

LOOK UP AND LIVE

BY L. C. NADEN.

FORWARD

MOST MEN seem to spend their lives worrying about the past, complaining of the present, and trembling for the future.

The author of this book presents to you the Wonder Man of all ages, who said in the long ago, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” John 12:32. He can adequately care for the past. He assures us of help for today and hope for tomorrow. To all who may be downcast and discouraged we extend the invitation to Look Up to Him and begin to really live. L. C. Naden.

KEEP LOOKING UP!

Like millions of other boys, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Brock had just been called overseas to face the dark, dangerous days of war. The hearts of the family were heavy. Shortly after, the father of the soldier-son noticed a motto on the wall of his minister’s study. It read, “Keep Looking Up!” It was like a message from heaven. Returning home, he and his wife wrote this lovely gospel song.

Life has its joys and sorrows, too,
Sometimes the mists will hide our view;
If we would hope and strength renew,
There’s just one thing to do:

Refrain:

Keep looking up, thy God is still the same today,
Keep looking up, He will not fail thee, come what may;
Keep looking up, the darkest cloud will roll away,
So do not doubt, but keep looking up!

When darkened clouds have filled your sky,
And faithless friends have passed you by;
When prone to doubt or reason why,
There’s just one thing to do:

So when your faith is sorely tried,
And earnest prayers have been denied;
Whenever you need a faithful guide,
There’s just one thing to do:

— *Virgil P. Brock.*

PREFACE

EVERY BOOK is more or less a picture of its author. He reveals himself in every page. We seem to see him looking out between the words. That is one reason why I like this book. It is evidently written by one who is himself at peace with God and has found in Holy Scripture the answer to life's great questions, How can a man find peace in a world of unrest? How can he be at peace with mankind, with the world, and with God?

From beginning to end, the author presents Christ as the only hope of man and his civilization — but the gloriously sufficient hope. He buttresses every statement with plain and clear quotations from Holy Scripture, and he climaxes every chapter with a prayer. These eleven prayers will bring blessing to every reader.

Multitudes today have forgotten how to pray, and the earnest prayers recorded in this book constitute one of its greatest attractions.

The author is strong and clear on salvation by faith alone, and on justification through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. He exalts the life of obedience and sanctification. He shows us that every man has a place to hide in this time of world trouble, if he will seek it.

The book reveals the blessed hope of our Lord's return. Along with this are the two great doctrines and holy truths — the cross of Christ and His second coming. They illuminate every chapter.

The chapter entitled, "Solace for the Sorrowing," is well worth the price of the book for those who are troubled or who have lost loved ones. It leaves no doubt at all that there is to be life after death, and that the holy resurrection promised by Christ is not far in the future.

He describes the second coming of Christ in Biblical terms, and pictures the world and man in the light of it. He shows what would happen to us all if the second coming of Christ should not take place.

Last of all, he makes heaven real — the Paradise home that has been prepared for the redeemed. It is a most thrilling picture, and one that will never be forgotten.

The author's object is to uplift Jesus before us all, as the Redeemer and Restorer of the world. He invites the discouraged, the troubled, and in fact all sinners to look by faith to Jesus as the Redeemer, dying for man upon the cross, and as the Lord of life soon coming in the clouds of heaven. In this way all may look up and live. H. M. S. RICHARDS.

CONTENTS

- 1. LEADER THE WORLD NEEDS MOST**
- 2. HOPE FOR A HOPELESS WORLD**
- 3. MAKING A FRESH START**
- 4. WALKING WITH CHRIST**
- 5. A PLACE TO HIDE**
- 6. ENTERING THE JUDGMENT WITH HIM**
- 7. SOLACE FOR THE SORROWING**
- 8. THE GREATEST EVENT IN HISTORY**
- 9. LOOK UP AND LIVE**
- 10. YOUR HEAVENLY HOME**

1. LEADER THE WORLD NEEDS MOST

DURING the last world war, when Hitler's troops were over-running Europe, a young German lad is reported to have said: "Hitler has become so big, and Jesus Christ so small." But Hitlers come and go, and Christ goes on forever.

He alone of all the sons of men has been able to cross the bounds of nationality, caste, and society. Men have not forgotten His visit to the world nearly 2,000 years ago. He is still adored by great and small, rich and poor, throughout the world. Songs of love and fidelity honor His name. In scores of languages, daily prayers ascend to Him from the lips of millions who would rather die than dishonor His holy name. Shortly before His death on the cross, He prophesied that His name would be preached in the entire world. (Matthew 24:14). Today we witness the fulfillment of this prophecy.

He possessed neither wealth nor influence. His relatives were inconspicuous and uninfluential, yet in infancy He startled a king. In childhood He puzzled theologians. In manhood He ruled the course of nature, walked upon the billows as if they were pavements, and hushed the sea to sleep.

He healed the multitudes without medicine and without money. He never wrote a book, yet all the libraries in the world contain numberless books that have been written about Him. He never wrote a song, yet He furnished the theme for countless hymns and sublime oratories. He never founded a collage, but all the schools in the world cannot boast of having as many students. He never marshaled an army, drafted a soldier, or fired a gun, yet no leader ever had more volunteers.

Every seventh day multitudes wend their way to houses of worship to pay Him homage and respect. The names of great statesmen are soon forgotten, but the name of this Man is known in every land on earth. Though nineteen hundred years separate this generation from His crucifixion, He still lives. Herod could not kill Him. Death could not destroy Him. The grave could not hold Him. As another has said, "He stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed of God, acknowledged by angels, adored by saints, and feared by devils, as the living, personal Christ, our Lord and Savior."

The name of Jesus fits into every language of the earth. It needs no translation. It seems as if His name were meant to be on every man's lips.

"Jesus," oh, how sweet the name!

"Jesus," every day the same;

"Jesus," let all saints proclaim

Its worthy praise forever.

— W. C. MARTIN.

Dr. Gordon tells how he at one time gave his little boy a jigsaw puzzle-map of the United States to put together. Surprised at how quickly the little fellow accomplished this task, he asked him how he had done it. Smiling, the boy turned the map over and showed his father a large picture of Uncle Sam on the opposite side. He had just put the man together, and in so doing had quickly solved the puzzle. Likewise, the best way to understand the Bible and piece together those portions that are difficult to understand, is to study them in the light of Christ and His experience.

No one can find a satisfactory answer to the puzzle of life without Christ. Without Him life is meaningless. With Him everything fits into a pattern that can be readily discerned.

Jesus said to His followers in the long ago, "Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me." John 14:1. These words were spoken to men who were saddened at the thought of His impending departure. They had seen Him provide food for the hungry. They had witnessed His miracles of healing. They had seen Him raise people from the dead. They loved Him dearly, and were deeply distressed at the thought of being parted from Him.

No one is happy at the thought of partings. A brief visit to an airport, a railway station, or a wharf is proof of that. Nothing stirs the emotions more than the realization that someone whom we dearly love is slipping from us into the unknown.

Jesus brought peace to the disciples' troubled hearts by revealing something to them about the afterlife. He made it real. He spoke of a real heaven and a prepared place. "In My Father's house are many mansions," He assured them. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." John 14:2, 3. The thought of a reunion with loved ones, of real homes and eternal happiness, is thrilling indeed.

How do we get there? "Follow Me," He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is the way from doubt to certainty. He is the way from earth to heaven, and He is the way from man to God. He can show us the way through the dark tunnel of the tomb, clear through till we emerge on the other side, out under the blue skies of eternity.

I like to think of Lazarus. The Scriptures record that when Jesus reached the village of Bethany, Lazarus had already lain in the tomb four days and his body had begun to decompose. Jesus stood before that tomb and uttered just three words, "Lazarus, come forth!" and Lazarus answered the call of the Life-giver. What He did for Lazarus and others He will do for you and me if we have faith in Him.

Jesus was no ordinary man. He was God in the flesh. He demonstrated this by His miracles, His works, His wonderful sayings, and by the things He didn't do. He never uttered a word that He had to take back. He never showed any personal fear. He never made a mistake, and He never confessed a sin. Why? Because the Scriptures declare: "In Him is no sin." 1 John 3:5. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." 1 Peter 2:22. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21.

This wonderful man assures His followers that He will answer their prayers. (John 14:12-14). Furthermore, He reminds us of our need of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives to convict us of sin, to guide us in the way of eternal life, and to remind us of the precious promises He has made to all who do His will. He has made it possible for the Holy Spirit to be with His people in all the world, comforting and guiding and blessing them in the Christian way.

Finally His promise to all who believe in Him is, "Because I live, you shall live also." John 14:19. What a glorious assurance to poor, dying humanity! What a soothing balm for broken hearts!

We must all face the question asked by the Lord Himself in the long ago, "What think you of Christ?" Matthew 22:42.

Are you just an admirer of Him? If His life is to mean anything to us, we must learn to know Him as our personal Friend and Savior. Apart from Him we have little hope for the future. There is nothing outside of Christ to satisfy the deep longings of the human heart. When we are face to face with the great unknown, His smile of assurance will certainly carry us through into the land of glad reunion. Like the Psalmist of old we can say, "Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Psalms 23:4.

