



Volume XVIII. No. 9 MELBOURNE, 1st SEPTEMBER, 1935. Price-Twopence Halfpenny

## The Oath-Bound Covenant.

“In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”—Gen. 22:16-18.

IN various terms the Lord eight times repeated to Abraham His Covenant, and St. Paul calls our attention to the fact that these numerous repetitions and specifications of the Covenant, as well as God's oath attesting, were intended specially for us -- for Spiritual Israel—”that . . . we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay held upon the hope set before us (in the Gospel); which hope (expressed in the Covenant made with Abraham Aid confirmed with an oath) we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.”—Hebrews 6:18, 19.

Thus the Apostle declares that this Covenant has not yet been fulfilled and that Christians, no less than the Jews and the whole world of mankind, are vitally interested in its fulfilment. We may have wondered, Why did God repeat the ‘Promise so frequently to Abraham, and then confirm it to Isaac and to Jacob, etc.? But when we see that this Promise, as a nutshell, contains the entire Plan of God for human Redemption and-Restitution, as an acorn contains an oak tree, this explains to us the Divine particularity. It explains to us also why this Promise made to Abraham is continually referred to by the Apostles in, their presentation of the hope for the Church and for the world.

The Promise primarily was to Abraham himself —”Lift up now thine eyes, . . . to the north, and to the south, and to the west, and to the east; all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and thy seed after thee.” Although God's providence led the children of Israel into that land, and although it was given to ‘them by Joshua ,to be their inheritance, this did not fulfil the conditions of the Promise. The Israelites did not have permanent possession of the land. Time and again it passed under the rule of the Philistines, the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, etc.; and for many centuries it was under the rule of the Turks.

The Jews have had (until recent years) no more right to that land than had the Canaanites, Amalekites and others whom they drove out, except through this great Oath-bound Covenant made to Abraham. How foolish, therefore, do those intellectual Jews appear who disclaim Abraham as a mythical character, and who wholly distrust God and the promises that He made to Abraham, and who, nevertheless, claim the Land of Promise! It is not their Land of Promise, and never will belong to any except those who hold to the Promise.—Romans 4:11-14.

Abraham's Three Wives Typical.

While Abraham and his wives were all real personages, their affairs were so supervised by the Almighty

that they became types. Thus Abraham was a type of God, and Isaac a type of Messiah. Isaac's wife, Rebecca, typified the Church, the Elect Little Flock of this Gospel Age, for whom God has provided joint-heirship with the Redeemer in His great Kingdom, and through whom, as the Seed of Abraham, all the families of the earth will be blessed. Galatians 3:29.

As Abraham was a type of the Almighty, so his wives were- types of God's three great Covenants, through which all of His blessings will come by and by: St. Paul explains that, as Sarah was barren, -so the primary, or chief Covenant of God was barren for a long time--until Jesus came. Meantime, Hagar representatively became the wife, and attempted to bring forth the heir of promise, but failed. St. Paul declares that in this Hagar typified the Covenant made with Israel at Sinai, which failed to bring forth the real Seed of Abraham, competent to bless all the families of the earth.

As Hagar was a bond-maid, she typified the bondage of the Law Covenant; and her child, Ishmael, typified the Jewish people. They were, indeed, related to God, but as children of a Covenant of bondage. As later on the barren Sarah brought forth the son of promise, so, St. Paul explains, God's original Covenant in due time brought forth the true Heir, Jesus—Messiah.

In one figure, all the followers of Jesus are reckoned as His members, under Him as their Head, as the Apostle says, "We brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise." In another figure, Jesus is pictured as a Bridegroom, and His followers a Bride company. This picture is shown in Rebecca, who became Isaac's wife, and joint-heir with him to the riches of Abraham and the promises to his seed. In the type, Sarah died prior to the time that Isaac married, which signifies that this primary Covenant of God, made with Abraham, will reach its fulfilment in the bringing forth of the completed Messiah, Head and Body, Bridegroom and Bride. These will be the Seed of Abraham, through whom all nations will be blessed.

Abraham's All Given to Isaac.

In the type Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, through him making provision for Ishmael and for his other children by his third wife, Keturah. In the antitype, God bestows all His fullness upon Christ, The Messiah, and through Him makes provision for the Natural Israelites and for all the families of the earth—all who are to be blessed through the antitypical Isaac—The Christ.

