manifestation of the lower animal nature will be outlawed.

Again in Daniel 7:27 is recorded the promise of dominion. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Note the quick transition from "people...of the most High" to "him"—here is the one multitudinous man, the one man made in God's image.

Further, Daniel 7:27 informs us of the duration of this man's dominion: "Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." When this multitudinous man has performed the most stupendous feat of which mortals are capable—that of ruling and governing self—he shall be granted supremacy over the nations of earth forever. And unlike the kings and potentates of today, having first conquered self he shall be competent for the position.

A beautiful description of the future dominion of Christ and the saints over the nations is found in Isaiah 11:4-9. "With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The

wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fating together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The inhabitants of the kingdom, whether formerly known as wolves, lions or bears, will be so transformed in nature as to live peaceably, happily, holily, brother with brother. "And a little child shall lead them," young in the immortal life yet full grown in the Christian graces. This "little child" is the man made in God's image.

Dominion Over the Elements

This one man will also be given dominion over the elements. A revealing glimpse into this dominion was given when our Master lay sleeping in the ship and a great storm arose on the sea of Galilee and it seemed there was danger of the boat capsizing. In haste, the disciples woke Him, saying, "Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm" (Mark 4:38-39). Someday all nature will obey the will of that man under whom all things are put in subjection.

Dominion Over Disease, Accidents and Death

This one man will also have dominion over *disease*. Jesus healed the sick. He cleansed the lepers. He opened the eyes of the blind. Jesus

healed only a few sick people, but in that coming day this one man will heal all the sick; all sickness will be forever abolished (John 14:12). Isaiah revealed the coming of that better day in the following words: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing....And the inhabitant shall not say, 'I am sick'" (Isa. 35:5-6; 33:24).

This one man will also have dominion over *death*. Jesus' own promise is: "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:34-36). And the apostle Paul repeated the promise in I Cor. 15:54-55, "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Even death will be brought into subjection to this one new man.

Today nearly one hundred people pass out of existence each minute. But that will not continue when the "world to come" has arrived. Revelation 21:4 pictures that blissful day when the conquering Christ shall have complete dominion in the following beautiful words: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Moreover, the one new man shall have dominion over the elements that produce *accidents*.

Psalm 91 gives us a word picture of the time when there will be no accidents: "Because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone" (vs. 9-12).

In Isaiah 65, the Prophet carries us down to the time when the conquering Christ shall have dominion over the mortal nations of the earth, and *premature old age* will be a thing unknown: "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old...And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them....and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (vs. 20-22).

This one man to whom dominion will be given will also be able to *banish sin and all sinners* from the earth. The words of Isaiah the prophet are forthright and clear: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isa. 60:12). And again: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh....to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it" (Isa. 13:9). And the Revelator, speaking of the heavenly city that shall one day be established on the earth, said, "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:26-27). Sin will be ban-

ished to the point foreseen by the prophet Zephaniah: "The Lord...the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zeph. 3:15).

Furthermore, this one man is promised *dominion over other men*. There is no feature that appeals more strongly to human beings than personal power, power over others. The love of money is deeply embedded, but often the power that money brings is the factor that appeals more than the actual pride of possession. God sanctions this feature of power over others when

***By virtue of a
righteous life we can
ascend from the dust
of mortality to the
heights of power and
dominion.***

it is properly controlled and administered. In fact, it is one of the choicest promises held out to the overcomer. Consider Jesus' own words: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron...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. 2:26-27; 3:21).

The first phase of this power wielded by this one new man who is to have dominion will be during the Millennial Age. During this thousand years of peace and tranquility God will still be taking out

(Continued on page 26)



Who's Watching?

Characters:

Bruce Singer Youth, 11 years old
Mrs. Singer Mother

Setting:

Mother is reading in the living room. Bruce rushes in waving a note in his hand.

BRUCE: Look, Mother! Look what I found in our mailbox.

MOTHER: Why, it's too early for the mailman. What is it, Bruce?

BRUCE: It's a letter to *me*—Bruce Singer. I must see who it's from. (tears open the letter). Why, it's from Jimmie Parker.

MOTHER: That's nice—what does he say?

BRUCE: There's a picture, too. The letter says: Dear Bruce. I made this just for you 'cause I like you. It's me and you going fishing. Mike and Bill said all big boys are mean. I told them no, because you aren't. You fixed my bike and showed me your fishing pole. I'm going to play a trombone like you when I get bigger. I watch you every Sunday morning in church. I don't have a big brother, but if I did, I want one just like you. Jimmie. (pause) Why, I never dreamed Jimmie has been watching me!

MOTHER: (smiling) Bruce, you never know *who* may be watching you!