The Lord offers to us all today forgiveness of sins, peace of mind, hope for the future, and life everlasting. If you have not as yet done so, will you accept Him today as your Savior and live for His glory till He comes? Will you look into the face of God right now and say:

FATHER, I love You and I love Jesus, and I wish to thank You both for all You have done for me. Take my life and make it wholly Yours. Keep me from sin, and help me to live in harmony with Thy divine will till Jesus comes. Amen.

2. HOPE FOR A HOPELESS WORLD

WERE I ASKED to name the greatest tragedy in the history of the world, I would say, “The fall of Adam.” Had there been no fall, none of the things that have since made life so unhappy for millions would have happened.

When our first parents were expelled from their Edenic paradise, they moved away from their home with sad hearts and heavy steps to enter a world blighted by the curse. What a terrible experience it must have been for Adam to witness the corroding effects of his sin for almost a thousand years!

Thank God, the story does not end there. God had a plan ready for the restoration of the human race to the Paradise that was lost.

This is encompassed in the immortal words of John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Christ’s death was not an afterthought; neither was it an emergency plan that God devised at the last minute. We read in 1 Peter 1:18-20 that the plan of salvation originated in the mind of God even before the creation of the world. “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: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

The provision of a Savior was part of God’s eternal purpose. Jesus was the Lamb of God, “slain from the foundation of the world.” (Revelation 13:8). God did not leave man without hope. The plan of salvation was made known. We read in Genesis 3:15 the words addressed to Satan through the serpent: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise His heel.”

When Eve’s first baby was placed in her arms, she exclaimed in joyful anticipation, “I have gotten the Man Jehovah.” (Genesis 4:1, Spurrell). Eve thought she had given birth to the promised Redeemer. But she lived to discover that her first-born was not the Messiah, but the world’s first murderer! Four thousand years went by before the angels announced Christ’s birth in Bethlehem’s manger. During those intervening millenniums the sons of Adam marched in unbroken columns into the dark shadows of death. None have returned to tell what life beyond the grave was like.

In 1 Corinthians 15:22 we read, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” What thrilling news this is to dying men! We know from past history and personal experience that men do not live too long. Threescore years and ten is life’s normal span. If we are fortunate, we may reach fourscore years. Life at its best is all too short, and we know that the curse of death lies heavily upon the human race. But as we are doomed to die in Adam, so we are predestined to live in Christ.

Some time ago, while driving to Cambridge from London, a friend of mine took me to see the tomb of Lady Anne Grimstone. Once, when reminded of the Christian’s hope of resurrection from the dead, she is reported to have said, “It is no more likely that I should be raised from the dead than that a seed should grow out of my body.”

Lady Anne Grimstone died in the year 1717 and was buried in an altar tomb. Soon after her death a crack developed in the tomb, and a seedling pushed its head up and through it. During its growth the tree split the tomb and twisted the railings so much that it has left them hanging in the air. Thus what seemed so unlikely to Lady Anne Grimstone actually happened.

In John 5:28, 29, N. E. B., we read: “Do not wonder at this, because the time is coming when all who are in the grave shall hear His voice and move forth: those who have done right will rise to life; those who have done wrong will rise to hear their doom.”

“All” shall come forth. There will be no exceptions. From Abel to the last man who dies before the trumpet sounds, all will come forth. Voltaire, who sneered at the Christian hope, will rise again. So will Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin. But not all will come forth at the same time.

The first resurrection will be of those who have died in Christ. (1 Thessalonians 4:16). But “the rest of the dead,” that is, the wicked, will not live again until “the thousand years” are finished. (Revelation 20:5). They will live but a little while and then suffer “the second death.” (Verses 6-9).

You might be wondering why God plans to raise *all* the dead — both righteous and wicked. He is going to raise all men to prove the efficacy of the blood of Christ. God has made it possible for all men to live again. Just how long we live after our resurrection depends on our attitude to Christ. He died that we might live, and live eternally. Let us look at that text again. “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” If we die the first or natural death, we die for Adam’s sin. If we die the second death, we die for our sin of unbelief. There is no need for anyone to die outside of Christ, that is, to die without hope, for “God,” we repeat again, “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

How important it is to *believe in Him!* If we are laid to rest before His coming, how important it is to be *asleep in Him* and to come forth clad in the robes of immortality at His second advent. If it were not for Him we would have no hope beyond the grave. The angel of death could descend from the courts above and visit every cemetery in the land, and carve on every tombstone the words, “Dead for ever more.”

I once read the story of a little girl who found this blessed hope in Christ. She was dying of tuberculosis, and her parents were concerned about her salvation. She had left the church of her father and joined one of the evangelical churches. In desperation her parents requested their minister to visit the girl and try to persuade her to return to their church. The minister pleaded with the child, but in vain. Then in desperation, he said, “If you don’t return to our church, we will not be able to bury you in holy ground.” Raising herself on her frail elbows, the child said, “You do not frighten me. Bury me where you will. When the Lord Jesus returns for me, He will know where I am.”

Jesus said, “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:10. The world was lost. You were lost. I was lost. Thank God, Christ came and paid the full price of our salvation. The gospel prophet, writing of Jesus and His mission to this world declares: “Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Isaiah 53:4-6. Then “shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.” Verse 11.

In Hebrews 12:2 we read, “For the joy that was set before Him” Jesus “endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

The joy that came to the heart of Christ was that of seeing by faith the triumph of His mission. He saw that day when He will lead the sons of men back to the Paradise of God.

In “*The Great Controversy*,” E. G. White depicts this inspiring scene in the following words: “As the ransomed ones are welcomed to the city of God, there rings out upon the air an exultant cry of adoration. The two Adams are about to meet. The Son of God is standing with outstretched arms to receive the father of our race — the being whom He created, who sinned against his Maker, and for whose sin the marks of the crucifixion are borne upon the Savior’s form. As Adam discerns the prints of the cruel nails, he does not fall upon the bosom of his Lord, but in humiliation casts himself at His feet, crying: ‘Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain!’ Tenderly the Savior lifts him up and bids him look once more upon the Eden home from which he has so long been exiled.

“After his expulsion from Eden, Adam’s life on earth was filled with sorrow. Every dying leaf, every victim of sacrifice, every blight upon the fair face of nature, every stain upon man’s purity, was a fresh reminder of his sin. Terrible was the agony of remorse as he beheld iniquity abounding, and, in answer to his warnings, met the reproaches cast upon himself as the cause of sin. With patient humility he bore, for nearly a thousand years, the penalty of transgression. Faithfully did he repent of his sin and trust in the merits of the promised Savior, and he died in the hope of a resurrection. The Son of God redeemed man’s failure and fall; and now, through the work of the atonement, Adam is reinstated in his first dominion.

“Transported with joy, he beholds the trees that were once his delight — the very trees whose fruit he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence and joy. He sees the vines that his own hands have trained, the very flowers that he once loved to care for. His mind grasps the reality of the scene: he comprehends that this is indeed Eden restored, more lovely now than when he was banished

from it. The Savior leads him to the tree of life and plucks the glorious fruit and bids him eat. He looks about him and beholds a multitude of his family redeemed, standing in the paradise of God.” — Pages 647, 648.

Friend, if you would be *with Him* in that day then you must be *in Him now*. Will you just bow your head where you are and repeat with me this prayer of surrender and consecration:

PRAYOUR: Father in heaven, I thank Thee for sending Jesus into the world to save me. I have learned that He is the way, the truth, and the life — that He is the way from earth to heaven, from death to life, and I accept Him as my Savior. Whether I live or whether I die, I do want to be among those who will be found in Him at His second coming. As I place my hand in Yours today by faith, do lead me on. Keep me from falling, and grant that through the merits of my Savior I will at last see Thy blessed face, and be welcomed into the kingdom of glory, I pray in His precious name, Amen.

3. MAKING A FRESH START

GODS PARDONING LOVE casts our sins into the bottom of the ocean of His forgetfulness. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7.

In Romans 5:1 we read, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:.”

What does it mean to be justified? It means that in Christ we have a standing with God that causes Him to forget what we once were. We are in His sight as if we have never sinned. That is the simple meaning of justification.

There is a natural law which allows one to look at a dark-red rose through a crimson glass and we see it as white as snow. Try it sometime. You will be surprised and delighted.

The same law operates in the plan of salvation, for God, looking at you and me through the precious blood of Christ, does not see our sin-stained past. He sees only the purity of His own dear Son. The Bible declares: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9.

The moment we fulfil the conditions of that text we are justified before God. We are cleansed in His sight.

I repeat, in the experience of justification, God forgets the man I was. This was fully demonstrated in the life of King David. All who know David can name his sins. No man, of course, could sin so grievously before the Lord without having a very troubled conscience. If you want to know how deeply repentant David was, read Psalms 51. No person could have been sorrier for his sins than he. He knew he had dishonored his Maker, and felt separated from Him. Now he prays for a restoration of the joy of salvation, asking God to purge him, cleanse him, and renew a right spirit within him.