The inspired interpretation is that Hagar and Sarah were types of the Law Covenant and of our covenant of this Gospel Age, which gives us assurance that Abraham's third wife, who was taken after the death of Sarah, and who bore him many children, typified the New Covenant, which the Bible declares will soon be inaugurated—at the close of this Gospel Age. Under that New Covenant and at the hands of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, The Christ, during the thousand years of the Messianic reign, all the families of the earth will be blessed. Such is the length, the breadth, the height and depth of God's Love for humanity, and His provision for their future !

Thus seen, God's promise to Abraham had only a partial beginning at Mount Moriah, and the development of the real Seed of Abraham had only its start in Jesus, and the real Seed which is to bless the world, according to His Promise, is not yet complete. Our hope is that this Spiritual Seed will soon be completed by the First Resurrection. Then, the secondary part of the Promise, which relates to the natural man—the world in general—will begin to be fulfilled; because then the Messiah class, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, in power and great glory beyond the veil, will set up a Kingdom —begin to exercise Messianic power and authority and thus begin to bless the world.

Messiah's reign, according to the Scriptures, is to last a thousand years. Its effect will be the binding of Satan, the restraining of sin, the scattering of ignorance and superstition, and the general enlightenment of mankind. Under that enlightening influence, the "knowledge of God will fill the whole earth as the waters

cover the great deep,” until none shall need to teach his neighbour, because all will know, understand and appreciate the Divine arrangement and the privileges then possible to them.

Under that reign, not only the living will be blessed and led back to health, perfection and everlasting life, but all that are in their graves will be awakened and come forth to similar knowledge, privileges and opportunities. Only thus could those families of the earth be blessed who died, before Abraham’s time and since, in utter ignorance of God and His glorious arrangements.

As the Stars and as the Sand.

Only of late have Bible students discerned that Abraham is to have two seeds, exclusive of the Ishmaelites of the Law, or Hagar Covenant. “Thy Seed shall be as the stars of heaven, and as the sands of the seashore.” The stars of heaven fitly picture to us a glorified Christ and His Church, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, changed from human nature to Divine nature, from earthly conditions to heavenly conditions. These are the heirs of Galatians 3:29, and are referred to by St. Paul again when he says, “As star differeth from star in glory, so is the resurrection of THE dead.”—11 Corinthians 13:41, 42.

But God’s glorious Plan will only begin its accomplishment in the glorification of the Church. All the families of the earth, like the sands of the seashore, will be privileged to come into relationship with God under Messiah’s Kingdom. All who will then knowingly and wilfully reject the Divine arrangement will be cut off in the Second Death. But all who then will accept the terms of Messiah’s Kingdom and become obedient thereto will be gradually brought to perfection, and because of faith and obedience become identified with God and become the earthly, or human seed of Abraham, blessed with human perfection and everlasting life in an earthly Eden.

God’s Oath to Abraham.

It is understood (Gen 15:5-18) that the procedure of cutting animals in two parts and passing between them was an ancient form of solemn obligation or contract—an oath. Thus God adopted the strongest possible symbolism for assuring Abraham and all his posterity that His Covenant to bless Abraham and his Seed will never be broken. Incidentally, a prophecy was made, showing that it would be four hundred years before Abraham’s posterity would have even a semblance of Divine favour, and that meantime they would be under the yoke of bondage to Egypt, and then would be brought forth.

St. Stephen, evidently voicing the sentiment of all the Apostles, noted the fact that God’s promise to Abraham had not been fulfilled up to that time, even though the Israelites had possessed Canaan off and on for centuries.

The promise reads that the land shall come to Abraham and to his seed after him. St. Stephen noted the fact that Abraham never owned enough of Canaan to set his foot upon. His reasoning is that after Messiah and His Bride shall be glorified as the Kingdom, then Abraham will come forth from the dead to inherit the land and bestow it upon his posterity. But the antitype, we have seen, will be larger; for the whole earth shall be the Paradise of God and the Land of Canaan, to all who shall return to harmony with God, and through faith and obedience be accepted as the Seed of Abraham.

## “God’s Covenants.”

Appreciation of the thoughts on the New Covenant, etc., in our recent issues, has been expressed by a number of brethren, and it is good to realise the importance that is placed upon a correct understanding of these matters. For a fuller explanation of the Covenants, the booklet by Bro. B. H. Barton—“God’s Covenants”—is recommended to all. Reduced price, 6d. per copy, posted.

### TRACTS AVAILABLE.

The main article of last month’s “People’s Paper”—“A Blessed Hope for Suffering Humanity”—may now be had in tract form for distribution. Also on hand, a good supply of other tracts, such as “Why Sorrow, Sin, Death and are Permitted.” Order these according to requirements.

### BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS.

Regular Class Meetings for Bible Study, etc., are held each Sunday afternoon and evening, also mid-week, in Melbourne and Adelaide, at the following addresses:—

“Towler House,” 18 Queen Street, (near Flinders Street), Melbourne.  
Liverpool Buildings, Flinders Street Adelaide, South Aust.  
The gatherings are quite unsectarian, and all desiring to attend will be very welcome.

### “WATCH TOWER REPRINTS” (Prior to 1919).

Some volumes of the above “Reprints” are on hand for disposal, new and second-hand, and friends desiring them will be supplied with particulars. Complete sets of the “Reprints” will be available shortly, and these will probably be the last obtainable. The value of these fine volumes is well known amongst the truth brethren.

### PLAN OF GOD—IN BRIEF.

This booklet of 90 pages is very useful for making the plan of salvation available to others. Good stock now on hand at 6d. per copy.

### OTHER ITEMS.

Set of Six Volumes, “Studies in the Scriptures,” in karatol (pocket) size, practically new, for disposal. Price 7/6, posted.  
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### PEOPLES PAPER.

Published by the Berean Biblical Institute, at National Bank Chambers, 226 Glenferrie Rd., Hawthorn, Melbourne E 2.

(Monthly) 2/6 per annum, post paid,

While it is our intention that these columns be used for teachings strictly in accord with the Lord’s Word, we cannot accept responsibility for every expression used, either in the correspondence or in the sermons reported.

A. Cross (x) on the wrapper indicates that the Subscription to “Peoples Paper is overdue.

## God and Reason.

THE Dawn Publishers, of Brooklyn, U.S.A., have recently produced a book entitled "God and Reason," and which we believe will be found very useful in bringing Biblical truths before the minds of enquiring people in an interesting manner. The first chapter of this book is reproduced in the following lines for the purpose of making known a little of its contents to the friends generally.

Chapter x.—The Way Out.

"This is a day of amazing paradoxes. Scientists say that we have wondrously scaled the ladder of learning since the days of the 'dawn man.' Evolutionists insist that we have made steady progressive strides since the first 'crude' beginning of civilization on this planet. Men of to-day boastfully point to the marvelous achievements of this modern 'brain age.' Yet our highly 'civilized' world is to-day faced with the undeniable fact that its boasted civilization now stands at the very brink of utter destruction. With all our learning, we are not able to maintain the standards of civilization to which we pretend to have arrived through centuries of evolutionary progress.

"No longer is it possible to prevent a knowledge of these startling facts from edging in upon the public mind.

Serious statesmen are frankly pointing out the necessity of something drastic being done if civilization is to be saved; politicians everywhere are admitting it, and prominent religious leaders of all schools of ecclesiasticism are earnestly announcing that unless the people now quickly return to God, the whole world will be plunged into the greatest and most deadly cataclysm of all human history. But how this hoped for return to God is to be accomplished has not yet been made clear, either by political potentates or prelates.

A Candid Investigation

"This far-flung appeal to the people by which they are urged to depart from sin and selfishness, as a last resort to save society, is possibly prompted in many cases by about the same motive that causes almost any drowning man to offer a frantic prayer. But regardless of motive, the suggestion of returning to God, nevertheless, is worthy of consideration. Indeed, with the Present and future welfare of the world's two billion population now at stake, anything that purports to be a way out of the present world-wide debacle of human selfishness and foolishness is worth investigating. The purpose of this book, therefore, is to enquire candidly and dispassionately into various religious claims and proposals of Christendom, comparing them also with the Bible, in order that we may ascertain, if possible, to what extent men may be justified in looking in this direction for a solution to present world problems.

"When the outstanding religionists of the day declare that the world is doomed unless it returns to God, what do they mean? In a Christmas message delivered last year by the head of the Roman Catholic Church, the Pope admitted to a group of Catholic prelates that about the only advice he had to offer was to 'pray, pray, pray.' This was very good advice, certainly; but for what good Catholics to pray? Both Catholics and Protestants have been praying and striving for centuries to bring the world to God. Just what does the Pope want his people to do now, different from what they have been doing right along? He doesn't say!

