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“THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME”

As each year comes around, the Lord's people have the privilege of gathering together to celebrate the memorial of the death of Jesus, their Saviour. It is profitable at such times to recall the solemn occasion when our Lord Himself instituted the simple way in which all who trust implicitly in His sacrifice for their salvation from sin may remember that sacrifice, given on their behalf but in God's due time to benefit all mankind.

This is evidently the reason why it is God's will for His people to commemorate the death of Jesus, for it is essential that we always keep before our minds the necessity for Jesus' death and the fact that, only because of His death, we are now privileged to enjoy the hope of life through Him. Let us go briefly back to the typical arrangement that the Israelites were instructed to carry out in relation to the Passover; these instructions are recorded in Exodus 12.

The record tells us how the nation of Israel was delivered from the bondage of Egypt and particularly about the passing over of the firstborns of Israel during the plague of death which came upon Egypt, and which, as the last of the plagues, finally compelled Pharaoh to release the Israelites from compulsory servitude. For the Israelites to be spared from this plague of death, they were instructed to take a lamb for a sacrifice and sprinkle the blood upon the doorposts and lintels of their houses, so that their houses would be “passed over” on that night.

“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; you shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats; and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening, and they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.”
(Exodus 12:5-7)

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of

Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgement: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and you shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” (Exodus 12:12-14)

The two points that attract our attention here are first, the “lamb”, and second, the “firstborns”. The lamb was to be a male of the first year, without blemish, and it was to be killed on the 14th of Nisan. The Israelites were commanded to celebrate this memorial of the passover each year and it was for this purpose that the Lord and His disciples assembled in the upper room on that day, as recorded in the New Testament gospel accounts.

It was on this day (14th Nisan) that Jesus was crucified, thus identifying Him as the antitype of the lamb, without blemish, that was slain. John the Baptist who heralded the presence of our Lord at His first advent said of Jesus, *“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”* John 1:29 The apostle Paul also speaks of Jesus as the Lamb of God in 1 Cor. 5:7,8 - *“For even Christ our passover (our passover lamb) is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”*

We note from Exodus 12:12 that only the firstborns were in danger of death, but the deliverance of all the Israelites was dependent upon their salvation. This was also typical of the “church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven” of whom we read in Hebrews 12:23. It is the church of the firstborn alone that is being spared (passed over) during this gospel age. These have the blood of the Lamb – Jesus sprinkled not on the doorposts of their houses but upon their hearts, as we read in Hebrews 10:22 – *“Let us draw near with a true*

heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

"Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." *1 Peter 1:18,19.* So, indeed, as we come together on these memorial occasions, we look unto Jesus as the "Lamb of God". In Exodus 12, we noted that the lamb must be totally without blemish; so Jesus was the perfect One, "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

Jesus further declared that no man took His life from Him, but He laid it down Himself, that is, He voluntarily gave his life in accordance with the Father's will. "*No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received from my Father.*" *John 10:18.* Again the Psalmist speaking prophetically of our Lord declares – "*Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea thy law is within my heart.*" *Psalm 40:7,8.*

With this in mind, we rejoice to think of the great love of our Lord in giving His life so that we can, during this present age, have life through His sacrifice. We rejoice also in the so great love of the Father who gave His only-begotten Son to be our Redeemer, and we know in God's due time this love will reach out to all mankind. "*There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*" *1 Timothy 2:5,6.*

An account of the institution by Jesus of the memorial of His death is given in Matthew 26; in verse 26 we read – "*As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.*" Evidently, when the passover supper was over, Jesus took some of the unleavened bread that was left and instituted a new memorial, a memorial that was to be kept in remembrance of Him. He was the antitypical Lamb that had been chosen three and a half years earlier to fulfil the picture seen in Exodus 12.

So when Jesus took bread and said, "Take, eat, this is my body" He meant that it represented His body. This pure and unfermented bread represented our Lord's sinless flesh; leaven being a type or picture of sin was expressly forbidden to be used at the Passover season. Here it is good to read from John 6 -

"*The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that*

believeth on me shall never thirst." Verses 33-35.

The Matthew account of the institution of the memorial of His death continues - "*And He (Jesus) took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.*" *Matt. 26:27.* The fruit of the vine, of which we partake, represents our Saviour's life given for us, His human life, His soul poured out unto death on our behalf and of our recognition of His great sacrifice for us. By faith in that sacrifice, we are justified in the sight of our Father in heaven.

In 1 Cor. 10:16,17 the apostle Paul presents an additional significance to the taking of the emblems of bread and wine. "*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? For we being many are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.*" The Diaglott translation renders it – "*Is it not a participation of the blood of the Anointed One... is it not a participation of the body of the Anointed One?*"

This illustrates the great grace of God, that He is willing to receive us and make us joint-heirs with our Lord and Saviour if we have His spirit. That spirit which actuated Jesus was one of entire devotion to His Father's will, even unto death, as we read in Hebrews 10:7 – "*Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God.*" The same spirit must be in all those whom the Father accepts as members of the Body of Christ.