Did God hear that prayer? He did. David regained fellowship with his Maker. His new-found faith is well described in Psalms 116: “I love the Lord because He hath heard my voice. . . . Yes, our God is merciful. . . . For Thou has delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.”

In 1 Kings 14:7, 8, God indicates what He thought of David after his death. “Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus said the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over My people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou has not been as My servant David, who kept My commandments, and who followed Me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in Mine eyes.”

What do we read here? The simple truth that God had forgotten David’s sin! He had kept His promise. When He thought of David, He said, “David was truly a wonderful man: a man who kept My commandments, a man who followed Me with all his heart, a man who did only that which was right in Mine eyes.” This is what it means to be justified. David was perfect before God. He was in God’s sight as if he had never sinned. That is the gospel of justification by faith.

Let us look at another well-known Bible character, a man whom God was proud to own as His man. I read in Exodus 3:6: “Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”

It is easy to understand how God could claim to be the God of those great men of faith, Abraham and Isaac, but no one can read the life story of Jacob without coming to the conclusion that he was a cheat and a deceiver. We are inclined to despise him because he took advantage of his hungry brother, and deceived his poor old blind father. We cannot study his life without being fully conscious of the fact that he had many of failings and shortcomings of mankind. Yet that man found favor with God. He was justified in God’s sight, for in the new covenant relationship, the Scriptures declare that “He [God] hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob.” Numbers 23:21.

This is God’s estimation of men whose faith clothes them in the robe of Christ’s righteousness. How thrilling that in the experience of justification He forgets what we were, and loves us even as He love His own Son.

Ellen G. White says. “If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Savior, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.” (*“Steps to Christ,”* page 62). That is what it means to be accepted by the Father in Him.

Friend, do you want to forget your past? Knowing that someday all must give an account of their actions before God in judgment, would you like to have your past cleansed by the blood of Christ? Would you like to have a new start in Him — to be justified and appear henceforth in the sight of God as one who has never sinned? You may have that glorious experience now.

O wanderer, in that far, far land,
From God still fugitive.
Turn homeward where thy Father waits —
Today, look up and live.

Though mighty famine grips the soul,
By sin’s dark narrative,
The eyes of love still watch for thee —
So now, look up and live.

Thy Father sends His word of love.
That word? “I do forgive.”
O famished heart, come home, come home.
Just now, look up and live.
— H. M. S. Richards.

All you need to do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Confess Him. Obey Him. Commit your life to Him now.

Will you bow your heads where you are and pray:

Prayer: Father in heaven, I have learned that Thou art merciful, loving and kind to those who are in need of Thy pardoning love. Lord, I need Thy forgiveness.

Like the prodigal of old, I have sinned against Thee and my fellow men. I am not worthy of forgiveness, but Thou has promised in Thy Word that if we confess, Thou wilt forgive. Please forgive me for all my past, and help me from henceforth to be a worthy child of You. Give me grace and strength to live a life pleasing to Thee, I pray in Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

THE SOUL’S CRY AND THE SAVIOUR’S ANSWER

(Arranged by Ralph Willis).

Psalms 30:10	Lord, be Thou my Helper.
Isaiah 41:13	Fear not; I will help thee.
Psalms 31:9	O Lord, . . . I am in trouble.
Psalms 50:15	Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee.
Psalms 51:2	Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
Matthew 8:3	I will; be thou clean.
Psalms 141:3	Keep the door of my lips.
Exodus 4:12	I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shall say.
Luke 18:13	God be merciful to me a sinner.
1 Timothy 1:15	Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
Acts 16:30	What must I do to be saved?
Acts 16:31	Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved.
Job 23:3	Oh that I knew where I might find Him!
Jeremiah 29:13	You shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart.
Job 40:4	Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee?
Isaiah 1:18	Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

Look up and Live – L.C Naden

Psalm 51:10	Create in me a clean heart, O God.
Ezekiel 36:26	A new heart also will I give you.
Psalms 6:6	I am weary with my groaning.
Psalms 55:22	Cast thy burden upon the Lord.
Psalms 27:9	Leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.
Hebrews 13:5	I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.
2 Corinthians 2:16	Who is sufficient for these things?
2 Corinthians 12:9	My grace is sufficient for thee.
Psalms 42:2	My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
Isaiah 33:17	Your eyes shall see the king in His beauty.
Psalms 130:6	My soul waits for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.
Isaiah 40:31	They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.
Psalms 55:4	The terrors of death are fallen upon me.
John 11:25	He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.
Revelation 22:20	Come, Lord Jesus.
Revelation 22:20	Surely I come quickly.

4. WALKING WITH CHRIST

THE APOSTLE PAUL urged the new believers in Colosse to walk with the Lord they had come to love. “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.” Colossians 2:6. “Live your lives in union with Him,” is the rendering of the New English Bible.

We have noticed that justification is the work of a moment, that the blood of Christ applied to the believer’s heart and life cleanses him from every stain of sin here and now. That in Christ we have a standing of perfection before God. That through the experience of justification God reckons us to be righteous. He attributes to us the character of Christ, and in so doing He forgets the men and women that we were. Justification sets us on the road to heaven; supplies us with a title to the kingdom of glory.

After receiving Him by faith, we must walk with Him by faith, which is to live “in union with Him.”

There is an inscription on the wall of an old English abbey which reads as follows: “I am on the cross for thee. Thou who sins cease from sin. Cease, I pardon; fight, I help; conquer, I crown.”

Speak to those who have been really converted and are rejoicing in the forgiveness of sins, and they will tell you that Christ is giving them victory over sin. He has not only saved them from the consequence of past sin, but He is now giving them victory over its power. A person who knows forgiveness for sin ceases from sin, then co-operates with the Holy Spirit, and never gives up till life’s course is run and the crown of life is bestowed.

Redemption does not patch up the old life; rather it imparts a new one. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

People have said to me: “Show me a miracle and I will believe. I would like to see water turned into wine.” I can show you that in a slow process. A visit to a vineyard reveals God taking moisture out of the earth and placing it in grapes that can be made into wine. But I can show you a greater miracle still. I can show you a home where wine and whiskey have been turned into food for little children who, prior to their father’s conversion, lived in a hovel without the necessities of life. In John 8:36 we read: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.”

Through the years of my ministry I have seen God working this miracle of grace in human hearts. I have seen people cleansed by the blood of Christ and freed from debasing habits. For the gospel not only brings pardon for an evil past, it is “the power of God unto salvation” now and for ever.

Someone has defined character as “God’s workshop where divine creations take form and they go out bearing His mark upon them to witness to the world of His skill and power.”

This process of sanctification is the work of a lifetime. While life lasts, it does not end. We must be sanctified today, tomorrow, and the day following until Jesus comes.

We read of people in the church at Corinth who were once gripped by loathsome habits. “But,” Paul says of them after Christ had changed their lives, “you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus.” 1 Corinthians 6:11. How did this come about? Notice the end of the verse, “by the Spirit of our God.” As E. G. White declares: “The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. . . . Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of the divine power. It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world’s Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Though the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church.” — *“The Desire of Ages,”* page 671.

In Romans 6 the Apostle Paul tells Christians that they must reckon themselves dead to sin. When we are tempted to do wrong, we should say, “No, I cannot do this thing, or walk again in crooked paths. I am dead to such things. Christ is now in control of my life. I am walking in Him.”

We should be like the little girl, who said, “When Satan knocks at the door of my heart, I say, ‘Jesus, You open the door.’ And when Jesus opens the door, Satan immediately says, ‘Sorry, I have come to the wrong place.’”

With Christ in control we can have victory over every temptation. “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him.”

Christ’s redemptive power has been well described in the following words: “You are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You will serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfil His word to you. If you believe the promise — believe that you are forgiven and cleansed — God supplies the fact. You are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it. Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, ‘I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised.’ . . . It is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. . . .’ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’ Romans 8:1.” — “*Steps to Christ*,” page 51.

“But,” you say, “I have tried so often and failed.” Think of Peter. He did the seemingly impossible. He walked on water. But the moment he took his eyes off Christ, the Source of his power, he began to sink. So likewise we can do the seemingly impossible through the power of Christ. He “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Jude 24.

So long as life lasts it will be possible for us to sin. But there is no excuse for sin. We read in 1 John 3:9: “Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin.” The thought in the original Greek is, “He who is born of God is not habitually guilty of sin.” Walking with Christ it is not our practice to sin. We may be overtaken in sin on the spur of the moment, caught unawares. But when that happens, praise God, “we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1.

Jesus has given us a wonderful picture of God’s love for sinners in the parable of the prodigal son. This is the only place in the Bible where God is depicted as being in a hurry. The father ran to meet his son. So God is ever eager to meet the prodigal son or daughter returning home. In Psalms 37:23, 24 we read: “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholds him with His hand.”