"Yes, the Protestants as well as the Catholics are telling the world that it must return to God. In a sermon broadcast over the National Broadcasting Company's network of radio stations on January 7th of this

year, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, in calling upon the people to decide whom they shall serve, said, 'I press for the decision because the wisdom of the Highest has been made known to Christian believers in Christ' . . . 'not only those who confess the ancient Faith of the Christian Church, but also those who belong to the still more ancient Faith of Israel, are now feeling that the people at large must return and walk in the light of the Lord.'

"Now just what does the good doctor mean by this? The Protestants, of course, are divided into two great groups -- Fundamentalists and Modernists. Are these two groups returning to God by the same route, or is each going its own way; and if so, will both reach exactly the same objective eventually? Then is one way just as good as another?

"And if it isn't out of place to ask a few more questions, laymen would like to know just what a Modernist could mean by getting back to God. If man has gradually evolved from protoplasm, on up from one species to another until he has reached the present 'brain age' stage in his development, just how is he to return to anything? Honest confession is supposed to be good for the soul, and we are frank to confess that it appears rather difficult to understand just how returning to God, or to any former 'condition, could 'possibly hell) a creature of evolution.

"Everybody knows that Catholics and Protestants have been opposed to each other for centuries, yet from each of these groups of sincere religionists now comes the admonition to pray. But for what? If the \_Papal viewpoint is entirely right, as every, good Catholic honestly believes then of necessity all earnest adherents of that faith must be praying for the defeat of Protestantism. On the other hand, the word 'Protestant' implies -that those composing. the. group which bears that name are protesting:, against what they consider to be wrong in Catholicism. Therefore, is the Protestants' prayer and effort supposed to be one of protest against Catholics? If both of these groups pray and work consistently, according to the tenets of their creedal dogmas, will the Lord answer both, or either, of them? Or, if both groups are willing to pray and labor unselfishly for the blessing of all others,- what then will be accomplished in the way of -saving the world from the threatened 'doom' which seems so rapidly approaching? This is - an important question!

To .Whom Shall We Go?

"And there is another vital matter. Two 'decades or more ago there was a lot of agitation about 'converting the heathen'; but to-day, while probably all in Christendom still would. like to see the heathen converted—and some effort still is being made to that end—it would seem rather that the heathen are now, making, considerable progress in converting us.-. Various forms of Hindu worship are springing up all over Christendom—some quite openly, others under the. mantle of mysticism, or other guise. Some of these Hindu philosophers and worshippers also claim that it is necessary to get back to God. But their deity evidently is different from either the Catholic or the Protestant God. To whom, then, shall we go?

"When Jesus was on earth He suggested to His disciples something very definite for which they should pray. He said.: 'Pray ye, Thy Kingdom come, and Thy will, be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.' All down through the centuries earnest Christians have been repeating that prayer and patiently awaiting its answer:

"Is it ever to be answered? This Messianic prayer is very definite—more specific by far than a general instruction to 'pray, pray, pray'—but will. such a universal Kingdom ever really come to this old earth ? Will the Lord, in answer to this prayer, ever establish a new social order on this planet that will, be. based upon absolute justice and love?

"None of these questions is being asked with any desire to make light of the various religious beliefs and

efforts put forth in this sickened world

to-day. No one should ridicule the conscientious religious beliefs of another, especially concerning the very praiseworthy and important matter of getting back to God. These questions are being asked from the standpoint of the average layman in a sincere effort to arrive at their solution, and in the hope of coming to understand what should be expected in the way of ending earth's difficulties if all should make an earnest effort, through prayer and otherwise, to get back to God. With the world facing ruin, unless something, is done, and done quickly, almost everybody wily want to fall into line with the right thing if they can be made to see just what is required. Doubtless, everybody would be glad to pray if that is the real solution; but in this day of enlightenment, most people will insist on having something definite suggested for which to pray; and if they are to return to God most folks will want to know how it can be done and what it involves.

How can the world return to God?

“Agreeing that it does look doubtful if mere human diplomacy will be able to prevent the cataclysm which every statesman sees coming, the necessity for hunting for some other solution naturally becomes obvious and imperative.

If prayer is the true solution, we want to know and do it. But both Catholics and Protestants should remember the Apostle James' words: 'Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss.' Hence it seems that we are quite within our right in seeking an explanation of this important matter from a religious viewpoint, in order that meaningful prayers to God and intelligent co-operation with Him may be possible.

“Do these apparent religious difficulties mean that we should give up our quest in this direction for a satisfactory solution of the world's problems? And should we conclude that the great Intelligence who brought into existence the countless billions of heavenly bodies, and who causes them to move about ceaselessly in their orbits with such absolute accuracy, has signally failed in His attempt to produce a race of sentient creatures here on this small planet that can continue to exist under conditions of uninterrupted peace and happiness?

