

**December 28**

*He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall He lift up the head. Psalm 110:7*

WE want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that He will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the

R3080 "The grateful, thankful heart may go on from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from knowledge to knowledge, from attainment to attainment; but if gratitude begins to wane and our advantages are accepted either as matters of our own attainment or of good luck, in that same proportion we will find ourselves growing cold spiritually."

R2644 "The Christian who has learned in everything to give thanks, and to make acknowledgment to the heavenly Father, has learned to appreciate and to enjoy his blessing more than others. To such thankful hearts the plainest of food will be more appreciated, more happyfying, more satisfying than to others. And it is undoubtedly a fact that a peaceful, thankful, happy mind is not only a blessing of itself, but additionally an aid to digestion and to the obtaining of good benefits from the food which we eat. How many dyspeptics know that it is possible to eat without satisfying, and to have plenty, and yet be unable to derive therefrom comfort and proper nourishment! And perhaps there is no better antidote to dyspepsia than a thankful, grateful heart, which acknowledges divine blessings and seeks to use them, not only with thankfulness, but with contentment, and thus has great gain.

True, God does not resent failures to acknowledge him in all our ways, but continues to cause the sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and to send the rain alike upon the just and the unjust, and to permit many of the blessings of this present life to continue with those who make no proper acknowledgment of them. Nevertheless, such cannot hope to grow in divine favor, as they might if in all their ways they acknowledged God and sought to see in all the affairs of life his providential care."

#### R4200 "THE SIN OF INGRATITUDE"

Of all crimes, ingratitude appears to be one of the most inexcusable, and has so been esteemed amongst all people and at all times... Amongst the Athenians, if a slave, being freed, was afterward convicted of ingratitude toward his liberator, he was sent back again into slavery. Someone has written, "Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul; and the heart of man knoweth none more fragrant."...

Gratitude not only is a fragrant flower, but is indigenous to the soul of every true and noble heart. Accepting this standard, we are bound to conclude that comparatively few of the human family are noble in this respect. Even amongst the Lord's people the grateful seem to be comparatively few in number. This agrees well with the Apostle's statement that amongst the called are "not many noble"—chiefly the mean things of this world." (1 Cor. 1:26-29.) But this describes what we were when we were called. Who shall say that amongst those who have accepted the divine call and been made partakers of the divine favors granted to all the sons of God, begotten of the Spirit—

brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for His service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for His service also in the present time, and enable us by His grace to show forth His praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which

who shall say that these will remain ungrateful? Who shall say that the grace of God would not have a transforming influence on their hearts, so that however ungrateful they might be by nature, they would be so changed by grace that gratitude would be one of the chief elements of their disposition?

We believe that this is true; and that the Lord's people may in considerable degree measure their spiritual growth and development in this manner. If they find in themselves a spirit of murmuring and complaining against the Lord, it is a sure sign that they are ungrateful; for we know that he is faithful, and faith tells us that it is surely true that all the experiences of life permitted to come to us are working for our good. (Rom. 8:28.) Whoever has this faith can give thanks to the Lord and can rejoice even through his trial and sorrow. And if we have gratitude to God for his blessings and favors, if we cultivate the true nobility of heart which is impelled by love and appreciation of divine care, it will make us appreciative of all the affairs of life and of all those with whom we have contact. We shall appreciate their good qualities, even if we cannot endorse all of their course; and whoever may do us kindness in the least degree must have our gratitude, our appreciation. Yea, with the Christian the standard must be still higher than this; for this should be the world's standard; as our Lord expressed it, "For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same." (Luke 6:32.) The standard for the Lord's people is still higher than that of gratitude, though it must include this. Our standard is benevolence, a forgiveness of those who transgress against us, and who say all manner of evil against us falsely. Such as attain this degree of character-likeness to their Lord receive an extra blessing from him in proportion, and are bidden to rejoice and be exceeding glad, and to know that they will have a reward in heaven.