How often we have held the chubby hand of a baby and encouraged him to take his first step. What excitement there was when he walked unaided! So, likewise, the Lord delights in our progress. Should we stumble and fall, He says, “Get up, My son, My daughter, and try again. In Psalms 103:13, 14 He assures us: “Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”

There is only one successful way to walk toward the kingdom, and that is “in union with Him.” I suggest the following prayer for you:

Prayer: Father, Thou has shown us the way again. To some it may be a new way. Help them to know that as they commit their lives into Thy care and keeping, Thou wilt keep them from falling and give them victory in place of defeat. In appreciation of Thy love we desire to serve Thee faithfully. So lead us on, Lord, until we are safe home in the glory land, we pray in His precious name. Amen.

5. A PLACE TO HIDE

MANY YOUARS AGO I saw a picture hanging on the wall of a home in which I was visiting. It made a deep impression upon my childish mind. I do not remember all the details nor the title, but I do recall that the painting depicted an approaching storm.

I can still see the black clouds overhead and the trees bending before the first fierce gusts of wind. Two horses, one white and one black, their nostrils distended with fear, their tails and manes standing out in the wind, were galloping across the field to safety. In the foreground a little group of people with bowed forms, blanched faces, and terror portrayed in every look and action, were running before the approaching storm in search of a hiding place.

I have thought of that picture many times in recent years, for it seems to depict so vividly the tragic hour to which we have come in the history of the world.

Jesus' disciples one day asked Him a question that is of vital interest to you and me. "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3.

The whole of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is taken up with His answer. Luke also records it in the twenty-first chapter of his Gospel. He quotes Jesus as saying: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." Verses 25, 26.

The conditions Jesus said would occur just before His second advent are here today. Fear fills all hearts. Men fear the future; they fear another world war; they fear the atomic and hydrogen bombs. They are concerned about the possible extinction of the human race. But the message of our Lord to His followers in these uncertain days is, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27. Again, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matthew 28:20. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh." Luke 21:28.

Isaiah, the gospel prophet, draws attention to the only safe shelter from the problems and dangers that bring fear to the human heart. He declares: "A Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isaiah 32:2.

The testimony of God's people in all ages is that Christ, our blessed Lord and Redeemer, is well able to shelter His people from every type of "fallout" — physical or spiritual — that the devil may bring upon them. Those who daily walk with the Lord have nothing to fear for the future.

If Christ could take a little boy's lunch and feed 5,000 men, besides women and children, why should His followers worry about where their next meal is coming from? When people were sick, He took them by the hand and led them from their sick-beds in the glow of perfect health. When others were dead, He raised them to life again. He is able to meet every emergency.

We need a hiding place from many things. We need it from an accusing conscience. Recently I read of a young man who had confessed to poisoning his foster-father with arsenic. He told how he had planned the murder over a period of seven years because he hated him so much. His mother had been charged with the murder, but the case had been dismissed. For fifteen years and more this young man had hidden his secret, then he confessed to the police.

He is alleged to have said, "I have nightmares, and recall the past so often in my sleep that I am cracking under the strain. I want to live the remaining years of my life with peace of mind. I want to forget the past and the only way I know is to confess the truth."

Conscience troubles people for many reasons, and the only place where peace may be found is in Jesus Christ.

I once read of a parliament of religions that was held in the United States. The great religions of the world were represented by able speakers. One by one they propounded their respective philosophies to a great audience. When the representative of Christianity arose to speak he quickly gained the attention of his audience by his novel approach.

“I want to introduce to you,” he said, “a woman in great sorrow. Her hands are stained with blood. She has been tormented for ten long years. She has had no peace day or night.” Then, turning to the speakers who occupied the dais with him, he said, “Is there anything in your religions, in your philosophies, that can bring peace to this poor woman’s troubled conscience?”

There was silence. No one could offer any help. “Then I will ask someone else,” said Dr. Smith. Cupping his hands before the vast crowd, he shouted, “John, can you hear me? Will you tell this woman how she can get rid of this awful sin? Listen!” he said, as he raised his hand, “John is speaking: ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ “ 1 John 1:9.

Jesus alone can forgive and cleanse.

“Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain;
He washed it white as snow.”

We also need Him as a hiding place from the power of sin within us. He can take away the overmastering appetite for alcohol and tobacco, the overpowering passions that cause me to debase themselves. He can kill the passion for gambling to which untold thousands are enslaved. He can set you free from all that would destroy you — body, soul, and spirit. “If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed” John 8:36.

We need Him, too, as a hiding place from all the devil’s temptations. Satan sets his traps so skillfully for unwary feet! “Be sober, be vigilant,” urges the Apostle Peter, “because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour.” 1 Peter 5:8. Only Jesus can keep us safe from this adversary.

It is difficult to understand how people can contend that there is no devil. Why, the old serpent, as he is called in Revelation 12:9, has left the imprint of his slimy tail upon all the pages of history. How often we have seen him with subtlety take a beautiful young woman and ruin her life; take a fine young man from a respected family, debase and ruin him, destroy everything that was decent in him and leave him in the gutter, an outcast of society. We have also seen him take the devoted church member, not just a simple soul, but the educated and cultured, and deceive him with the most fantastic theories in the field of theology and finally and completely wreck his faith in God and His church.

We need a hiding place for our children, our loved ones and ourselves, too, from the subtle power and cunning of the devil. We have observed through the years that he baits his hook well, hauls countless millions into his well-filled boat, and leaves them to torture and burn under the merciless sun of their conscience and to ultimately die in despair.

What refuge shelters you today? May we all say to the Lord at this moment,

“Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, O leave me not alone!
Still support and comfort me;
All my trust in Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.”

Prayer: Father in heaven, we realize again our great need of a hiding place that Thou has provided for us in Thy dear Son and our Savior. We thank Thee that the past cannot condemn us when we are found in Him: that the devil and our adversaries cannot harm us while we are in Him, and that we have nothing to fear for the future while He is our refuge. Keep us ever sheltered in Him till the glad day of His return, we pray in His precious name. Amen.

6. ENTERING THE JUDGMENT WITH HIM

NO DOUBT there are many people in this world who hope that death ends everything for them. But, we ask, what do the Scriptures say? Will there be a day of reckoning for human beings? In Hebrews 9:27 we read: “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” There it is, friend, whether we believe it or not, the judgment for each one of us is coming just the same.

We read in the Bible that there is a day of judgment *for all men*. This day has been appointed by God. It is a day during which the whole world will be judged by Christ “in righteousness.” And finally, this judgment day for all men is just as certain as Christ’s resurrection from the dead. Let us notice the text: “Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.” Acts 17:31.

But, says someone, I have always understood that the righteous, because of their faith in Christ, will escape the judgment. They will not escape the searching investigation of the judgment; but, praise God, if they enter the judgment with Christ as their Judge-Advocate, they may escape its penalties and rejoice in its rewards.

Years ago, when I was a lad attending the little church in our village, we often repeated the Apostles’ Creed in which there occurs the following statement of belief: “He will come to judge the quick and the dead.”

Yes, in the day of God’s judgment all — righteous and wicked, living and dead — must give an account of their deeds. Jesus declared, as recorded in Matthew 12:36, 37, “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

The doctrine of the judgment, you see, is a Bible doctrine, and like the second coming of Christ it is an absolute certainty. It is, according to Paul, just as certain as Christ’s resurrection from the dead. That great fact upon which the Christian church is built was confirmed by many miracles and the eyewitness account of at least 500 persons who beheld Him after He arose. See 1 Corinthians 15:6.

In the Book of Revelation, John depicts an angel flying in the midst of heaven announcing to all the world that “the hour of His [God’s] judgment is come.” When the great prophetic clock in heaven indicated the appointed time of the judgment as foretold in Acts 17:31, two great events commenced simultaneously — the beginning of the work of judgment in heaven, and the announcement of that work on earth. Bible students found that the time-period of Daniel 8:14, beginning with the year 457 BC, reached to the year 1844, thus indicating the time for the commencement of the judgment. Is it not a significant thing that such a message has been going to the nations since the year 1844 when, according to the prophecy, the judgment hour message was due?

Now it is clear from the Scriptures that the judgment is divided into three phases: First, the investigative section which precedes the Second Advent and deals with all those whose names have been written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. Second, the judgment of the wicked which takes place during the millennium. And third, the time when the decisions of that judgment are executed at the end of the thousand years.

We read in 1 Peter 4:17 “that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us [The house of God, or the church], what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God [the wicked]?” Some people agree that the wicked will be judged, but find it difficult to believe that judgment touches the house of God. The Bible makes it clear that all who have had their names inscribed in the Lamb’s Book of Life will come into review in the solemn judgment that is in session right now, and which could conclude at any time! Commencing away back with Adam, continuing with all who have had their names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life down through the centuries, the judgment of the house of God will end with the investigation of the cases of the living.