BRUCE: Mother, you have no idea how strange this makes me feel. I've been friendly to Jimmie just because he lives next door and because he is alone so much.

MOTHER: That little fellow has just paid you a compliment, Bruce. But with that compliment comes a big responsibility. Now that you know that little Jimmie likes you and is watching you, you want to be sure you are doing only the things that you want to see *him* do.

BRUCE: You're *right*, Mom. And here's the picture he drew... (holds up picture and laughs) Look, Mom. This must be Jimmie with the *big* fish and the big smile. And this must be me holding the fishing rod—it's big enough to catch a... (pause). Mother, do you suppose he is trying to tell me something?

MOTHER: (laughing) It does look like it.

BRUCE: (musing) You know, Mom, Jimmie is alone so much ... his father is away for so long at a time and his mother is so busy with the two younger children. I have an idea! Do you suppose we could take Jimmie with us on one of our camping trips? Maybe to the Twin Lakes...?

MOTHER: That might be a good idea, but we will want to talk to your father first.

BRUCE: I can show Jimmie how to row a boat, find his way in the woods, and maybe Dad can tell us some of those good Bible stories like he did last year...about Paul and the shipwreck, or Daniel and his three friends. Dad really makes them come alive!

MOTHER: I'm sure Jimmie would like that—and the rest of us, too!

BRUCE: Let's talk to Dad tonight. (pause) ...But I can't get over it...Jimmie has been watching me all this time, and I never even knew it. I wonder what he has seen me do... If I had only known, I would have been watching what I do. If I had only known... I don't want to disappoint him like Larry disappointed me!

MOTHER: Larry?

BRUCE: Yes, I thought Larry had it all—he was friendly, and smart, and big and strong. I wanted to be just like him—until he let me down. I found out he was more interested in being popular than in being fair and right. I don't want Jimmie to find out *I'm* not what he thinks I am.

MOTHER: That's all up to *you*, Son.

BRUCE: If a fellow is going to follow me, I'm going to give him a good example to follow. The very best. All the way through.

MOTHER: If you follow Christ and Paul, you can do no better than that. We will help you all we can. You never know who is watching you.

BRUCE: You mean the angels ?

MOTHER: Yes, (smiling) the angels *are* watching. But I was thinking of your friends, your brother and sister, or anybody else—we never know who we are influencing. None of us live just to ourselves, you know.

BRUCE: (looking out window) Jimmy's outside now with his wagon. Mom, I think I'll go out and give him a ride. Is it all right?

MOTHER: That's a good idea.

BRUCE: I'll give him the best ride he has ever had! MM

Blood: Miracle of Life

(Continued from page 17)

against sin," meaning, You have not yet fully surrendered yourselves.

Jesus Himself spoke of His own "blood" in this highly symbolic and spiritual sense at His last supper with the disciples. These are His words: "This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye... in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:25). In other words, This cup is a symbol of the new testament or covenant, which I am ratifying by my death. It is a covenant of death, a covenant of total self-sacrifice. I have met the requirements of this covenant; I have fulfilled it by My death, and you must do the same. You too must die. You too must surrender your lifeblood, even as I have. It is the terms of the covenant.

The apostle Paul captured the full meaning of Jesus' self-sacrifice as he repeated His words to the Corinthian brethren: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?...After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 10:16; 11:25). Notice the command: "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:25-26).

Let us feel a new sense of gratitude to God for the life that is in our blood, and now consecrate every drop of our spiritual life blood to Him, as did Christ. Then one day we shall experience the change to immortality, the life that is better than flesh and blood, and receive the crown incorruptible.

MM

Letters

On the Way!

I am on the Gospel Highway,
Here my feet are always free.
Though the way may be called "narrow,"
It is wide enough for me!
It was wide enough for Daniel,
And for David in his day.
I am glad that I can follow
In the good old fashioned way.

Many friends have gone before me,
Who have laid their armor down,
Like Paul, the dauntless soldier,
They are waiting for their crown.
On their road they fought their battles,
Shouting victory day by day;
Shall we overcome and join them,
In that glad Eternal Day?

— Contributed by Dorman Tulk, Newfoundland

Undistractable!

I often wonder what we would do without God's Word—all those rich treasures of truth to comfort us and strengthen our faith that we may have a sure hope of a glorious future with no more physical pain. What a wonderful prospect to anticipate and work for!

There certainly are many seemingly clever and interesting things which could distract us from our spiritual study and meditation if we allow them to, but what, indeed, can they offer compared with what God is offering? So may we give our very best to Him, which truly can never be too much, and not be negligent in our commitment, especially now, when there is so much confusion and wickedness in the world. Everything about us is pointing to the nearness of the great Day of the Lord, which hastens greatly, and there is much need for us to be preparing ourselves to be ready for the coming of Elijah.