“If there is a God who really has the power and disposition to lastingly bless those who come to I-Tim, or those who return to Him after having strayed away, just what should be expected if such a return on a world-wide scale should be effected? What changes would be wrought thereby in economics, and in other national and international matters?

“Does it mean believing blindly in a conflicting and superstitious system of theology?

“Does it mean that everyone must join a church; and, if so, which church?

“What kind of laws will the world be required to obey if, and when, it does return to God?

“These are but a few of the many important questions that must be considered if we are to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion in the discussion of this very vital subject that now confronts a distraught and imperiled human family.”

Copies of this book, “God and Reason,” may now be obtained from this office. TO be had in two bindings—with paper covers, at 10d. per copy-, and nicely, bound in strong, blue cloth, at 2/- per copy, posted. Reduction in price for three. or more..

## Progress in Palestine.

LORD Melchett's description of Palestine at a recent gathering of London Jewry as "the potential Singapore of the Near East, projected not by English battalions, but by 3,000,000 grateful Jews," sounds like a fairy tale, yet the facts are in favour of its coming true. An even safer prediction, perhaps would have been that the new port of Haifa is destined to become the Singapore of the Mediterranean. Built by British firms at a cost of £1,500,000, obtained from Palestine Budget surpluses, Haifa was opened at the end of 1933. It is already the entrepot for the inland trade of Palestine, which is growing amazingly every year, and it promises to serve countries farther to the east. The Palestine Jews aim at making their country the supply depot for the whole of the countries between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. Haifa is the terminus- of the Palestine and Hejaz railways, and, it is the outlet for the oil pipe line from Persia and Irak. An aerodrome is being built to serve as an intermediary stop between London and Calcutta on the Imperial air route from Australia to England. In 10 years the population of Haifa has quadrupled. It now stands at 100,000. It is still growing. Even more startling has been the growth of Tel Aviv. In 1911 a few scattered settlements among, the sand dunes north of Jaffa contained only. 500 people. To-day there is a thriving modern city, Tel Aviv,. with 120,000 inhabitants.

Unlike most other countries, Palestine has encouraged: immigration, with the result that in the last four years nearly 200,000 Jews and many thousands of Arabs have entered it. One of the grievances of the Zionist leaders 'is that Great Britain, which administers the mandate over Palestine, restricts immigration, the quotas being fixed on the principle of "the economic absorptive capacity of the country." There are the interests of the Arabs, to be considered, though in recent years there has not been the fear felt at first by the Arabs that they were in danger of being swamped by the new-comers. The great new Jewish undertakings that have sprung up everywhere have given employment to the Arabs, and new agricultural methods -have been brought under their notice. Indeed, there is said to be no unemployment at all in Palestine.—Melb. "Argus."

## Jews in Travail.

Greater Effort. in Palestine,- German "Jew-Baiting." London, 23rd August.

The Lucerne correspondent of the "Times" states that the Jewish Congress agreed on the necessity for intensified efforts in Palestine in view of the catastrophic position. of Jewry; and criticised the restrictions on Jewish immigration.

Delegates contended that Great Britain's sympathy with persecuted Jews justified the hope that the gate to Palestine would be opened at least a little wider.

Congress is considering the floating of a Jewish national loan for 15,000,000 to extend settlement in Palestine and

supplement the Government's public works schemes. Part may be raised in London, but it is hoped the funds will be obtained in Palestine.

The conference has shown remarkable restraint in its criticism. of the Nazis. The general feeling is that the only. effective way to deal with "Jew-baiting" is to settle .as many German Jews as possible in Palestine.

Refugees in Terrible Plight.

The Warsaw correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" states that numbers of Jewish refugees have arrived at Danzig, victims of the unprecedented Nazi campaign to turn Jews out of East Prussia. Bakers have been warned not to sell bread to Jews, and flour mills and vegetable, fruit and grocery shops have also been forbidden to serve them. Two bakers who protested against the inhuman injunction were arrested.

The Jews were obliged to go to surrounding villages to save themselves from starvation. They were able to obtain food only at night, as the peasants feared to trade in the day time.—Melbourne "Age."

## The Song of our Syrian Guest.

AN interesting little booklet, bearing the above title, and written by W. A. Knight, was brought along by one of our visiting brethren recently. In this article it is reprinted in full, for the benefit of our readers.