When that work concludes, probation closes and the decree of Revelation 22:11 goes forth” “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

The second phase of the judgment deals with the wicked, whose names are not found in the Book of Life. We note this in 1 Corinthians 6:2: “Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world?” We read further in 1 Corinthians 6:3 that the saints will also judge angels. The Bible declares that there comes a time when the saints will sit on seats of judgment and consider the cases of the wicked. When will this take place? We repeat, during the millennium. Note Revelation 20:4, 5: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

Now these passages of Scripture reveal that those who come up in the first resurrection, and go to heaven to be with Christ during the millennium, will be seated on thrones of judgment. Some might be reasoning, if the wicked have not already accepted the provisions of the gospel, are they not doomed already? And if an individual’s name has been blotted out of the Book of Life, will he not be doomed to die? So why the necessity to judge the wicked? Well, there is at least one thing that the judgment of the wicked will undoubtedly do — it will demonstrate to the universe that God’s ways are just and true. Say, for instance, you reached heaven and discovered that someone you regarded as a sincere Christian was not there, this could cause doubt to enter your mind. But there will not be any doubts in the minds of God’s people respecting His judgment. Why? Because all will have the opportunity of going through the records, and discovering to their complete satisfaction just why certain individuals are finally lost. At the conclusion of this phase of the judgment we shall be able to say that all God’s ways are just and true. (Revelation 15:3).

The third phase of the judgment, when the wicked are raised to hear their doom, takes place at the end of the millennium and fulfils John 5:27-29 and Revelation 20:11-15. Notice: “As the Son of man He has also been given the right to pass judgment. Do not wonder at this, because the time is coming when all who are in the grave shall hear His name and move forth: those who have done right will rise to life; those who have done wrong will rise to hear their doom. I cannot act by Myself. I judge as I am bidden and My verdict is just.” (New English Bible).

John the Revelator depicts this last sad scene when the wicked hear their doom, in Revelation 20:11-15; “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

During the investigative judgment, which extends from 1844 to the close of probation, it will be determined whose names will be retained in the Lamb’s Book of Life, who will be worthy of a part in the first resurrection, and who will merit translation at His coming. In Revelation 22:12 we read: “And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Before we can receive awards there must of necessity be a judging.

This is what the Bible teaches, for I read in Luke 20:35, “But they which shall *be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, . . .*” Can you see it? Before Christ comes it is determined by the investigative judgment who are worthy of resurrection to eternal life.

The Bible declares that “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 5:10). None will escape the judgment, for we read: “And thinks thou this, O man, that judges them which do such things, and does the same, that thou shall escape the judgment of God?” Romans 2:3. We may be able to escape many things in this life’s experience. There are numerous thieves and murderers who have covered up their tracks so well that to date they have escaped the tribunals of man. Much of the crime that is committed is done under the cover of darkness. Many things are done in secret, and men delight in the thought that they have fooled everybody. They might have deceived others, but they will not fool God!

The colored people of the South in U.S.A. have a song they sing, the words of which go something like this:

“He sees all we do,
He hears all we say.
My God’s a-writing all the time.”

Yes, God is writing, and some day we will have all the secrets of our lives revealed to the universe, if we do not allow our Savior to deal with them now! We read in Romans 2:16 of a time “when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.”

Let us now notice the basis of the judgment, shall we? We read in Daniel 7:10 that “the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” It is clear, therefore, from the Scriptures, that we shall be judged out of the records in the books of heaven.

Friend, there is no need to have any sin remaining on the books of record unconfessed and unforgiven to condemn you in the judgment. You can have those sins pardoned now through your confession of Christ as your Savior. You can have them removed now from your personal record and charged to our Lord and Savior. If they are charged to His account now, as a result of your confession to Him, they will not condemn you in the judgment. We must be sure that no unconfessed sins are piling up against our names in the books of heaven.

We repeat again, we have no righteousness of our own that would recommend us to God. He has told us in Acts 17:31 that He will judge us in righteousness, and if we have the righteousness of Christ when we appear in the judgment, we shall be accounted worthy to enter God’s kingdom. If we don’t have Christ’s righteousness in that day, we shall be found wanting.

I am so glad that the Lord Jesus with His precious blood covers all our sins, that we can pass them over to Him and He will cleanse us from every stain of sin. The stains are removed now in the experience of justification by faith. In Christ we can have a standing before God of perfection. Right here and now we can rejoice over this glorious fact. How thrilling to know that the sin confessed no longer witnesses against us, but is charged to Christ our Savior, that in this judgment hour we can through the merit of Christ’s atonement appear before God as though we had not sinned! If we are in Him we need not fear the issues of the judgment. Thank God we can safely leave our cases in the hands of the most capable Advocate in the universe.

I remember reading one time of a minister who dreamt that he had died and stood before the judgment bar of God. He said that in his dream he heard God say to him, “Have you always been true?”

“No,” he replied.

“Have you always been kind?”

“No.”

“Have you always been just?”

“No.”

And as he continued through the long list of questions, the minister said “No” to them all.

“Then,” he said, “I thought the end had come and judgment was to be passed. I bowed my head and waited for sentence, when I was conscious of a light before me. I looked up and saw a face — a face fairer than all the sons of men. I looked at His hands and saw the marks, then I saw who it was, and I heard Him say, ‘Father, this man stood for Me down in the world. I will stand for him here.’”

This illustration may not be entirely true to Scripture, but thank God we do have an Advocate, a Mediator, in the courts above, Jesus Christ the righteous.

“Arise, my soul, arise:
Shake off thy guilty fears;
The holy sacrifice
In my behalf appears.
Before the Throne my Savior stands;
My name is written on His hands.

“The Father hears Him pray,
His dear anointed One;
He cannot turn away
The presence of His Son.
His spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I’m a child of God.”
— C. Wesley.

Friend, we may escape the penalties of the judgment only through the meritorious work of Christ our Savior. You may have been the victim of circumstances, you may have lost all that makes life worth living, you may think your case is hopeless; but we say unto you in the words of Scripture, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” He will blot them out, and He will hurl them from you as far as the East is from the West.

I am so glad for the assurance that if we commit our case to Him, He will bring us through the judgment uncondemned. I am not concerned about the past, for I have confessed it. My great desire is to keep my sins confessed and covered by the precious blood of Christ, and like the great Apostle Paul, to be found only in Him in that great day.

Some day soon probation will close for all mankind. What will the records reveal for you when that days dawns? May you, too, be found in Him is my sincere prayer. If you are in Him then you will be eternally secure.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, we thank Thee for Christ our Advocate, for the blessed assurance that we are accepted in the Beloved. May not one of us be found wanting when our cases come in review in the courts above. Help us to keep our sins confessed and covered, that at last by Thy unfailing grace we may reach the eternal kingdom, we pray in His precious name. Amen.

7. SOLACE FOR THE SORROWING

HOW FREQUENTLY we receive letters containing statements like this: “I don’t have much to live for since John died. When he left us the lamp of my life went out, and nothing seems to matter now. Every day is just an aching void, and darkness brings a nightmare of loneliness.”

Friends, that is but an echo of the despairing cry that goes up from sorrowing hearts all over the world. Sorrow is no new thing. It has been the common lot of all mankind in all ages, for it is the eldest child of sin. How true the words of Cowper:

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No traveler ever reached that blest abode
Who found not thorns and briars in his road.”

No matter how great our sorrow, it is bearable if one knows and believes that God has allowed it to come our way for a purpose. The reason may never be revealed this side of the kingdom, but we must have faith to believe, as the Apostle Paul declares, that “all things work together for good to them that love God,” and that some day we shall understand.

In the Book of John, the eleventh chapter, and verse thirty-five, we read that Jesus wept when He talked with Mary, the sister of His departed friend, Lazarus. But His were neither tears of hopelessness nor despair; they were, rather, tears of sympathy and compassion. The picture of the weeping Christ fills us both with awe and hope — awe that the Majesty of heaven, the mighty Creator, should have His face bathed in tears, and hope because we know He really cares, that He is touched with the feelings of our sorrow.

He came from the courts of glory to bear our griefs and to carry our sorrows. (Isaiah 53:4). He alone is the answer to the cry of the ages, “Is there no balm in Gilead” for wounded and broken hearts?

Thank God, our sorrow need not drive us to despair, for a remedy for sorrow has been found. The Great Physician has “an oil of joy for mourning,” a “garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” He has a “blessed hope” that reaches within and beyond the tomb. What it cost to make possible this remedy for sorrow only the heart of God knows, but “God so loved the world,” with its guilt and sorrow and woe, that He gave His gift, and the results of that gift constitute the sweetest story ever told in heaven or earth. It is the “blessed hope.”

For six thousand years the gateway into the valley of dark shadows has opened and closed in endless rhythm. As far as we know, only two exceptions (Elijah and Enoch) have been made in the grim reaper’s record, which is pictured so pointedly in the words, “as in Adam all die.” But, God be praised, there is more to this text than the dismal wail, “all die.” There is the promise of life: “Even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:22). As all die, so all, because of Christ, shall live. The “all” includes those near to us by the ties of nature who were so rudely torn from our hearts and homes. What a day is before us! How it thrills the soul and quickens the emotions! It is the comfort for our sorrow, hope for our despair, joy for our tears. The poison of the sting of death has been removed by the gospel balm, and now we “sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” (1 Thessalonians 4:13). But rather do we look forward to that time when “there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4.