Gratitude is therefore a keeping power in our hearts, there to repel the suggestions of the evil one, and to stop our imperfect fleshly mind if it attempts to assert itself. Gratitude is closely akin to love; and where they dwell together in the heart, there is little room for the Adversary to get in his work. On the contrary, ingratitude signifies a blindness of the mind in respect to justice. It speaks a low standard of character, in which the fruits of the Spirit of the Lord have not been well developed. Surely in any heart in which the love of God has been "shed abroad," ingratitude to him or anybody would be an impossibility. But where ingratitude gains a foothold, it admits its relatives—selfishness, pride, anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil surmisings, slander, backbitings and other qualities which the Apostle enumerates as "works of the flesh and the devil." The Lord's consecrated peo-

are His. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which, when drinking, repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial—appropriating them all to our spiritual development. Z. '02-14 R2936:5

ple should daily search their hearts for any manifestations of selfishness or ingratitude, and should look well to the growing development therein of love and thankfulness and appreciation toward the Giver of all good, toward the brethren of the Household of Faith, yea, toward all with whom we have to do."

R2352 "We should view every affair and incident of this present life that is not painful as a cause for thankfulness to the Lord; because it is that much less than our covenant might legitimately require... Our Lord's own example of suffering and enduring patiently the mockings, slanders, evil speaking, and general contradiction of sinners against himself, and the examples of the Apostles, who followed closely in his footsteps in the same path, all indicate that, all things considered, we of the present time who "have not yet resisted unto blood [death], striving against sin" and the machinations of sinners and the wiles of the Adversary, have much to be thankful for, that our lines have fallen unto us in comparatively pleasant places. We have every reason for thankfulness, no reason for murmuring.

And not only are we to be appreciative of the smooth places along the "narrow way," in which the Lord gives rest to our weary feet, but we are to be thankful also for all the trials and tribulations... Viewed from the proper standpoint, all the trials and difficulties which come to us will be seen to be mercies and blessings, designed to shape us in conformity with the lines of character manifested in our Lord and Head, and to polish us and to make us fit for the inheritance of the saints in light. While, therefore, we are not to rush into temptation, nor to bring upon ourselves persecution by injudicious conduct, yet when these things come to us as rewards for fidelity to principles of truth and righteousness, exercised in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience and love, we are to rejoice in them, as so many ministries of evil toward us, which under divine guidance are fitting and preparing us to further reflect the Lord's likeness, and to further be his representatives and ministers of righteousness, now and hereafter. And to shrink back from and to avoid the trials and difficulties and persecutions incident to faithfulness to the Lord and to his service, would be, in a measure at least, to draw back from our consecration, which is to suffer with him, that we may also reign with him—to be dead with him, that we may also live with him."

R4199 "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you."...

Samuel appealed to fleshly Israel to remember the great things that God had done for them, as a ground for thankfulness and faithfulness—their delivery from Egypt, their guidance through the wilderness and their entrance into the land of Israel; but if we apply these words to Spiritual Israel,

with what greater force do they come to us! The Lord has delivered us from Egyptian bondage, the bondage of sin and death. He has led us out of darkness into his marvelous light. He not only lifted our feet from the horrible pit and the miry clay, but he placed them upon the Rock, Christ Jesus; yea, more! he has put a new song into our mouths, even the loving kindness of our God. He not only forgave our sins, but accepted us in Jesus, and invited us to joint-heirship with Christ. He not only gave us exceeding great and precious promises to cheer our hearts in the wilderness journey, but has in reservation for us things exceed-

ing great and precious, of which he has given us a glimpse or foretaste through the holy Spirit, an earnest of our inheritance.