Great Britain

R. B.

Appreciative

By accident I chanced upon a copy of *Megiddo Message*.

I would like to subscribe to this magazine. I have announced this to others and do hope many more will subscribe to such a magazine which is timely for everyone living today.

I will eagerly look forward to receiving it.

May God continue His blessings upon all who are engaged in this apostolate and please continue in trying to spread the word of God to everyone.

Pennsylvania

M. G.

Great Encouragement

You are a great blessing to us. The magazine *Megiddo Message* is wonderful spiritual food and a great encouragement to us on the field and in the ripe vineyards that God has called us to here in Kenya and Uganda. Thank you for publishing the truth and sending it to us.

Kenya, East Africa

J. & D. G.

A Knitting Expedition

Change is a challenge—we are on a knitting expedition knitting our hearts together in love. What wonderful knitting to do, being knit to a "full assurance of understanding."

If we could realize that "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase" (I Cor. 3:7), there would be no such thing as carnality in our midst. None would be jealous of the other. The one that plants, the one that waters, both work for God, and God will give the increase and will reward both for what they have done. He is always just.

These are the things that we should constantly, seriously consider, to see that we are preparing for light and glory everlasting.

Iowa

B. C.

material with which to fill the earth with His glory. He will be taking out the great body of people who will form the populace of His future Kingdom, hence the need for the rod of iron—not a rod of iron in the sense that it will be cruel, or even harsh, but the law will be unbreakable. Only by the administration of such laws could a Utopian state of affairs be realized.

Psalm 72 gives us a preview of Christ's benign reign over the blest inhabitants of earth: "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth... Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (vs. 7-8; 11).

With Christ's return to earth, and the consummation of the greatest upheaval ever to visit this planet, the time of trouble such as has never been (Dan. 12:1), man's outmoded forms of government will give way to a new and better order and the thousand-year day of peace will be ushered in. During the earlier years of this thousand-year period there will be many die-hards from the old order who during the world-embracing battle of Armageddon merely submitted to save their lives, while at heart they were still rebels against authority. The "rod of iron" will be needed to hold this element in check. But as the centuries quickly pass, and as the populace are surrounded by blessings such as human beings never before dreamed of, as they become further removed from the "bad old days" (such as we now are experiencing), an ever expanding proportion will learn to count their blessings and will the more willingly comply with the just and beneficent laws that will emanate from Jerusalem, then the capitol city of the whole earth.

Century after century of that Golden Age will slip by, with joy ever increasing and tranquillity abounding. One century ... two centuries ... five centuries ... eight centuries ... nine centuries ... and with the completion of the tenth century the thousand-year day will be spent. Only a few more vital steps, and God's long-revealed plan to fill the earth with His glory will be complete. The second resurrection will be one of these steps, the resurrection of all who have lived during the thousand year period, the "rest of the dead" of Rev. 20:5.

The great King will inaugurate a plan whereby wicked men and women can reveal their identity. The scum will come to the surface, those who have proved themselves unfit for perpetuation in God's eternal kingdom will manifest themselves, and with one mighty stroke of Divine judgments they will be swept from the scene, leaving the earth peaceful and serene, only the righteous remaining. Then the "great number which no man can number who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood (or Word) of the Lamb," will be changed from mortality to immortality, and death, man's ancient and unconquerable foe, will be "swallowed up in victory." The man of Genesis will have had all things placed in subjection under his feet.

What immeasurable exaltation is set before us poor creatures of clay! What loftiness of position to aspire to! What heights of supremacy to waken and stir every noble impulse within the believer's breast! By virtue of a righteous life we can ascend from the dust of mortality to the heights of power, glory, might, and dominion in a world without end. The promise is as old as the plan of God, as certain as His very existence.

(To Be Continued Next Issue)

Criticism: Always A Blessing

(Continued from page 2)

about character? Is he or she free from jealous feelings? If the answer to any of these questions is unclear, we should not take the criticism too seriously. On the other hand, let us not lose any opportunity to learn something about ourselves, perhaps something we had not realized before, something that may well be for us the way to life. If a perfect moral character is our high goal, our critic may be our best friend.

Lastly, we should weigh carefully our attitude toward our critic, to be sure that it is one of appreciation, gratitude, and kindness. And always we must *return good for evil*. Even if our critic has been harsh and caustic, we must be gentle. If our critic has been angry, we must be calm. If our critic has been bitter, we must reflect no bitterness or enmity toward him, not even in our thoughts. Whatever he or she says, we must remain in full control of our emotions.

The best answer for harsh criticism is a life above reproach, a life that shows Christian maturity and the highest qualities of godliness.