No longer does death mean an eternal separation from those we hold dear. In God’s great plan it now becomes but a little rest, a quiet sleep, until the storm is passed; then comes the call to eternal life. How good is our God to take away the sting of death! How comforting are those little words, “sleep” and “rest!” David, speaking of death, says: God, “gives His beloved sleep.” (Psalms 127:2). Like a weary child, God’s “beloved” drops off to sleep, knowing full well that his Father will call him in the dawn of His tomorrow, and in glad anticipation he writes, “I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness.” Psalms 17:15.

The great Apostle Paul, eager that none should worry about death, also uses the peaceful expression “sleep” in describing the death of the righteous. “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. . . . For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [or precede] them which are asleep.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15.

Then he goes on to tell of the call to awake from death at the second coming of our Lord: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. (See also Psalms 13:3; Daniel 12:2; Acts 7:60; Revelation 14:13.).

With this view of death God’s children are unafraid of its presence. As Paul faced the executioner, he cried: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:55-57. Christ has gained the victory over death for every soul. When He arose in triumph over the grave that resurrection morning, He made possible the release from the prison house of death of all who have felt its cruel bondage. From the courts of glory Jesus shouts in triumph: “I am He that lived, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; . . .and have the keys of hell [grave] and of death.” Revelation 1:18.

While upon earth Jesus, in a few instances, manifested His power over death and the grave. This He did because of the compassion and sympathy of His soul for the sorrowing, and to beget confidence in Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. When the people stood in awe at His power, He cried: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.” John 5:28, 29. What a glorious morning that will be! No words of man can describe the joy of that hour. In response to the voice of King Jesus, which echoes and re-echoes to every part of the earth and sea, the dead come forth, clad in immortal youth. “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. . . . Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Corinthians 15:52-54. Truly, “God’s tomorrow is a day of gladness, and its joys shall never fade.” Though “weeping may endure for a night, . . . joy comes in the morning.” Psalms 30:5. Just to know that the morning of the resurrection is hastening on apace is enough to dry falling tears, to revive perishing hopes. It is only “a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” Hebrews 10:37.

Possibly the words of this little poem will bring to some sorrowing heart the message that God would have you hear just now:

“One night, when my life was young and strong,
I was crooning a lullaby
To my sweet wee tot three summers old,
When the babe began to cry
For the dollies my mother-hands had made,
And I soothed her childish sorrow
With the words: ‘Your babies are put away;
You may have them again tomorrow.’

“And now, as I travel the sunset road
‘Mid the twilight soft and deep,
While my empty arms are starving
For the forms once hushed to sleep,
My Father in love bends over me,
And there’s hope instead of sorrow,
As He says: ‘Your babies are safe asleep;
You may have them again tomorrow.’ “

God forbid that the grief of despair should rob us of our vision and strength. Rather should our sorrow and loss lead us to a complete consecration of every fiber of our being to God. Jesus is coming, and coming soon! The long, dark reign of death is about to end. The signs of that event are everywhere. No longer should the wail, “I don’t have much to live for since John died,” pass our lips. We have everything to live for — Christ, eternal life, meeting our loved ones, heaven, eternal home!

The great Apostle Paul was thinking of just such a prospect when he wrote: “Comfort one another with these words.”

PRAYER: Dear heavenly Father, we thank Thee again for the promises of Thy Word so helpful and appropriate for every need of man. Lord, while we do not understand the reason for many of the tragic happenings of life, which include the removal of our loved ones by death, we thank Thee for the blessed assurance that to those who love Thee the parting is not for ever. We rejoice in anticipation of that glad day when we will meet never to part again. We thank Thee for buoying up our spirits with the Blessed Hope of the glad re-union day, so soon to dawn. Help us to keep on looking up, we pray in His precious name. Amen.

8. THE GREATEST EVENT IN HISTORY

WHILE STANDING in the Capitol Building, Washington, D. C., one day, we gazed high up into the dome where are inscribed Tennyson's immortal lines:

“One God, One Law, One Element —
And one far—off Divine Event—
To which the whole creation moves.”

That one supreme event toward which all creation moves and toward which all history is tending, is the second coming of Christ.

Nineteen centuries ago, our Lord entered this world via Bethlehem's manger. He remained here thirty-three years, and then returned to the world of glory and light whence He came. His first advent is the greatest and most important fact in human history — so great that today all history is reckoned as before or after His birth. (BC or AD). We have noted that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by reason of that visit, and by what He did and taught while here, became and has remained the greatest figure of all time.

It naturally follows, then, that the most important announcement that one could bring to the people of this generation is that He who has wielded such great influence in human affairs, is about to appear in this world the second time. On His first visit to this planet, He laid the foundation of human salvation. When He returns He will put into effect the eternal principles of His kingdom, and he will establish righteousness, justice, and equity in all the earth.

While this may all sound fanciful and improbable to many, it is, nevertheless, no cunningly devised fable. Our Lord will surely come again. In fact, we say on the authority of God's Word, that the second advent of Christ is an absolute, assured certainty. There is nothing more positive and certain in God's program for the salvation of mankind. Events all about us, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy, are shaping with amazing positiveness to this very end. Yes, Tennyson was right when he wrote, “One far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves,” with the exception that that event is not now so far off.

Every person who believes in God, every person who accepts Jesus and would be counted as a Christian, every person who holds the Bible to be God's Word, must believe in the second coming of Christ and that He will return in the near future. This doctrine is one of the outstanding teachings in the Bible which is the foundation of our Christian belief. I suppose no subject of the Scriptures is more pronounced or more clearly stated than this one, for there are at least three hundred positive statements regarding the second coming of Christ in the New Testament alone. It would appear that every writer insists upon it, so it is not a matter of interpretation.

When we deal with this subject, we are dealing with one of incontrovertible fact. Jesus Christ is coming again, and what is more, He is coming in our time, and if we understand the Bible aright, His coming will change the face of this world. His coming will solve all the vexing problems facing the nations just now. His coming will usher in an eternal kingdom of peace. His coming will mark the inauguration of a new kingdom in which there will not be found any of the things that make this life so sad. His coming will mark the end of evil, sin, and suffering, and the bringing in of righteousness, peace, and everlasting joy.

In support of our contention that the Lord will come again, we read Hebrews 9:28: “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” To those who are ready when He returns, this will be the greatest of all days in their experience, for it is recorded of them in Isaiah 25 that they will gaze heavenward in that glad day and say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.” Verse 9. So, to His followers who are waiting and praying for their Lord's return, this will be the culmination of their every hope, the realization of their every desire.

To others, however, His coming will be as a thief in the night, and they shall mourn when they ultimately view His appearing. John the revelator, in the sixth chapter of the Book of Revelation, has outlined the reaction of those who are not prepared to meet the Lord when he returns in all His

glory. Here it is recorded: “And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: [17] For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Revelation 6:14-17. Now is the time to prepare our hearts for that great day, for whether the world approves or not, whether men desire Him or not, Jesus our blessed Lord and Redeemer is coming again.

Let us turn to God’s Word once more and see how absolutely certain these things are. We base our belief in the second coming on the authority of the infallible word of Jesus Himself. When Jesus says He is coming again the second time, that settles the matter forever for us, and Jesus has said just that. Immediately prior to His death upon the cross, He said to His disciples, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” John 14: 2, 3.

Here in the words of the greatest of all authorities, Jesus Himself, is a clear-cut unequivocal promise and pledge, the meaning of which there is no possibility of mistaking. “I will come again,” said our Lord. And in the twenty-eighth verse of John 14 He repeats this promise in these words, “I go away, and come again unto you.” To the unbelieving Pharisees and scribes just before His betrayal, He declared “You shall not see Me henceforth, till you shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.” Matthew 23:39.

Replying to the questions of His disciples as to what would be the signs of His coming and of the end of the world — and those signs are all clearly outlined in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 — Jesus said, “Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: . . . and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:30.

On another occasion, he said to His disciples, “the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels.” Matthew 16:27. On the occasion of His trial, when adjured by the High Priest, Jesus replied, “Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Matthew 26:64.

In the last chapter of the Bible, this same Jesus repeats three times to His servant John this great truth of His second coming: “Behold, I come quickly,” and “Behold, I come quickly,” and “Surely I come quickly.”

After reading these precious promises, it would seem only natural that every person who accepts Jesus as his guide and teacher must have a conviction created in his heart regarding the certainty of the second coming of Christ. These things admit of no doubt.

Not only did our Lord make these plain, positive statements giving assurance of His second coming, but during His public ministry He uttered many parables in which He forcefully presented this great truth.

In the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25), He admonishes His people, “Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man comes.” And He appeals to every disciple to be ready.

In the same chapter, in the parable of the talents, He represents Himself as a man travelling into a far country who, before going away, delivered His affairs in this world — the work of human salvation — into the stewardship of His servants, giving them special privileges and opportunities to carry forward His work. Then He declares that after a long time He will come again and reckon with them all in a final judgment.

In the parable of the tares, recorded in Matthew 13, He plainly declares that the end of the world is to be connected with a work of separation between the righteous and the wicked, at the establishment of His kingdom.