Who that has gratitude of heart to the Lord for these blessings, who that is appreciative and thankful, would not be indeed seeking to serve the Lord in truth with all his heart! Who that is of this attitude of mind would fail to remember the Lord's Word and to seek divine assistance in complying with its requirements, remembering the statement, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." To such daily the commandments of the Lord amplify, enlarge. Daily he sees new forces, new meanings in

these commandments. If he be thankful, if he be appreciative of the Lord's providence toward him in the past, the depths of meaning to God's commands would not be grievous to him; but he will still rejoice to go on day by day in sympathy with our Lord's words, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; Thy law is written in my heart." So it will be with us. As the Apostle says, We shall do his commandments, and they will not be grievous unto us, and this will be the evidence to us that we love God and that we are loved of him, and being sealed, impressed more and more by his Spirit, the spirit of truth.—1 John 5:2,3."

R2031 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

## DAVID'S GRATITUDE TO GOD

--SEPTEMBER 13.--2 Sam. 22:40-51--

*Golden Text--"The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer."--2 Sam. 22:2.*

THIS entire chapter is one of David's songs of praise and gratitude to God for his goodness and his loving providences which had been so manifest toward him ever since his anointing by Samuel the prophet, and doubtless before that as well. It calls to mind another expression of one of his psalms,--"Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright." (Psa. 33:1.) Indeed, the writings of David, and all the prophets and apostles as well, abound in fervent expressions of praise and thanksgiving to God. They not only praise the Lord themselves, lovingly and gratefully recounting all his mercies, but, with impassioned eloquence and holy enthusiasm, they call upon all the sons of men, and every thing that hath breath, and even inanimate nature, to laud and magnify his holy name. The worshippers are also bidden to bring with them to the concert of praise every musical instrument of human device; and grateful reverence exclaims,--"Blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen!"--Psa. 33:2,3; 50:1-6; 72:19. See also Exod. 15:1-21.

As we thus consider that, by the voice of inspiration, the whole human race is called to praise and worship and thanksgiving, we are led to consider further the relationship which the spirit of praise has to the Christian or godly character. David says, it is "comely for the upright." But why so? It is because loving gratitude is one of the divinely implanted instincts of a soul bearing the image of God, and one which should therefore be cultivated. It is this element of the intelligent creature that is designed to be responsive to the divine goodness and benevolence; and it is this element of character in man which makes fellowship and communion with God possible. If the goodness of God could awaken in us no sense of grateful appreciation; if we were wholly dead to such sentiments, there could be no pleasure on God's part in manifesting his goodness to us, and there would be nothing in us to call out his love; and so also nothing, of all his goodness and grace, would awaken love in us. But since for the divine pleasure we are and were created (Rev. 4:11), God endowed his intelligent creature with this element of character which, being responsive to his own goodness, institutes a lively and delightful fellowship with himself, which is the chief end of human existence, both on the side of the creature and of the Creator.--Psa. 16:11; Prov. 11:20; 15:8.

Rejoicing and the spirit of praise are thus seen to be indissolubly linked together in the divine economy; and so David links them, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord, for praise is comely," thus making the two almost synonymous. To see this principle illustrated take as examples the dog and the hog. Neither can have any appreciation of the divine goodness, neither being created in the mental or moral likeness of God, and hence being utterly incapable of knowing or thinking of him. Man is the highest being that they can know in any sense or degree; and that is first, because man is visible and tangible to them, and second, because they have some similar faculties, though very inferior and exercised within a much narrower sphere. The dog has in him to a considerable degree the sense of gratitude: feed and caress him, and he shows signs of gratitude and affection, and a desire to reward you with a manifestation of appreciation. He wags his tail, looks kindly into your face, licks your hand, caresses you with his head and watches to see what errand he can do for you. But the hog, on the contrary, makes no demonstration of appreciation: he takes all he can get without even so much as a look of recognition; his eyes are always downward, and his snout continual-

ly rooting in the earth for more; and a grunt is the only sound to which he gives expression. A hog, therefore, can have no pleasure in man; nor can man find any pleasure in the hog. There is no bond of fellowship whatever, and man therefore tolerates his existence only until his flesh is fit for the slaughter and the market, while between the dog and his master there is strong friendship which, when cultivated, gives pleasure to both, and they become life-long friends, irrespective of any commercial value.