“FADUEL MOGHABGHAB,” said our guest, laughing, as he leaned over the tea-table towards two little maids, vainly trying to beguile their willing and sweetly-pursed lips into pronouncing his name. “Faduel Moghabghab,” he repeated in syllables, pointing to the card he had passed to them. “Accent the u and drop the g’s, which your little throats cannot manage,” he went on kindly, while the merriment sparkled in his lustrous dark eyes, and his milk-white teeth, seen through his black Moustache as he laughed, added beauty to his delicate and vivacious face.

He was a man of winsome mind, this Syrian ‘guest of ours, and the spirituality of his culture was as marked as the refinement of his manners. We shall long remember him for the tales told that evening of his home in Ainzehalta, on the slope of ‘the Syrian Mountains, but longest of all for what he said out of the memories of his youth about a shepherd song.

“It was out of the shepherd life of my country,” he remarked, “that there came long ago that sweetest religious song ever written—the ‘Twenty Third Psalm.’ “

After the ripple of his merriment with the child-ten had passed, he turned to me with a face now serious and pensive, and said:—

“Ah, so many things familiar to us are strange to you.”

“Yes,” I answered, “and no doubt because of this we often make mistakes which are more serious than mispronunciation of your modern names.”

He smiled pleasantly, then with earnestness said:

“So many things in the life of my people, the same now as in the days of old, have been woven into the words of the Bible, and into the conceptions of religious ideas as expressed there. You, of the western world, knowing these things as they are, often misunderstand what is written, or at least fail to get a correct impression from it.”

“Tell us about some of these,” I ventured, with a parental glance at two listening faces.

After mentioning several instances, he went on:

“And there is the shepherd psalm; I find that it is taken among you as having two parts, the first under the figure of shepherd life, the second turning to the figure of a banquet, with the host and the guest.”

“Oh, we have talked about that,” said my lady of the tea-cups, “and we have even said that we wished the wonderful little psalm could have been finished in the one figure of shepherd life.”

“It seems to us,” I added, wishing to give suitable support to my lady’s declaration of our sense of a literary flaw in the matchless psalm, “It seems to us to lose the sweet, simple melody, and to close with strange, heavy chords when it changes to a scene of banquet hospitality. Do you mean that it actually keeps the shepherd figure to the end ?” “Certainly, good friends.”

With keen personal interest, I asked him to tell us how we might see it as a shepherd psalm throughout. So we listened and he talked, over the cooling tea-cups.

“It is all, all a simple shepherd psalm,” he began. “See how it runs through the round of shepherd life from first word to last.”

With softly modulated voice, that had the rhythm of music and the hush of veneration in it, he quoted: “‘The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.’ There is the opening strain of music: in that chord is sounded the keynote which is never lost till the plaintive melody dies away at the song’s end. All that follows is that thought put in varying light.”

I wish it were possible to reproduce here the light in his face and the interchange of tones in his mellow voice as he went on.

### **Finding Still Waters.**

“‘He maketh me to lie down in green pastures’; nourishment, rest.

“‘He leadeth me beside the still waters’; refreshment. You think here of quietly flowing streams, and get only another picture of rest. But streams are few in that shepherd country, and the shepherds do not rely on them. To the shepherd ‘the still waters’ are wells and cisterns, and he leads his sheep to these still waters, not for rest, but to bring up water to quench their thirst.”

Then he talked of how the varied needs of the sheep and the many-sided care of the shepherd are pictured with consummate skill in the short sentences of the psalm.

“Each is distinct, and adds something- too precious to be merged and lost,” he said.

“‘He restoreth my soul’; you know,” he said, turning to me, “that ‘soul’ means the life of one’s self in the Hebrew writings.”

Then, addressing all, he went on:

“There are private fields and gardens and vineyards in the shepherd country, and if a sheep stray into them and is caught there, it is forfeited to the owner of the land. So, ‘He restoreth my soul,’ means ‘the shepherd brings me back, and rescues my life from forbidden and fatal places.’ “

“‘Restores me when wandering,’ is ‘the way it is put in one of our hymns,” I interposed.

“Ah, sir, that is it exactly,” he answered, “‘Restores me when wandering;””

“‘He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for His name’s sake’; often have I roamed through the shepherd country in my youth, and watched how hard it is to choose the right path for the sheep; one leads to a precipice, another to a place where the sheep cannot find the way back, and the shepherd was always going ahead, ‘leading’ them in the right paths, proud of his good name as a shepherd.”