In parable after parable, Jesus sets before the world in His public teaching, the truth of the coming of His kingdom, at which time final judgment of the world, and ultimate rendering of rewards and punishments, take place. In His model prayer, He taught His disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.” Plainly then, the immutable Word of God teaches the second coming of Christ. Nothing can prevent its occurrence. Unbelief will not hinder it. Opposition will not stop it. Fear of it will not keep it from coming, for it is predicted in the infallible Word of God.

In the early days of the last war when the German invasion was on, a bomb was dropped near the Warsaw Depot of one of the great Bible societies, blowing out windows and doors. Only one little pane of glass remained unshattered, on which was printed, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away." These words remained on that small fragment of glass for all to see during the long months and weary years of the war, and passers-by often took off their hats saying, "It is a miracle." Yes, and God's Word, too, is a miracle. We should thank Him every day for it, especially for those precious promises concerning our Lord's second coming.

It may be difficult for you to appreciate that fact that Christ is coming, and coming soon. Nevertheless, He will come, and we pray that you will be among those who will greet Him with joy when He returns.

A gentleman who lived on Long Island, New York, had for many years wanted to buy a good, reliable barometer. The price asked for these delicate instruments seemed more than he could afford; but one day in 1938, he satisfied his long ambition by buying a barometer made by a reputable firm. It was shipped to his home. You can imagine his disappointment when, after unpacking it, the instrument registered, "Hurricane." He shook it vigorously to dislodge the needle, but it still stayed on the "storm" area on the dial. He was not only disappointed, but he was angry, and returned the barometer to the firm with a strong letter of complaint. Upon returning to his Long Island home the next evening, he found his home was missing. The barometer was right. A hurricane had swept away his home and all he possessed.

Many people today are skeptical about the barometer of God's Word of prophecy; but, friends, a fair and impartial study of the prophecies will lead any honest man to discern that God's barometer has predicted present world conditions. We are living in that "storm" period immediately prior to the second advent. But beyond the storms and tempests there lies, in sunny peacefulness and rest, the glory that is to be revealed, the kingdom of the Most High, joy unspeakable, and life eternal. May God keep us calm as we face the future, and may His abiding presence be with us all as we keep on looking up till He comes to take us to our home above.

PRAYER: Dear heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the precious promise of our Lord's return. We are happy in the knowledge that soon all sin and sorrow will be removed from the earth for ever. Like the disciples of old, we pray again this day, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Grant that we might be there in that glad day, we pray in His precious name. Amen.

9. LOOK UP AND LIVE

NO BOOK in recent years has caused such a stir as William Vogue's "Road to Survival." Within its pages he charges the people who have lived upon this earth in the past three hundred years with behaving as if the earth's resources were limitless. He declares that the present tremendously rapid growth in human population is frightening. It is causing mankind to face the kind of crisis that should cause us to study immediately ways and means of assuring our survival. In his own words he declares: "A brief survey of five continents makes it obvious that man has moved into an untenable position by protracted and wholesome violation of certain natural laws. Much has already been lost, but most of the wealth that still remains to us can be vastly increased, and man's survival assured, if we hurry. The most critical danger is that we shall not realize how short we are of that one unrenewable resource — time! If we wait until next year, or next decade, to push our search for a solution, then our fate may be sealed. Never before in history have so many hundreds of millions of people teetered at the edge of a precipice."

William Vogue is but one of many individuals who, while not particularly familiar with Bible prophecy, are so deeply stirred by the swift-moving events of our day, and conditions prevailing at the moment, that they wonder if there is really time left in which to plan a rescue of the human race. We want all who are discouraged by these prophets of doom to lift up their heads and rejoice, for our Deliverer will soon be here. The road to survival lies, we believe, in the second coming of Christ. He is our only hope. In John 14:1-3 we read His own precious promise concerning His return: "Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also." And further, in Luke 21:28: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh."

We have referred to these texts because we do not wish you to question for a moment the fact that the Lord Jesus will come again. Not only does Jesus refer to this glorious event time and time again, but His disciples bound it up with every doctrine they taught, and with every exhortation to holy living. When the Apostle Paul earnestly entreated the Christians of his day to faithfully attend church services, he did so by appealing to the imminency of the Lord's return. He said, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:24, 25. When he endeavored to inspire them to live godly lives, he exhorted them by saying, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Again, whenever he was called upon to comfort the hearts of those bereaved of loved ones, he did so by reminding them of the coming of the Lord in these words of assurance and hope: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18. I do not know of any more comforting promise than this: that in the day of the Lord's return, our loved ones will be restored to us again.

Maybe there is someone who is saying to himself, "Well, suppose Jesus doesn't come, what does it matter?" We answer this question in detail. If Christ does not return, then not one grave in this world containing the mortal remains of a child of God will ever give up the dead. And every Christian who has died in the hope of a glorious resurrection, has hoped in vain. You cannot show us one promise of the resurrection that is not somehow bound up with the second coming of Christ. Turn back to the patriarch Job, and find what he has to say about it: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:25, 26. The hope of Job was bound up with the return

of his Redeemer to this earth. The Apostle Paul says the dead in Christ shall rise when he comes. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

Again, if Christ should not return, not one child of God would ever be rewarded for anything that he had ever done for the cause of our Lord. The great apostle declared just before his execution: "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: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Timothy 4:7, 8. To what day does Paul refer? Why, to the glad day when Jesus returns, for we read in Revelation 22:12 that when He returns He will bring rewards with Him. Paul has been dead nearly nineteen hundred years, but he will not be rewarded until the day of Christ's return. If Jesus doesn't come again, he will not be rewarded at all, and neither will any other martyr who has laid down his life for the cause of Christ.

We state unhesitatingly, that if Christ should not return, then there is absolutely no hope for this world. No matter how sincere men may be in their efforts to correct things just now, conditions can never be righted until Jesus comes. Wars and rumors of wars, uncertainty and fear, with earthquakes, pestilences, and famines, are our lot in spite of the tremendous efforts that men are making to bring order out of chaos and restore balance to a topsy-turvy world. This is all in harmony with the prophetic forecast given by our Lord in the long ago. (See Matthew 24 and Luke 21). Thank God there is a day coming when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and nations shall never learn the art of war again; when the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and the desert shall blossom like the rose. There is coming a day when we will have heaven upon this earth, but that day is always associated in God's Word with the return of Jesus.

No doubt some farmers and orchardists will read these lines. What hope is there for you under present conditions? Isaiah says, the earth will grow old and "wear out like a robe." (Isaiah 51:6, Moffatt's translation). The prophet Joel warns that toward the close of this age pests will increasingly attack the fruits of the earth, causing men to become discouraged. Read the first chapter of Joel, verses 11 and 12, for his description of farming conditions in the last days. Among other things he says: "The farmer is downcast, the vine dresser wails, . . . the fig tree withers, pomegranate, palm, and apple; every tree of the field is adrooping, and joy fades from man." (Moffatt's translation).

Any farmer will tell us upon request, of numerous difficulties associated with farming today. Our grandparents remember the time when apples had no codlin moth, when stone fruits were impervious to disease, when potatoes and tomatoes had no blight, and wheat no rust. But today one cannot successfully farm without the aid of insecticides and fungicides. Our livestock is being more and more ravaged by disease. Man himself has to live in an atmosphere of approximately two thousand diseases. Our public and private hospitals are crowded to the doors, while thousands of patients badly in need of hospitalization await admission. It is certainly a sick old world in which we live.

In addition, insanity is increasing at an alarming rate, and is making serious inroads in our midst. The strain of the times is such that there are, according to the statisticians, twice as many insane people in the world today as there were forty years ago. Since that day when the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, a new and terrible fear has gripped the hearts of all men. That original bomb devastated two square miles only. Today men are experimenting with bombs calculated to destroy everything within an area of one thousand square miles. Dr. Hans Thirring, the man who discovered the principle behind the hydrogen bomb, says: "The radio activity released would be sufficient to kill all organic life on earth — yes, birds, beasts, fish, plants, and the human race in its entirety. . . . It is too late to stop the development of this or any other atomic weapon." Scientists and geneticists are still uncovering through experiments with mice and other animals the horrible and frightening effects of atomic radiation that are yout to be seen in future generations of men. They state unhesitatingly that should the results of some of these experiments be repeated in the human race, then the doom of mankind is already determined by the atomic explosions of the past. Someone has well said, "This old world of ours is aging rapidly, and the signs of its abating activity are on every hand. Its pulse beat is abnormally fast. Racked by fire and flood, lashed by storm and tide, cleft by quake and the lightning terror, it has left yawning chasms, gaping holes, rugged rocks — the wounds of nature in its mute struggle with the forces of iniquity." But release is coming, for I read, "Thou, O Lord, in the beginning did lay the foundations of the earth . . . and they will all grow old like a garment, . . . yes, like a garment, and they will undergo a change." Hebrews 1:11, 12, Weymouth's translation.

If Christ should not return, nature would never be set free from enslavement, decay, and disease. But I read in 2 Peter 3:1-13, that in the day of the Lord's return this old world will be purified and cleansed by the fire of His own kindling, and the Apostle Peter says (verse 13), "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness."