As the apostle indicates, when we break this bread together as a memorial, not only do we symbolise our Lord's broken body but in a wider sense the breaking or the laying down of the lives of the members of the Church. The cup of the fruit of the vine symbolises the sacrificial life of Jesus, but it also teaches us that in becoming His disciples we accept His invitation to share His cup. Paul in Romans 12:1 again presents the thought in different words – "*I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service.*"

As we read again the account of the last hours of our Lord's life, it makes us sad to think of the ignominy and shame to which He was subjected but let us also remember that it was for the joy set before Him that our Lord endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of God. This joy is foretold in Jesus' words in Matt. 26:29, where we read – *I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*" Let us thank the Lord for this great hope; may it be an inspiration to each of us to serve the Lord acceptably and partake of the cup of joy with Him in the kingdom. Amen. (JBH)

“What shall I Render unto the Lord?”

“What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord. Now in the presence of all His people.” (Psalm 116:12-14)

David wondered how to express his gratitude for all that God had given to him: “What shall I render unto the Lord?” – not as if he thought he could render (i.e. repay) anything proportional or as a valuable consideration for what he had received, but he desired to render something acceptable, something that God would be pleased with as the acknowledgment of a grateful servant of God. He asks God: “What shall I render?”

We also, having received many benefits from God, should be concerned to enquire, “What shall we render”? We like David can no more pretend to give recompense to God than we can to merit any favour from him. David continues in verse 17 to say. “I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.” His prayer asks for the Lord’s deliverance, acknowledges his love and duty towards his Creator. How little did the Psalmist realise, in writing these words, that hundreds of years later they would find an even greater fulfilment in the life of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Today they have a very important message for all the members of the church as they seek to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

“What shall I render unto the Lord?” Let us look to the Bible to see what others have rendered to God. First of all let us look to Christ and the example that He set. In rendering unto the Lord, Jesus gave up a position far greater than any other could occupy. We read in Phil. 2:5 and then from 7-8, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who... made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Jesus entered this world in the humblest of circumstances as Luke tells us in Luke 2: 7 “And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn”. In John’s gospel 1:14 we are told “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

During his ministry He compared His situation to that of the animals, saying, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.” We are told in Heb. 12:2 that Jesus, “for the joy that

was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Jesus was completely dedicated to doing God’s will regardless of the cost to Himself. Paul in his letter to the Hebrews gives us a snapshot of our Lord’s life – “God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Heb 1:2,3) So in rendering unto the Lord, Jesus laid aside His former glory and honour, and became a perfect human being, that He might redeem us all. He gave all He had in willing service to the Heavenly Father, who, after His resurrection, rewarded Him with glory that far excelled that which He formerly possessed.

Another example is Paul the Apostle, who gave up much from this world’s standpoint to follow Christ; as he tells us in Phil. 3:5-8 “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” Paul is an interesting example, since before his conversion, he felt that he was doing the will of God in persecuting the Christians, whom he felt were going against God, and it was not until Jesus revealed Himself to Paul that he realised the error of his ways. We too must be sure that we are listening and watching so that we really follow what God wants from us.

Paul suffered many persecutions, afflictions and imprisonments which he endured throughout his Christian walk, as he recounts in 2 Cor 11:25-27 “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger

and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness". However after all these sufferings he was so sure of his Heavenly Father that he could say at last in 2 Tim 4:7 and 8, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Let us ask ourselves the question, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" The answer is given in the New Testament in Rom. 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Before we look to what we can render unto the Lord, we should stop and ask ourselves, what do we have that we can render unto God? King David speaking before all the congregation of Israel put it beautifully saying "Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee" (1 Chr 29:11-14) We only have what the Lord has given us in the first place to gratefully offer to Him. How humbling a thought that is to the Children of God.

"For all his benefits toward me" – the Psalmist lists these benefits in the beginning of Psalm 116: "I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell took hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee deliver my soul." (V1-4) The Psalmist at the time of writing would not have realised that Christ had to come into the world first before this could come about, as we are told in Heb 2:9 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man".

But this is only part of what God has in store for us following on redemption; the benefits bestowed on us are manifold, reaching a pinnacle in the

expression of 1 John 3:1-2 "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as he is." But our own responsibility in the matter is shown in the following verse. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure".

Verse 13 of The Psalm continues "I will take the cup of salvation". What does this mean to us? "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation", said faithful Simeon as he held the infant Jesus in his arms. Jesus became the Captain of our salvation only through suffering and death. He became the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). Peter says, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold", I Peter 1: 18,19 "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." But in order for us to be able to take the cup of salvation provided, the eyes of our understanding must be enlightened; we must come to know what is the hope of our calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance in the saints, as suggested in Eph. 1:18 We must go on to believe the exceeding greatness of His power, remembering that the greatest of all miracles was the raising of Christ from the dead, and His being set down at the right hand of God. We are promised that, if faithful, we are to share in the First Resurrection.