There is just no way criticism can harm us, unless we allow it. Even the harshest criticism need not disturb us. If it is not true, we can simply forget it, and practice that perfect inner peace that nothing can offend. If there is any truth in it, let us examine it closely, extract any good that we can, and discard the rest—and keep traveling full speed up the highway of holiness.

In this way, criticism can never be anything less than a blessing. MM

Lines to Live By

Hitherto the Lord hath helped us,
Guiding, loving all the way;
Henceforth let us trust His promise:
Grace sufficient for each day.

*One who builds walls instead of bridges
lives a lonely life.*

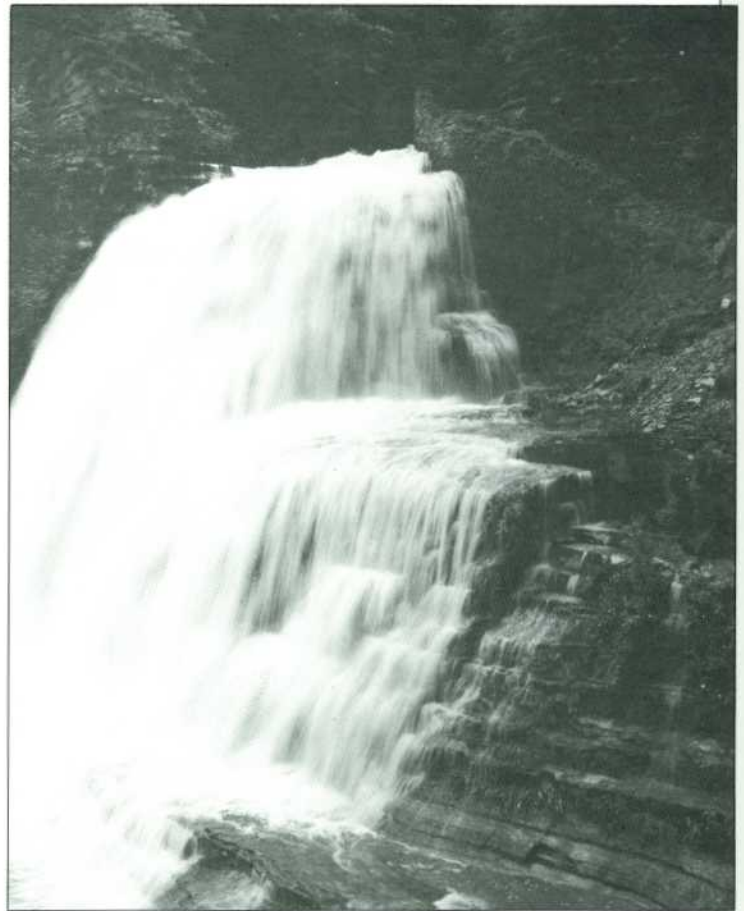
No Christian need have a Gethsemane
without a comforting angel.

Meditation is the soul's perspective glass.

We can indulge ourselves in the pleasure
of the moment; or we can renounce it for
the sake of obeying the voice of God, for
the sake of being true to the high motives
of our heavenly calling. The choice is
ours.

*If you do not long for His Kingdom, do
not pray for it. But if you do pray for it,
you must do more—you must work for it.*

Don't use a gallon of words to express a
spoonful of thought.




If God requires anything of us, we have no right to draw back under the pretext that we are liable to commit some fault in our obedience. It is better to obey imperfectly than not to obey at all. Perhaps you know you ought to rebuke someone dependent on you, but you are silent for fear of giving way to anger;—or you avoid certain persons because they make you cross and impatient. Set to work and change yourself. Get your will under control, and be master of your temperament. Concentrate on keeping a steady mind to do right, go wherever duty calls you, and believe firmly that God will strengthen you in your endeavor.

Giving Ourselves

Scripture says that he who rules his own spirit is better than he who takes a city. Self-discipline is the art of managing yourself and your life. As a Christian you know that your life belongs to Christ: your talents, your possessions, your heart. But how about your time?

We are stewards of time as well as money. Even though we claim to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, we may be robbing it because of the poor use we are making of our time. We need a new manager! And Jesus Christ is willing to be that manager. To be His disciple means to follow the discipline of Christ, who could say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4).



*When freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her banner in the air,
She tore the azure robe of night
And set the stars of glory there.*

*She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldrick of the skies
And striped its pure celestial white
With streakings of the morning light.*

*That noble ensign blazed the way
To purer, higher liberty:
The torch of Truth whose shining ray
Lights up the path toward the Day*

*When matchless freedom bathes the land
And sons of God shall know no end
Of life or joy; but all shall be
Clothed in immortality.*