We repeat, the second advent of Jesus is our one and only hope of survival. Surely we should view with hope this coming day, and look with joy to the future when all that would destroy us shall be removed! Jesus said in the long ago: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws nigh." Luke 21:25-28. We thank the Lord for this invitation to look up, to lift up our heads, to be of good cheer, for the future is bright for the child of God.

PRAYER: Dear heavenly Father, we thank Thee for the blessed promises of Thy Word. At this time when men's hearts are failing them for fear as they contemplate the future without Thee, we gladly respond to the admonition to look up and live. In Jesus name. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOME

I have a home above, From sin and sorrow free: A mansion which eternal love Designed and formed for me.	John 14:2 Revelation 21:4, 27 John 3:16 Matthew 25:34
My Father's gracious hand Has built this sweet abode; From everlasting it was planned, My dwelling-place with God.	Ephesians 1:3 Hebrews 11:6 Ephesians 1:11 Exodus 15:17
My Savior's precious blood Has made my title sure; He passed through death's dark raging flood To make my rest secure.	Hebrews 9:11, 12 Hebrews 10:14 Matthew 27:46, 50 Hebrews 4:5-11
The Comforter is come, The earnest has been given; He leads me onward to the home Reserved for me in heaven.	Acts 2:2, 4 Ephesians 1:13, 14 Romans 8:14 1 Peter 1:4, 5
Bright angel's guard my way; His ministers of power Encamping round me night and day Preserve in danger's hour.	Psalms 91:11 Psalms 103:20 Psalms 34:7 2 Kings 6:16, 17
Loved ones now fallen asleep, Whose pilgrim days are done, I hope soon to clasp and greet Where partings are unknown.	1 Thessalonians 4:14 Hebrews 11:13 1 Thessalonians 2:19 1 Thessalonians 4:17
But more than all I long His glories to behold Whose smile ever fills that radiant throng With ecstasy untold.	Exodus 33:18 John 17:24 Psalms 4:7 1 Corinthians 2:9

Look up and Live – L.C Naden

That bright, yet tender smile
(My sweetest welcome there)
Shall cheer me through the “little while”
I tarry for Him here.

Numbers 6:25, 26
Matthew 25:34
John 14:18, 19
1 Thessalonians 1:10

And then through endless days
Where all Thy glories shine,
In happier, holier strains I’ll praise
The grace that made me Your.

Psalms 145:2
Revelation 21:23
Revelation 5:9, 10
Ephesians 2:8

(“Notes for Bible Readings,” Morgan and Scott).

10. YOUR HEAVENLY HOME

FRIENDS, our heavenly Father is always thinking of His children. In fact, we are never out of His thoughts. In the Scriptures we read: “He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep,” and He is constantly working things out for the best good of those that love and serve Him. God not only thinks of us and our needs during this life’s experience, but He earnestly desires that we should have a part in the world to come.

Oh, that men might lift their heads away from the soil from which they are endeavoring to extract a living, and look up and see the angel of God waiting to place a crown of eternal life upon their brows! this present life is only a fleeting shadow, but the life to come will be an eternal reality, and, too, all that God offers to us associated with the future life will be real and tangible.

We wish to tell you about the home that God has prepared for you in heaven. When Jesus left the earth, He said He was going to prepare mansions for His followers in His Father’s house. In John 14:1-3 we read: “Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

Our heavenly home will surely be something worthwhile. Think who is designing it — none else but the Lord Jesus Himself. We read in the Bible that what the ear has not heard, nor eye seen, and what has never entered into the mind of men, God has prepared for those who love Him. I wish we could forget the old idea of heaven’s being a spirit-world where people are immaterial spirits, for, according to the Scriptures, heaven will be quite different from that. And here’s the proof. I am reading Philippians 3:20, 21: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” Goodspeed translates this passage as follows: “He will make over our poor bodies to resemble His glorious body.” Do you get the significance of that? Our bodies will be changed to resemble the glorious resurrected body of our Lord, and this change will take place at the appearing of our Lord. (1 John 3:2).

Let us now notice the significance of the fact that we are going to be just like Jesus was in bodily form right after the resurrection. When He met with His disciples He made it very clear to them that He was a real, material being. He stated this fact positively in Luke 24:39, where we read: “A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me have.” And to doubting Thomas He said: “Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing.” John 20:27.

When Thomas reached out his hand and found that the Master was really there in person, and that He was a real, tangible being, he exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” We bring this proof of the tangible, material body of our Lord to you because the Scripture says we shall be like Him. Thus, when we come forth from the grave, or if we live to see Him come, we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, and these vile, mortal bodies of ours will be changed and we shall become immortal, tangible beings.

Next we answer the question, “Shall we partake of food in the kingdom to come?” It is interesting to note that Christ could and did partake of food after the resurrection. We read in Luke 24:41-43: “And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have you here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them.

That we shall eat and drink in the life to come is clear from the statement of our Lord Himself, who said, as recorded in Matthew 26:29: “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.” So you see, God’s heaven will be a very real place with real people in it.

It is spoken of as a place where houses will be built and crops harvested. The Lord says, through the prophet Isaiah, “Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. . . .And they [the

inhabitants of the new earth and the New Jerusalem] shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” Isaiah 65:17-23. I hope, when that day dawns, that I’ll be living in the midst of all my friends, so that I can have the joy of handing them some grapes from my vineyard in that glad day.

One thing that is uppermost in many people’s minds when they think about heaven, is whether they will know their friends and loved ones there. There is a statement made by the Apostle Paul which indicates that we shall know one another in heaven. In 1 Corinthians 13:12 we are told, “Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” I would gather from this that we shall know others, and they will know us in heaven.

And then I think of that question that mothers especially are so fond of asking: “Will our children grow up in heaven, or will those that die as infants always remain babies?” We are assured that the babies will grow up in heaven, for Isaiah 65:20 declares: “There shall be no more thence an infant of days.”

But does that mean that babies and little children will not go to heaven? Never forget that it was the great Life-giver who said: “Suffer the little children to come unto Me.” And we can be sure that He will see them saved in the kingdom. Isaiah 11 depicts babes and sucklings in the new earth living in the midst of one-time ravenous beasts. In Malachi 4:2, we are told that, in that day we shall grow up as calves of the stall. And what a lovely picture there is in Zechariah 8:5, of boys and girls playing in the streets of the New Jerusalem! The streets are full of them, we are told.

One of the great pleasures that awaits fathers and mothers in heaven is to see the children grow up whom, with broken hearts and many tears, they had laid in the grave during their sojourn on earth. In that glad day the angels will place them in the arms of their parents, and they will have the joy of seeing them grow up in the atmosphere of the glory land. Why, that thought in itself should spur us on to win the prize of immortal life, and join the loved ones beside the river of life.

We shall never grow weary in the life to come. The Bible says: “They shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Heaven, on the other hand, will not be a lazy man’s country. Having perfect minds and perfect bodies we shall constantly be so full of energy that we shall always be eager to do something.

At the end of 6,000 years the men of this world have just begun to discover some of the secrets of God’s great universe. Every day new discoveries are being made in every field of science. What a wonderful thing it will be in the life to come, to study with our perfect minds every branch of science, and understand for ourselves the wonders of God’s creation! Here we just begin to appreciate some of the wonders that God has prepared for man’s enjoyment when we come to the end of life; but in that day life will never end.

Just think of it! Heaven will be a place where death will never enter. In that land there will be no funeral trains, no farewell partings with swollen eyes and tear-stained cheeks. The aches that rack our bodies, and the fears that perplex and distress our minds in this life, will have no place there.

Perhaps you are saying just now, But what is required to get one’s name in the Lamb’s Book of Life that we may find admittance into the heavenly home? In Revelation 22:14 we read: “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Friend, if you feel the Spirit tugging at your heart, urging you to make sure of entering through the gates into the city of God, do not delay. Your passport into the heavenly country can be obtained right now, at this very moment. Your name can be registered upon the book of life just where you are. If you ask the Lord Jesus to inscribe your name there He will do it. If you are willing to surrender your all to Him and follow in His footsteps, your name will be immediately written in letters of gold upon the white pages of the book of life.

It is not enough to be anxious about getting to heaven, we must make a definite decision to take out our citizenship papers for heaven. We must determine to do what we know to be right in the sight of God. We must walk in the light as He has been pleased to reveal it to us, and we must place our hands unreservedly in the hand that was nailed to the cross for us, and ask God to lead us through all the future of our lives until it is our privilege to be led through the pearly gates into the city of God. Think of that beautiful home that Jesus is preparing for you right now. Are you preparing to occupy it some day? Jesus said to the people of His day, “You will not come to Me, that you might have life.” John 5:40. May that not be said of one who reads these lines. Eternal life in God’s new world is yours if you can but say, “I will,” today. “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that

hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17.

PRAYER: Dear heavenly Father, we tank Thee for the provision that Thou has made for our eternal welfare. We are glad to learn, dear Lord, that heaven is a real place, and that we shall know our loved ones and friends in the glory land. We are happy that Thou has revealed to us “the way, the truth and the life.” We respond to Thy invitation to come and drink of the water of life freely. Continue to “show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths . . .for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.” In Jesus Name, Amen.