In taking the cup of salvation, we have the honour to call upon the name of the Lord. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom 5:1-2). Thereafter we have the Lord on our side. He will never leave us nor forsake us; we are engraved upon the palms of His hands. He gives His angels charge over us, to keep us in all our ways. What a beautiful picture of our Heavenly Father's watch care over us.

Just as Jesus rendered to the Lord all He had, so must we. The early disciples understood Him when He said, "Take up thy cross and follow Me." We have so little, anyway, to give up; nothing at all of value to God, Who owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and the entire sum of the gold and silver and precious stones this earth produces. We have nothing to give which could enhance His magnificence; and yet, if we give our wills to Him, the end result will be to His honour and praise and glory. He has given us the means of praising Him, simply by giving up, letting go, laying down, the negative things.

Of ourselves we have nothing to offer, but because of His redemptive work on our behalf, our Father accepts our heart intentions as if they were perfect. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out", we read in 1 Tim 6:7 No earthly possessions will enhance our position in the world to come. No worldly honours will carry over into the next age. Paul gave good advice to Timothy in I Tim. 6: 17-19 "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

Those who are young in years should not imagine that on this account they have nothing to render unto the Lord. Remember that Jesus was only twelve years of age when He said, "I must be about my Father's business." There are many examples in both the Old and New Testaments of individuals being called to God's service in their youth. We might think of Samuel, who served the Lord in a special sense from his early childhood; of David, anointed to be King while quite young. Jeremiah was commissioned to deliver the Lord's messages while a young man, and Daniel, who became a great statesman as well as a prophet beloved of the Lord, had the honour of delivering the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream while in his very early twenties. Some years before that he had made a decided stand in refusing to eat meat from the king's table. Timothy was taking an active part in establishing the early church in his young manhood, so that Paul said to him, "Let no man despise thy youth."

So for all, either young or older, who have a mind to serve the Lord, let them "take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord." He will surely hear their prayers for His help and guidance. We are living today in "a grand and awful time", when the powers of darkness are shortly to be destroyed forever. The Lord has great things indeed in store for all, young and old, who desire to serve Him. (RC:00)

MEMORIAL DATE – According to our usual reckoning, the time for the observance of the Memorial of our Lord's death will this year be the evening of Tuesday 18 April 2000.

**"WHAT SHALL I RENDER
UNTO THE LORD?"**
(Psa 116:12-14)

What shall I render Lord to thee
For all thy benefits toward me?
For life and earthly good
For raiment, shelter, daily food;
For light and truth, peace and love,
For heavenly wisdom from above?
How great thy bounties unto me!
What have I, that is not from thee?

For all these benefits towards me,
What shall I render, Lord to thee?
The cup thy hand of love hath poured,
I'll humbly take, most gracious Lord,
And call upon Thy holy name
To help me thy great plan proclaim;
I'll spend my days in ceaseless praise,
And tell abroad thy wondrous ways!

"Salvation's Cup" – of suffering, too –
Of suffering with God's chosen few,
Dear Lord, I'll drink of this Thy cup,
And smiling through my tears look up –
A mingled cup of grief and joy,
Of blessedness without alloy,
Of love and friendship divine,
A foretaste of Kingdom wine.

That all dear Lord, may know and see
Thy countless benefits toward me,
Before thy congregation now
I'll pay my consecrated vow;
And in Thy strength, supplied each day,
I'll strive to walk the narrow way
That leads to rest and God and Thee
And blissful immortality.

(Gertrude W. Seibert)

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The Mighty Hand of God

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time", 1 Pet. 5:6

The hand is one of the most remarkable members of our body. Its capacity ranges from actions requiring the most highly trained skill imaginable, down to the most menial of tasks, from the carrying through of delicate operations upon the human body, and the performance of scientific experiments, to the playing of musical instruments in a way that exhibits brilliance in the use of both fingers and hands.

Hence the hand is often used as a symbol of power or ability to perform. To show one's hand has therefore come to mean the manifestation of a person's skill or power in a certain way. The hand is also used in the Scriptures as a symbol of power to perform in many directions.

In harmony with this, we read of God's hand being active in the works of creation. Isa.45:12 says, – "I have made the earth and created man upon it. I, even my hands have stretched out the heavens and all their host have I commanded." The whole creation is His care; Jehovah our God is the great Emperor of the whole universe, and His wisdom, power, goodness and benevolence are abundantly equal to all the responsibilities of so exalted an office. The human mind staggers in its efforts to comprehend the mental resources of a Being who is able to assume and to bear such responsibility.