It is plain, therefore, that in the cultivation of the spirit of praise, thanksgiving and loving appreciation of all the manifest goodness of God, is the Christian's secret of a happy life. And in order to the cultivation of such a spirit it is necessary that we continually call to mind his acts of mercy and of grace; that in our prayers we frequently tell him how all his goodness is remembered, how every fresh evidence of his love and care causes faith to take deeper root and makes the sense of his presence and favor more fully realized; and how through such experiences our love and joy are made to abound more and more. We love him because he first loved us; and every time we see some new mark of his love, our love, if we have truly appreciative hearts, is called out more and more, and we are made to rejoice in God, in whose presence is fulness of joy. It is to this end that our Lord encourages our frequent coming to God in prayer with large requests for his favor, saying, "Ask, and ye shall receive, *that your joy may be full.*"--John 16:24.

We observe that in Israel the spirit of praise was cultivated by calling to mind and recounting what the Lord had done for them. "If I do not remember thee," says David, "let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."--Psa. 137:6. See also Exod. 15:1-21; Deut. 7:17,18; 8:2; 15:15; 32:7; 1 Chron. 16:12; Psa. 20:7; 63:5-7; 143:5,6; 77:10-12.

So must the Christian continually call to mind the works of the Lord, especially his own individual experience of the Lord's leading and care and deliverances from dangers and snares and the wiles of the adversary. If we keep these things in mind and meditate upon them, our appreciation of God and his goodness grows, and the spirit of love and praise takes possession of the heart, and thus we are made to rejoice in the Lord always, and in everything to give thanks. So also the soul is made to hunger and thirst after God and to realize that God alone is its satisfying portion, and to desire more and more of his fulness. Thus, as the Psalmist suggests, our prayer will be, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."--Psa. 42:1.

This same principle of gratitude and praise, which reciprocates loving kindness and generosity, is that which also makes human friendship and fellowship possible and delightful. In our intercourse one with another, if the kindnesses we show awaken no sense of appreciation, receive no acknowledgment, and their repetition is expected as a matter of course, there can, in the very nature of things, be no such thing as fellowship. True, as Christians, we may not relax kindness and generosity on this account; for we, like our heavenly Father, are to be kind to the unthankful as well as to the thankful (Matt. 5:44-48); but when this goodness awakens no appreciation, no love, fellowship becomes impossible.

In David's thanksgiving for victories over his enemies we observe that those enemies were the enemies of the Lord and his people, whom David was commissioned of God to conquer. These battles he undertook in the strength which God supplied, and the victo-

ries he properly ascribes to God, the rock of his salvation. The words, regarded from the standpoint of the future, are also prophetic of the victories of Christ, of whom David was a type, and to whom Jehovah will grant victory full and complete over all his enemies,--the enemies of God, the enemies of truth and righteousness. The whole strain of thanksgiving, thus viewed in its wider application to the conquests of Christ, is eloquent in its prophecy of his glorious victory, as well as in praise to Jehovah. (1 Cor. 15:27,28.) The prophecy of a future wider dominion, contained in *verses 44-46* can

only be considered as fully applicable to the wider dominion of Christ.

The Golden Text is a blessed assurance applicable to all of the Lord's people, and it is amply verified to all those who delight themselves in the Lord, who meditate upon his goodness and render to him the praise that is due to his holy name.--"The Lord is my rock [upon which I may safely build my hopes], and my fortress [in which I may safely hide], and my deliverer [in every time of trouble]."