With quiet animation he lifted his thin hand and continued:

“Now, here is where you drop the shepherd figure and put in a banquet, and so lose the Climax of Completeness in the shepherd’s care.”

It need not be said that we were eager listeners now, for our guest was all aglow with memories of his far-off home, and we felt that we were about to see new rays of light flash from this rarest gem in the song treasury of the world.

““Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.””

In the same hushed voice in which he quoted these words, he added:

“Ah, to think that the shepherd’s highest skill and heroism should be lost from view as the psalm begins to sing of it, and only an indoor banquet thought of !”

Again he sat in silence.

Then he said:

“There is no higher task of the shepherd in my country than to go from time to time to study places and examine the grass, and find a good and safe feeding-place for his sheep. All his skill, and often great heroism, are called for. There are many poisonous plants in the grass, and the shepherd must find, and avoid them. A cousin of mine once lost three hundred sheep by a mistake in this hard task.”

“Then there are viper’s holes, and the reptiles bite the noses of the sheep if they be not driven away. The shepherd must burn the fat of hogs at the holes to do this. And round the feeding ground which the shepherd thus prepares, in holes and caves in the hill-sides, there are jackals, wolves, hyenas, and tigers, too, and the bravery and skill of the shepherd are at the highest point in closing up these dens with stones, or slaying the wild beasts with his long-bladed knife. Of nothing do you hear shepherds boasting more proudly than of their achievements in this part of their care of flocks.”

“And now !” he exclaimed, with a beaming countenance and suppressed feeling, as if pleading for recognition of the lone shepherd’s bravest action of devotion to his sheep, “and now, do you see the shepherd figure in that quaint line, ‘Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies’ ?”

“Yes,” I answered, “and I see that God’s care of a man out in the world is a grander thought than that of seating him at an indoor banquet table.”

“But what about anointing the head with oil, and the cup running over? Go on, my friend.” “Oh, there begins the beautiful picture at the end of the day.”

“The Psalm has sung of the whole round of the day’s wanderings, all the needs of the sheep, all the care of the shepherd. Now the Psalm closes with the last scene of the day. At the door of the sheepfold the shepherd stands, and the rodding of the sheep takes place. The shepherd stands, turning his body to let the sheep pass; he is the door, as Christ said of Himself. With his rod he holds back the sheep while he inspects them one by one as they pass into the fold. He has the horn filled with olive oil, and he has cedar-tar, and he anoints a knee bruised on the rocks, or a side scratched by thorns. And here comes one that is not bruised, but is simply worn and exhausted; he bathes its face and head with the refreshing olive oil, and he takes the large two-handled cup and dips it brimming full from the vessels of water provided for that purpose, and he lets the weary sheep drink. There is nothing finer in the Psalm than this. God’s care is not for the wounded only, but for the worn and weary also. ‘He anointeth my head with oil, my cup runneth over.’”

“And then, when the day is gone, and the sheep are snug within the fold, what contentment, what rest under the starry sky! Then comes the thought of deepest repose and comfort: ‘Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,’ as they have through all the wanderings of the day now ended.”

“The song dies away as the heart that God has watched and tended breathes this grateful vow before the roaming of the day is forgotten in sleep. I will—not shall, but will; for it is a decision, a settled purpose, a holy vow—I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.’ And the song ends, and the sheep are at rest, safe in the Good Shepherd’s fold.”

Do you wonder that ever since that night we have called this Psalm “The Song of Our Syrian Guest?”

## ‘The True Church.’

ONE Sabbath morn I roamed astray  
And asked a Pilgrim for the way:  
“O, tell me, whither shall I search  
That I may find the one true. Church?”

He answered, “Search the world around,  
The one true Church is never found.  
Yon ivy on the abbey wall  
Makes fair the falsest Church of all.”

But, fearing he had told me wrong,  
I cried, “Behold the entering throng!”  
He answered, “If a Church be true,  
It hath not many, but a few!”

Around a font the people pressed,  
And crossed themselves on brow and breast,  
“A cross so light to bear,” he cried  
“Is not of Christ, the Crucified!

Each forehead, frowning, sheds it off:  
Christ’s cross abides through scowl and scoff!”  
We entered at the open door  
And saw men kneeling on the floor;

Faint candles, by the daylight dimmed,  
As if by foolish virgins trimmed;  
Fair statues of the saints, as white  
As now their robes are, in God’s sight;

Stained windows, casting down a beam,  
Like Jacob’s ladder in a dream.  
The Pilgrim gazed from nave to roof,  
And frowning, uttered this reproof:

“Alas! who is it understands  
God’s temple is not made with hands?”  
We walked in ferns so wet with dew  
They splashed our garments trailing through,

And came upon a Church whose dome  
Upheld a cross, but not for Rome.  
We brushed a cobweb from a pane  
And watched the service in the fane.