Think for a moment of the memory that never fails, the judgment that never errs, of the wisdom that plans for eternity, without the possibility of failure, and that times His plans with unerring precision for the ages to come; of the power and skill which can harness even every opposing element, animate and inanimate, and make them all work together for the accomplishment of His grand designs, whose eye never sleeps, whose ear is ever open and who is ever mindful of all the necessities, and active in all the interests of His broad domains.

Well has the Psalmist said in considering the immensity of God's hand over all His works, – "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it", Psa. 139:6. In view of this, we have read of the Lord's powerful hand-working for His typical people Israel and His gracious providences on their behalf. These things, Paul tells us, have been recorded for our admonition on whom the ends of the ages have come, 1 Cor.10:11. And if God's hand did so much for them. His typical people, how much more will His hand be manifested to assist those who have entered into a covenant of sacrifice to follow in the steps of Jesus, in the hope of sharing with Him and assisting in the great work of His coming king-

dom? Hence, we as spiritual Israel can especially apply to ourselves the words of the Psalmist, – "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation, and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great." (Psalm 18:35)

In Jesus we have the perfect example of humbling ourselves under God's mighty hand. He left His Father's rich estate and humbled Himself in human form, He humbled Himself still further and became obedient even unto the death of the cross. And it was because of His humbling Himself in this way that God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, Phil. 2:8,9. To have a humble mind and heart, we must therefore keep the lifeline of communion with God continually open and certainly in prayer there are reservoirs of power beyond our capacity of reasoning. James wrote that the effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much, James 5:16. Prayer is the expression of our soul, our spirit, our very being; through prayer we claim the promises of God, and they become veritable realities in our lives.

All of God's consecrated people who possess and properly exercise true humbleness, are used by Him as channels of grace and peace to others. Imbued with His love and peace they are shining lights wherever they go in this dark world of sin. Where there is wrong, these will reflect and demonstrate the spirit of forgiveness and tolerance. Where there is error, they endeavour to present truth with grace and humbleness. Where there is despair, they will reflect confidence and hope. In humbling ourselves we would seek to comfort rather than be comforted. These will try to understand others rather than be understood by them; they will forget self, that they may be remembered and found in Christ. They will delight in forgiving, knowing the joy of being forgiven by their Heavenly Father.

Thus in the doing of these things, we find we are doing our Father's will, and keeping our Master's words when He said, "This is my commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you", John 15:12. God has also promised to dwell with those whose hearts are in this humble condition. He says in Isa.57:15, – "Thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite one." This, then, tells us that God also has a humble spirit to descend to dwell with those

whose hearts have been so prepared to receive Him, whose chief desire is to know and to do His will. He dwells with us through His spirit, His Word helping to revive us when we become faint and weary by the way, for guiding us and lifting us up are His powerful everlasting hands.

The Psalmist tells us to "commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him", Psa. 37:5-7. We must not be cast down nor allow our faith to falter when the test of patient endurance is applied, while the outward peace and quietness which we crave tarry long. Outward peace and calm are not always the conditions best suited to our needs as new creatures, and we would not desire conditions in which the precious fruits of the spirit would not grow and develop in us. "Therefore, beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rather rejoice", 1 Pet.4:12. Because whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, Heb.12:6. Thus the Lord is chipping away the dross and the things not in accord with His purpose for us, and with His skilful hands will make us unto the delineations of our Head and Master, the perfect top stone in the temple of our God. Our Heavenly Father then will with every testing, if it becomes too great for us, provide a way of escape. So that when we find ourselves in difficulty we are to say, "The Heavenly Father is permitting this trial and the Lord Jesus will help me", so we can rejoice that we will not be allowed to be overthrown, for He has promised

that all things shall work out for our good because we seek to know Him more and to do His will. Therefore, however dark the way may become, however severe the storm my rage about us, our Father's hands are always there to console and to lift us up again, so that we are never in despair, though cast down for a while. As He assures us through Psa.91:11, – "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

Precious indeed are the Lord's promises to us that He will accomplish all that He has said in His Word, but it is necessary to have faith along every line. Without faith, we would not have the courage to go on, and if we did not have faith in His ability to help us in all our hours of need, where would be the source of our help? As Paul says in 1 Thes.5: 24, – "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." A son humbles himself under his father's hand when he renders obedience to his father's wishes, even when he might feel at times this curtailed his liberties in certain directions, and limited him in many of his natural desires. Let our attitude be the same toward our Heavenly Father, whatever the cost, whatever the sacrifice, for in doing this we shall be following our Redeemer, who continually humbled Himself under His Father's hand, becoming obedient even unto the death of the cross. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." In thus following Jesus, we shall find that our Heavenly Father's mighty hand continually upholds and sustains us, doing for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. – Eph.3:20. (JBH)

"Let Patience have her Perfect Work"

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." —Jas. 1:4.