R2935 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0 2006)

## DRINKING AT THE BROOK

*"He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."--Psalm 110:7.*

OUR TEXT refers directly to our Lord Jesus, and secondly to all the members of the church, his body, each one of whom must share his experiences--walking in his steps and drinking of the same "brook," if they would in due time share with their Lord in his exaltation, to glory, honor, and immortality; this exaltation being represented in our text by the expression, "lift up the head." In ancient times as at present, human language was full of figures and symbols, water representing truth, and drinking of water representing appropriation of the truth, namely, wisdom (See Prov. 18:4); and lifting up the head, exaltation.--See Gen. 40:13.

Our text is given as the reason for the glorious blessings and honors predicted of the Christ and described in the preceding verses of the same psalm. Let us notice these. The first verse is directly applied to our Lord by the Apostles (Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; 1 Pet. 3:22), and our Lord applied the same to himself. (Matt. 22:44.) A figure of speech is again employed, descriptive of our Lord's relationship to the Father in Glory; he is not literally seated beside him at his right hand, but he has been honored with a superior station, a position above all others--he specially is at the right hand of divine power. Nor does his second coming hinder or change this relationship; at his second coming he will still be at his Father's right hand as he himself, declared (Matt. 26:64.) At the Father's right hand during the Millennial Age, the Father, through him, shall subdue all things to himself--put down all opposing authority and insubordination; blessing those who come into heart-harmony with his kingdom of righteousness, and destroying from the earth all who after fair knowledge of good as well as evil, choose the evil. These will be considered as followers of Satan instead of followers of God, and the second death, we are specifically told, is for the Devil and his messengers, servants.--Matt. 25:41.

The description of the Millennial Kingdom is continued by the Prophet, who declares, "Jehovah shall send the rod of thy strength out of (or through) Zion"--primarily the Church, the "Bride," the "body" of Christ; the rod or sceptre or authority shall be exercised through the Church, by the Lord Jesus the Head of the Church, under the divine commission.--"Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." This is not in any measure fulfilled yet. Jesus when in the flesh did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and the Church has not thus ruled; on the contrary, both he and his followers have been subject to the powers that be, and the violent have taken the kingdom by force and have despitely used the Head and the body members. (Matt. 11:12.) The enemies are not yet made the footstool of the Lord, Zion has not yet been glorified, and Messiah's sceptre or authority has not yet gone forth therefrom. On the contrary we are still in "this present evil world," we still wait for the completion of the elect Church that together she may be glorified with her Lord--enter into His glory--when he, the due time having come, "shall take unto himself his great power and reign;--then the nations will be angry, etc., (Rev. 11:18) and divine wrath will come upon them; and following that "day of wrath" shall come the promised blessing, upon all who shall demonstrate under the good opportunities of that Millennial Kingdom, that they love righteousness and hate iniquity.

This latter class--those who during the Millennial age, during that day of his presence, shall become the Lord's people (1 Cor. 15:23)--are referred to by the Prophet when he says,--"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The day of his *power* is not yet here, as the poet declares: "Wrong and evil triumph now." The "Prince of this world" still rules and is "god of this world" as the Apostle asserts; because our Lord has not yet taken to himself his great *power* nor begun his reign. The people who shall be willing in the day of his power are not, therefore, the saints of this Gospel age; these latter are only the "first fruits unto God of his creatures" and are willing *before* the day of his power--willing to hear the Shep-

herd's voice and to follow him; willing to sacrifice all and to lay down their lives in his service, for the brethren.

Evidently, therefore, those referred to as "Thy people" who shall be willing in the day of Christ's power, the Millennial Age, are those whom our Lord represents as his "sheep," in the parable of the sheep and the goats. They are those who after the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory, and after his Church is seated with him in his throne, and after the judgment or trial day for the nations, the world, is ended,--after the knowledge of the Lord has filled the earth, after it has gradually proved the savor of life unto life, or death unto death to the world, shall be found truly "his people,"--willing, nay, glad to serve him when they know him and understand his will. As his sheep they will desire to follow in the way of righteousness, truth and holiness; as his people they will not need to be coerced further, but learning the truth in the day of his power, when the adversary is bound and when the eyes of their understandings are opened, they will be *willingly* his people. And all who shall not then become willingly his people will be esteemed his enemies, "goats," angels or messengers or servants of the adversary, and be destroyed with him in the Second Death.