“Do prayers,” he asked, “the more avail,  
If offered at an altar rail?  
Does water sprinkled from a bowl  
Wash any sin from any soul?”

Do tongues that taste the bread and  
Speak truer after such a sign?”  
Just then, upon a maple spray,  
Two orioles perched, and piped a lay,

Until the gold beneath their throats  
Shook molten in their mellow notes.  
Resounding from the Church, a psalm:  
Rolled, quivering, through the outer calm.

“Both choirs,” said I, are in accord,  
For both give praises to the Lord.”  
“The birds,” he answered, “chant a song • -  
Without a note of sin or wrong:

The Church’s anthem is a strain  
Of human guilt and mortal pain.”  
The orioles and the organ ceased,  
And in the pulpit rose the priest.

The Pilgrim whispered in my ear,  
“It profits ‘not to tarry here.’”  
“He speaks no error,” answered I,  
“He teaches that the living die;

The dead arise; and both are true ;  
“Both wholesome doctrines, neither new .  
The Pilgrim said, “He strikes a blow  
At wrongs that perished long ago; -

But covers with a shielding phrase  
The living sins of present days.”  
We turned away among the tombs—  
A tangled place of briars and blooms.

I spelled the legends on the stones,  
Beneath reposed the martyrs’ bones, .  
The bodies which the rack once brake  
In witness for the dear Lord’s sake,

The ashes gathered from the pyres  
Of saints whose zeal our soul inspires.  
The Pilgrim murmured as we passed,  
“So gained they all the crown at last.

Men lose it now through looking back,  
To find it at the stake or rack;  
The rack and stake are old with grime;  
God’s touchstone is the living time!”

III.

We passed where poplars, gaunt and tall,  
Let twice their length of shadow fall.

Then rose a meeting-house in view,  
Of bleached and weather-beaten hue.

Men, plain of garb and pure of heart.  
Divided church and world apart.

Nor did they vex the silent air  
With any sound of hymn or prayer.

God's finger to their lips they pressed,  
Till each man kissed it and was blessed.

I asked, "Is this the true Church, then?"  
He answered, "Nay, a sect of men:

And sects that shut their doors in pride  
Shut God and half His saints outside.

The gates of Heaven, the Scriptures say,  
Stand open wide, by night and clay.

So, then, to enter, is there need  
To carry key of church or creed?"

IV.

Still following where the highway led,  
Till elms made arches overhead,  
We saw a spire and weathercock,  
And snow-white church upon a rock—.

A rock, where centuries before,  
Came sea-tossed pilgrims to the shore.  
My sandals straightway I unbound,  
Because the place was holy ground.

I cried, "One church at last I find,  
That fetters not the human mind."  
"This church," said he, "is like the rest;  
For all are good, but none is best."

V.

Then far from every church we strayed—  
Save Nature's pillared aisles of shade.  
The squirrels ran to see us pass,  
And God's sweet breath was on the grass.

I challenged all the creeds, and sought  
What truth, or lie, or both, they taught.  
I asked, "Had Augustine a fault?"  
The Pilgrim gazed at heaven's high vault,

And answered "Can a mortal eye  
Contain the sphere of all the sky?"  
I said, "The circle is too wide."  
"God's truth is wider!" he replied.

"Though Augustine was on his knee,  
He saw how little he could see;  
Though Luther sought with burning heart,  
He caught the glory but in part;

Though Calvin opened wide his soul,  
He comprehended not the whole.  
Not Luther, Calvin, Augustine,  
Saw visions such as I have seen."

While yet he spake, a rapture stole  
Through all my still inquiring soul.  
I looked upon His holy brow,  
Entreating, "Tell me, who art Thou?"

But, such a splendour filled the place,  
I knew it was the Lord's own face!  
I was a sinner and afraid!  
I knelt in dust and thus I prayed:

"O Christ, the Lord! end Thou my search,  
And lead me to the one true Church."  
He spake as never roan may speak—  
"The one true Church thou shalt not seek,

Seek thou, for ever more, instead,  
To find the one true Christ, its Head!"  
The Lord then vanished from my sight,  
And left me standing in the tight.

—Selected.