The term "patience" carries with it the thought of meek, uncomplaining endurance of suffering with humble resignation and perseverance. It is a trait which indicates strength and self-discipline. It cannot be predicated of inexperienced persons, but only of characters which have been subjected to trials of affliction, pain or loss; and it always shines brightest when manifested under the glowing heat of severe affliction. This trait takes a very prominent place in the galaxy of Christian virtues; for without it the heart would grow faint, the head weary; and the steps would soon falter along the narrow way in which the church is called to walk. "In your patience possess ye your souls," said the Master, implying the danger of losing our souls, our existence, if we fail to cultivate this grace which is so very necessary to our continuance in well doing.

The Apostle James does not overstate the matter

when he intimates that the perfect work of patience will make its subjects perfect and entire, wanting nothing; for the Apostle Paul assures us that God, who has begun the good work of developing character in us, will continue to perform it until the crowning day – the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6). All His children will be subjected to just such discipline as they need for the correction of faults, the implanting and developing of virtues, and for their training and establishment in righteousness, so that they cannot be moved. "If ye be without chastisement [discipline and correction], whereof all [true sons of God] are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye [patiently] endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" – Heb. 12:7.

But how can we let patience have her perfect work? Just by meekly doing the best we can each day, and doing it cheerfully and well; making the best of every thing and going forward daily with true Christian fortitude to act the noble part in every emergency of affliction, pain or loss. Today's trial may be a light one, perhaps almost imperceptible; or today may be one of the sunny days in which God bids our hearts rejoice in his overflowing bounty. Tomorrow may bring its cares and its petty vexations that irritate and annoy. Another tomorrow may witness the clouds gather above our heads, and as the days follow each other the clouds may grow darker and darker until we are forcibly reminded of that strong figure of the Psalmist—"I walk through *the valley of the shadow of death*." Yet never will the valley grow so dark that the patient, trusting one cannot triumphantly exclaim, "*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou [my Lord] art with me: thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.*" Yes, there is comfort in the "rod" (of chastisement), as well as in the "staff" (of providential care); for both are designed for our ultimate profiting.

The Apostle Paul tells us plainly that tribulation is necessary for the development of patience—"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope." (Rom. 5:3, 4) Consider how your own experience has verified this, you who have been for some time under the Lord's special care and leading. How much richer you are for all the lessons of experience, and for the patience that experience has developed in you! Although, like the Apostle, you can say that "no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11) In the exercise of patience the lessons of experience have made you stronger. They have increased your faith and drawn you into closer communion and fellowship with the Lord. They have made you feel better acquainted with and to realize more and more His personal interest in you and His care and love for you. And this in turn has awakened a deeper sense of gratitude and an increasing zeal to manifest that gratitude to Him. This also deepens the sense of fellowship with God, and gives confidence to the hope of final and full acceptance with Him as a son and heir, worthy through Christ.

The Apostle James urges that we take the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction and of patience. Then he cites the example of Job and the manifest end or purpose of the Lord in permitting him to be so sorely tried: how the Lord was really very pitiful and of tender mercy, although the pity and mercy were not manifest except to the confiding faith that said, "Though He slay me, yet will I

trust in Him" — until the long and painful discipline had yielded the peaceable fruits and the subsequent rewards of righteousness.

There is little virtue in the patience that endures merely from motives of worldly policy, though even that often has much advantage in it. Men in business dealings with fellowmen well know that an impetuous, turbulent disposition is greatly to their disadvantage, while patient consideration, temperance in judgment, and good self-control are of immense value, even from a worldly, business standpoint. But the patience that is begotten of deep-rooted christian principle is the kind that will endure all trials and shine the brighter for every affliction through which it may pass.

Job, the servant of God, was accused of selfish policy-motives for his remarkable patience and faithfulness; and it was boldly affirmed that if he were tried by adversity his mean motives would be manifest—that he would curse God to his face. But God knew better; and it was in Job's defence that He permitted him to be tried to the utmost that the loyalty of his heart might be manifest. Some of his poor comforters viewed Job's afflictions only in the light of chastisements, failing utterly to comprehend the divine purpose, and this only added stings to his afflictions; but through them all the Lord brought His servant and most fully vindicated Him in the eyes of all the people.

The Apostle Paul (Heb. 11) calls up a long list of patient, faithful ones who endured cruel mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment, who were stoned, sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, who wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; who wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. All this they endured patiently for righteousness' sake, looking by faith to God for the reward of their patience and faithfulness in His own good time. Then again, says the Apostle (Heb. 12:3), "Consider Him [Christ] that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Yes, consider Him, "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." He left us an example that we should follow his steps.