"In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." That is to say, as morning after morning comes forth fresh and vigorous as its predecessor, as the sun grows not old and feeble, so with Messiah, and so also with those accepted as the members of his body, they will have perpetually the freshness and vigor of youth.--glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature--this is part of the blessing that is promised, and which will result, our text tells us, from drinking of the brook in the way.

Having told us of the kingly power and authority of Messiah, it is appropriate that the Lord through the prophet explains to us that Messiah's priestly office is to be also of a higher type than the earthly, --that his priest and kingly offices are to be blended and united as was typified in Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. Our Lord when on earth was not of the Aaronic priesthood, nevertheless, Aaron was his type, and the sacrifices which Aaron performed were typical of the "better sacrifices" performed by the antitypical priest, in the laying down of his own life and in the consecration and sacrifice also of all those who are his during this Gospel age, who thus "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." By and by our High priest will have completed all that was illustrated in the Aaronic type, he will have finished the Day of Atonement sacrifices, and then the glory promised will follow,--instead of a suffering priesthood there will be "a royal priesthood" --a reigning priesthood.--1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 5:10.

Then follow assurances that this glorious priest-king will prosper, that his reign of righteousness will be successful; the assurance being that God will be at his right hand supporting him and bringing matters to a successful issue,--smiting down kings and wounding the heads over many countries, and subduing all things mightily. The great day of trouble coming is very generally referred to as "the day of Jehovah,"\* the day of His wrath, although it will be under the direct supervision of our Lord Jesus, for the purpose of introducing and establishing his Millennial dominion.

These, foregoing, descriptions of the greatness of Messiah and his kingdom, lead up to our text; and it, as before suggested, is given as the reason why so great blessings, honors, and dignities and authority are conferred. "He shall drink of the brook in the way; *therefore* shall he lift up the head--[be exalted.]"

### LEARNING OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS SUFFERED

As we look into the Word for testimony upon the subject, we find that our dear Master did indeed learn certain lessons of experi-

\* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. 1, Chap. 15.

ence; as the apostle declares, he "learned obedience in the things which he suffered." Not that he had ever been disobedient to the Father's will, but that his testing at the time that he came into the world to do the Father's will was of a character and of an intensity such as never before had been brought to him nor any other creature. His obedience attested his love to the Father, attested his faith in the Father's love and justice; and in all these things he fully approved himself of the Father; he overcame every trial, he drank frequently of the brook of wisdom, in connection with these lessons. Moreover, it was expedient that he, to be the great High Priest of mankind, should be touched with a feeling of their infirmities, and therefore that he should be tempted in all points like as his followers are tested--along the line of personality, of self will; along the line of worldly ambition; along the line of faith and trust; along all the lines of obedience to God's plan. He drank deeply of the cup, and rejoicingly said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"--John 18:11.

And now we come to a point of special interest in our text; for we perceive that if it was necessary for our glorious Lord from the heavenly courts to drink of the brook of experience, and gain wisdom by the things he suffered, endured, and thereby to demonstrate his confidence in God, it is equally necessary that all the members of his body should likewise drink of the brook in the way, if they would hope to share with the Lord in the Kingdom blessings-- glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature.

Our dear Master's time for drinking at the brook is past, yet the lessons and encouragements therefrom are still before us in the Scripture records. It is now our time to drink of the brook of experience,--to learn the lessons that are necessary to our preparation for the Kingdom. It is not enough that we have tasted of the brook of experience, that we have learned something of obedience, that we have endured some trials, that on some occasions we have learned obedience through the things we have suffered; we must continue drinking until we can gladly say--Father, thy will, not ours be done! If we drink not of the brook in the way we shall not share in the glory to follow.