While we see the great necessity for pruning, cultivating and discipline in the development of character, it is manifest that none will be able to endure it unto the desirable end of final establishment in righteousness who do not from the beginning diligently devote themselves to the exercise of patience. "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." "In your patience possess ye your souls." (R1721)

Speaking the Truth in Love

(Eph 4:14,15)

The epistle to the Ephesians is amongst the most profound of all the writings of the apostle Paul. The first three chapters describe in some detail the privileged present position of the Church, their pre-destination and redemption, their present inheritance and God's eternal purposes in and through them. The second group of three chapters deal with the appropriate behaviour and witness of each member of the Church both within the congregation and in the world outside. Chapter 4 from which the text is taken likens the individual Christian's experience to a walk and gives instructions as to conduct along the way.

Verses 1 and 2 of the chapter set the keynote: the Christian is to walk in such a way as befits one who has been called to such a high vocation as Paul has described in the previous chapters, while verses 3 to 6 urge upon each one every endeavour to maintain the unity of the spirit, by which each true follower of Christ has been sealed, in the bonds of peace and sets out the unifying factors. Verses 7 to 13 describe the varying ministries of service within the Church, all designed for the building up of the church, and include the assurance that grace for useful service is given to "every one of us".

GROWTH INTO CHRIST

Verses 14 to 16 deal with God's provision for the development of the "whole body" individually and collectively. These verses read – *"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lay in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him, who is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*

The words "speaking the truth in love" may be considered in two contexts, first the literal speaking of truth in every day life and second in the presentation of the message of truth as we find it in the Word of God. As Christians, we would take the first application for granted but even among Christians it is possible for some laxity to creep in when we are off guard. The second is of greater concern to the Lord's people, but the first lesson is still most important. Lying is nowadays a way of life among many worldly people, often hidden under euphemisms such as salesmanship, public relations, hyperbole, "white lies" and so on.

For the Christian, there can be no compromise; let us not forget who is the father of lies in whatever colour or guise. *"Putting away lying, speak every*

man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another." (Eph 4:25) For most, if not all, of us, complete honesty and truth have always been set before us as the only Christian standard, and we have sought to abide by it. So it is to the application of the apostle's instruction to the presentation of God's truth, as it has been revealed to us, that we turn our attention. "Bible Students" are by definition 'lovers of the truth', the commendation given to the Bereans of old setting the standard, whether we use the name Berean or not. Luke in Acts 17:11 tells us that these noble brethren "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so."

PROVING THE TRUTH

These earnest ones believed it necessary to check even the words of the apostle Paul to verify that what he was preaching matched up with God's earlier revelations through Moses and the Old Testament prophets and writers as contained in their Hebrew scriptures. How necessary this still is for us, the same apostle in fact directly urges us to do likewise – "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good". (1 Thess 5:21) We are to test all things, to try all things, to establish whether or not they are truth and worthy of our acceptance, whether or not they are in accord with the character of God revealed in His Word and more directly in His dear Son, whether or not they harmonise with His declared plans and purposes.

Immediately before his injunction to speak the truth in love, Paul has pointed out the dangers of failing to make use of all the means which our Heavenly Father has provided for growth in grace and knowledge and thus for establishment firmly in the faith. "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried away with every wind of doctrine", he declares. There are plenty of weird and wonderful winds of doctrine blowing about these days. How important, how blessed, it is to know the truth and to nurture those younger in years or in the faith in understanding of the truth. The apostle Peter's desire was that his hearers remember his words to them and be established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12)

CHRIST – THE TRUTH

Bible Students often use this latter term and the expression 'the truth' to describe the understanding of the Scriptures which has come down to us in this end of the age, and it is a very understandable usage, conveying a deep appreciation of the light of His Word that we have received. We need at the same time to be careful, however, lest we start to think that we have all the truth or that we alone, as Bible Students, have any truth. Down the age the great truths of God's Word have at times been lost or hidden awaiting the time, as it were for, their re-

discovery. In the earlier Bible Student days, a text often quoted was – “*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*”. (Prov 4:18)

As Bible Students, we use the term “the truth” to define our understanding of God’s character and purposes centred in Christ Jesus, but the truth is not a creed or statement of beliefs but an experience, an understanding, a personal encounter with the one who is Himself “the Truth”. After we come to know Him, we need to learn of Him and by the various means of grace available to better understand the Divine ways and will for us. The importance and value of a clear grasp of the essential teachings of God’s word “the doctrine” cannot be overstated, and we all share responsibilities in this area especially towards our younger brothers and sisters.

The reference to Christ Himself as “the Truth” is taken from His own words in John 14:3-7 which read – “*If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*”. Thomas is often called the Doubter, but he wanted an explanation that he could understand – how wonderfully Jesus gave him his answer. To Pilate’s question “What is truth?” Jesus answered not a word, but to Thomas, the genuine enquirer, He gave a grand revelation of Himself which comes down to us today to gladden our hearts also. Jesus truly is the living Word, the truth and revelation of God and the only way to God.

John’s beautiful words concerning our Saviour are recorded in John 1:14 – “*The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*”. This message is also inherent in our Lord’s reply to Philip as recorded in John 14:8,9 – “*Phillip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He who has seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, show us the Father?*” Earlier, he had said – “*He that seeth me, seeth Him that sent me*”. (John 12:45) and in John 1:18 we read – “*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him*”. Here we see that our dear Lord Himself, the living Word, is first and foremost “the truth”.

THE WORD OF TRUTH

But the recorded Word of God is also described as “the truth”. The Psalmist tells us that “all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies”. (Psa

25:10) and that “*Thou God desirest truth in the inward parts and in the hidden parts Thou shalt make me to know wisdom*”. (Psa 51:6) In Psalm 19, David praises all the manifestations of God in creation and in all His instruction and provision for the nation of Israel. In the New Testament, our Lord plainly declares – “*Sanctify them by thy truth. Thy word is truth*”. (John 17:17)

As we come into relationship with God through His dear Son, so His word becomes the more precious, the more we will seek to know Him who is the author of that word, which is “the truth”. The message of our Lord at His first advent and of the apostles is indeed referred to as “the word of truth” and to understand fully the apostle’s injunction to “speak the truth in love”, we need to find out what influence and power over the Christian it does and should have. In James 1:18, we read that “*of His own will, He (God) begot us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures*”. In Romans 8, we learn that this begetting is a work of God’s Holy Spirit in the heart and mind of the believer. (vv 14-16)

It is the working of the Spirit that first opens our eyes to the truth as it is revealed in God’s word, that brings us, through faith in His dear Son and in His merit, into relationship with God, making us sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. (2 Cor 6:18) Romans 10:10,14,15 further explains the process for each one – “*for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation... How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*” How important then for our own growth and for the blessing of others it is that we “speak the truth in love” – a message of both truth and love.

In our Lord’s own words already quoted, we learnt that it is the truth that sanctifies. “*Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth*”. The thought of sanctifying leads our minds back to the sanctifying of the priests and vessels of the tabernacle in Old Testament times in Israel. These people and utensils were thereafter no longer profane but set apart for the divine service, reckoned holy and dedicated to that purpose alone. Such, under the influence of the Holy Spirit pictured in the anointing oil, is the effect of the sanctifying word of truth on each receptive heart. It is the truth that sanctifies and Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, says – “*God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*”. (2 Thess 2:13) God’s Spirit acting on His

word of truth bears this precious fruit. How well and clearly we need to speak it out!

THE TRUTH MAKES FREE

Further we read in John 8:31, 32, 36 – “*Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed in Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*” The truth is not only a begetting and sanctifying power but a liberating power! The literal speaking of truth is itself a freeing power, but more importantly for the Christian the truth frees from the bondage of sin. Romans 6:16-18 reads – “*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness.*”

In the early church, the urgings of the Judaisers who sought to reintroduce the old law rituals and services into the congregation were a cause of trouble and Paul had to remonstrate quite sternly with some, calling on them to “*stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage... for, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another, for all the law is fulfilled in one word, in this. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*” (Gal 5:1,13,14) Here both bondage to the law and to the old fleshly ways are included. The liberty into which the Lord’s people have been called is precious; it is only the truth as it is in Christ, the living Word, and in the Scriptures, the written Word, that fully frees from whatever it is that would imprison us. Our only captivity is to be a willing submission to our Lord and Saviour and to His service.

Preserving our own liberty in Christ is important, but we sometimes fail to extend that liberty to others. We need not, we cannot, judge others and their liberty – “*Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master, he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be held up, for God is able to make him stand.*” (Rom 14:4) Similarly, on points of Bible interpretation where there are differences, we need to extend the same freedom, and to do it heartily, to others as we expect to receive, realising, with the apostle, that despite the great light which has been shed on God’s word, we all still “see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we also are known”. (1 Cor 13:12 paraphrased)

The truth should be a unifying force, and that is the point at which the apostle’s injunctions in Eph 4 began. “*Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye*

are called... endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.” He follows these words with seven elements of truth which should have that unifying influence. As we focus on these, we shall surely be drawn closer together. Then follow the several ministries within the Church; not all are called to the same tasks but from verse 7 we note that it is “unto every one of us” that grace is given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Our Lord has a service for every single one of His people and, to a large degree, it is encompassed in the words of the theme – “speaking the truth in love”.

WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

There are two aspects to this speaking of the truth in love, the first among the Lord’s people, the second to those around us. Opportunities for the second do not often occur for most of us, though some seem skilled in the impromptu word for the Master. The promise is that in time of trouble, our Father will provide both “a mouth and wisdom”, so we may trust Him also for the right word of truth when the occasion does arise. All of us, however, are to be “ready always to give an answer to any that asketh (us) a reason of the hope that is in (us) with meekness and fear.” (1 Peter 3:15) How blessed we are to have such a reason, to have a message of truth that can be given in love. The gospel which is the heart of that message is by definition ‘good news’, something positive for heart and mind.