Some of the Lord's people not discerning the matter in its true light, are disposed to pray that they may be spared from trials and temptations; whereas they ought to understand that the trials and difficulties of the consecrated are witnesses of the spirit \*\* that they are children of God, and are under his training and preparation for a glorious share in the Kingdom, to which he has called us. Because if we are not tried we cannot be "overcomers"; if we do not suffer with him, and learn to endure hardness as good soldiers, and to esteem our trials and difficulties from the right standpoint, and to count it all joy when they come to us, knowing their object and knowing the Lord's sustaining grace and strength, we will not be "fit for the Kingdom."

Others interpret the trials of life as evidences of divine disfavor, and fail to realize that they are designed of the Lord to shape and

polish our characters and thus to work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Because of their misunderstanding they are profited little by many of life's experiences through which they are called to pass-- they feel the rod, but not discerning the loving purpose behind it, they fail to learn the lesson intended. Let us become more and more awake, more and more alive to the things of God,--to the facts of the case as he presents them to us in his Word--to our call to joint-heirship to the Kingdom, and incidentally to the drinking of the brook of experience and wisdom in the way that will fit and prepare us for the glories to follow.

Drinking of the brook does not, however, imply that we sorrow and are disconsolate above others; on the contrary, those who drink of the brook properly are full of joy. As the apostle declares, they are enabled in everything to give thanks unto God,--in life's difficulties, as well as in its pleasures--even as he again says, Count it all joy when ye fall into divers difficulties, knowing that under divine providence they will work out for you a greater blessing. (James 1:2.) It is the world, which must also share its part of life's difficulties, that sorrows as those who have no hope, or who have false hopes. The apostle points out side by side the world's condition and the Church's condition under the trials and difficulties of this present evil world, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." Then he explains the position of God's people, begotten of his spirit, who are walking in the Lord's footsteps, and drinking of the brook in the way, saying, "We ourselves also groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of the body"--the body of Christ, the Church. This hope, which we have, gives a changed coloring and silver lining to every dark and troubled subject which comes to us in common with mankind; so that inspired by draughts from the brook we can sing in the house of our pilgrimage, even though as yet we must also groan, because we are in this imperfect tabernacle, this unsatisfactory mortal body.

<sup>[1]</sup>We want to ask the Lord, our Master and Head, that he will bless us more and more, as with fresh zeal we shall endeavor faithfully and rejoicingly to drink of the brook of life's experiences, and gain wisdom therefrom that will fit and prepare us for his service by and by; and which will the better fit and prepare us for his service also in the present time, and enable us by his grace to show forth his praises in all the trying circumstances and vicissitudes of life so as to glorify him in our bodies and spirits which are his. Let us, as we drink of the brook, take a lesson from the little birds, which when drinking repeatedly lift the head as though giving thanks to God. Let us continually give thanks to our Lord for every taste of life's experience, for every lesson, for every trial-- appropriating them all to our spiritual development. The time for lifting up our heads in glory is nearing, too, and already the Master directs that seeing (with the eye of faith) the evidences of their approach, we may lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh.--Luke 21:28.

\*\* See Millennial Dawn, Vol. 5.

<sup>[1]</sup> Dec. 28 Manna, Psa 110:7

*How often God's  
Choice for us is  
seen to be an ugly  
Cross; but as we  
look closer we find in that Cross a message  
of love and encouragement from our Father  
above. If we had lacked submission to the  
Divine Will we should have turned away  
from that Cross  
impatiently and  
have never read  
the blessed message  
it brought. It  
would have been  
but a Cross, while  
now it is a Treasure.*

*Moral: Examine each Cross for its Lesson  
Much Christian Love to all, - B.H. Barton-Minot, N.D. - Jan.27, 1916 Pilgrim Echoes Page 511*