Among the Lord’s people, to speak the truth in love is made easier by virtue of love for the same Saviour and recognition of His loving kindness and tender mercy as shown in the Divine plan of salvation, but the history of the Church has shown that bitternesses can creep in. The great opponent of truth is ever ready to sow seeds of strife among brethren. One of seven things which the wise man says God hates is “he that soweth discord among brethren” (Prov 6:19) but on the other hand, the psalmist declares – “*behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*” (Psa 133:1, and Paul counsels the Hebrews – “*let brotherly love continue*”. (Heb 13:1) The bonds of truth and love for the truth should surely have that sweet influence if, at all times, we seek to ‘speak the truth in love’.

In Eph 4:29,30 we read – “*let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers, and grieve not the Holy Spirit whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*”, and in Rom 14:19 – “*let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace and things wherewith we may edify one another*”. These list the positives of truth-speaking out of love. But is this, good as it is, alone enough? James counsels us to be “doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves”. Likewise, our speaking out

the word of truth will be of no value, if we do not live out that truth to the limit of our ability in the strength our Father will supply. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue (only) but in deed and in truth". (1 John 3:18)

THE BEAUTY OF TRUTH

How precious indeed is the truth, how we need to cherish it, to seek to know it more and better and through the Holy Spirit's guidance to know and love its author more dearly. Paul commended the Thessalonians because when they heard the word of God, they 'received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.' (1 Thess 2:13) The word of God is indeed powerful, it sanctifies, purifies and sets apart, it liberates and should bind those together those who truly love the truth. It needs to be witnessed to not only by word, though this is important, but by life. Finally, it needs to be presented always in love.

The truth is itself a message of God's love, His so great love not only to a few now but to all in due course. So it would be expected that those who believe that they have found the truth should want to speak it in love, in a spirit of kindness and goodwill towards all. In Paul's own day, he had to complain that some were preaching Christ of contention, not sincerely. Fortunately, others were preaching Christ of love. Our presentation of Christ in our words and in our lives is to be an exhibition of the love which we ourselves have experienced. Without love, our testimony will be lifeless – the greatest eloquence, Paul says without love is merely an empty sound. Love like our Father's should shine through all our speaking of the truth, not least in the congregation of His people.

Two lovely and well-known verses in Malachi read – "Then they had feared the Lord spoke often one with another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him". (Mal 3:16,17) What do these verses conjure up in our minds? Surely they are a rather lovely picture of brethren in sweet communion and with the smile of God upon them. May it be so in our midst not only as we gather in times of convention but in all our associations week by week with others who love the truth. "Let us exhort one another daily, while it is called Today" ... and unitedly "hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end". (Heb 3:13,14)

What is then to be the end result of this cultivation of the daily practice of "speaking the truth in love?" The apostle goes in to tell us it is that we "may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love". This pro-

gram involves both individual growth in grace and knowledge and mutual upbuilding of the Body of Christ, as each individual contributes according to the measure of grace given to him or her. This is to be the blessed outcome for each child of God whose desire is always to be found "speaking the truth in love" and growing up in all things into our blessed Head.

Is the truth becoming every more precious to us as the days go by? Are we continuing to grow in grace and knowledge of our Heavenly Father and of His love shed abroad in His Son, that love which is eventually to bless all mankind? We have a grand message of hope; above all it is a message of truth. Let us encourage one another in the truth at all times, let us be ready to pass on a message of hope where we have opportunity to the broken-hearted. Let us be glad that a time is coming when all shall know Him whose Word alone is truth and when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Meantime, let us all continue "speaking the truth in love."

Amen.

HE LEADETH ME

In pastures green? Not always; sometimes He
Who knoweth best, in kindness leadeth me
In weary ways, where heavy shadows be.
Out of the sunshine, warm and soft and bright,
Out of the sunshine into darkest night;
I oft would faint with terror and with fright,
Only for this—I know He holds my hand;
So, whether in the green or desert land,
I trust, although I may not understand.
And by still waters? No, not always so;
Ofttimes the heavy tempests round me blow,
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.
But when the storm beats loudest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by,
And whispers to my soul. "Lo, it is I!"
Above the tempest wild I hear Him say,
"Beyond this darkness lies the perfect day,
In every path of thine I lead the way."
So, whether on the hill-tops, high and fair,
I dwell, or in the sunless valleys, where
The shadows lie—what matter? He is there.
And more than this, where'er the pathway lead,
He gives to me no helpless, broken reed,
But His own hand, sufficient for my need.
So, where He leads me I can safely go;
And in the blest hereafter I shall know,
Why, in His wisdom, He hath led me so.

(Poems of Dawn)