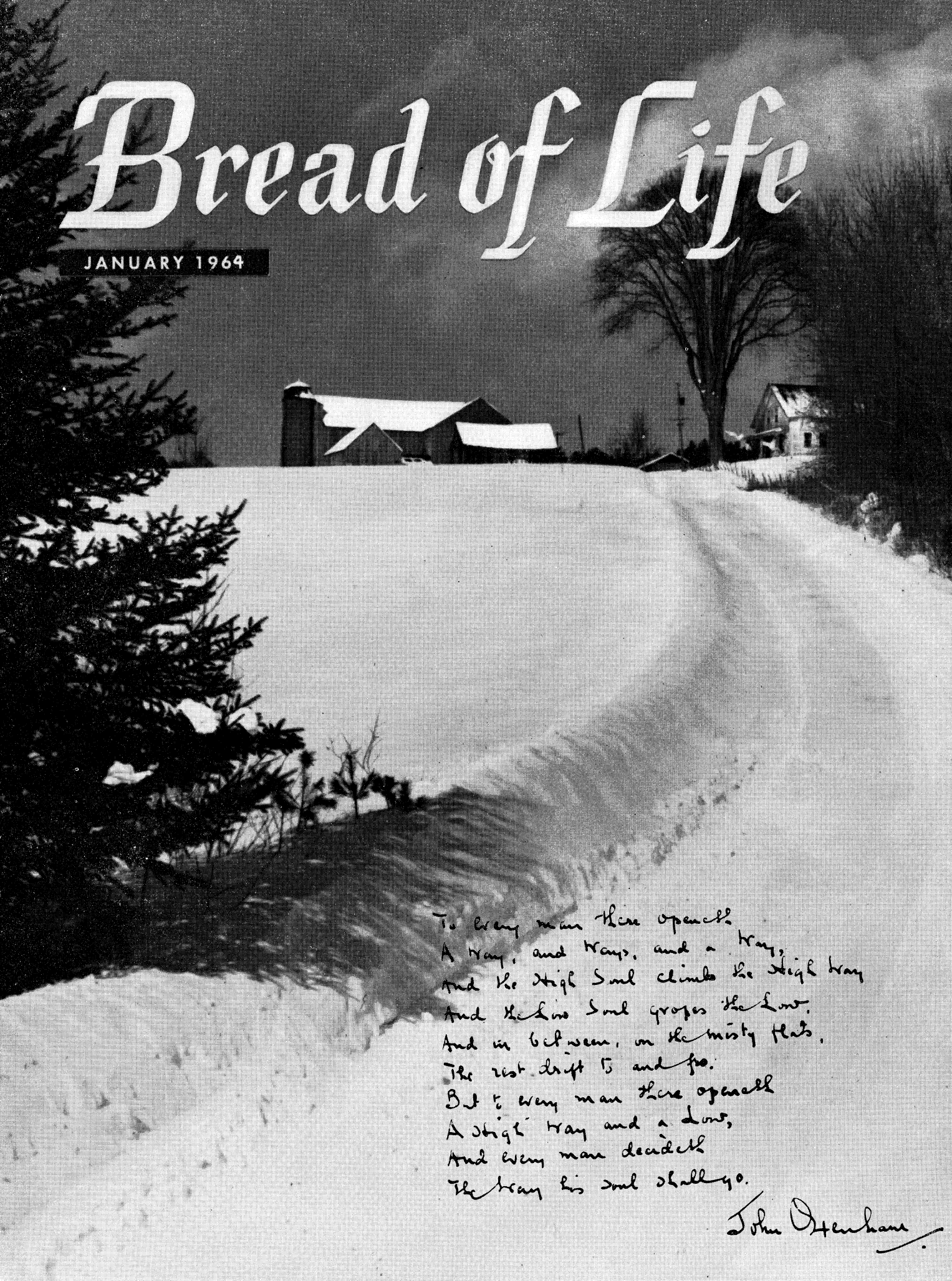


Bread of Life

JANUARY 1964



To every man there openeth
A way, and ways, and a way,
And the High Soul climbs the High way
And the Low Soul gropes the Low,
And in between, on the misty flats,
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A High way and a Low,
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go.

John O'Hara

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

GRASS-ROOTS CHRISTIANITY

SOMEONE once said that the only thing wrong with Christianity is that no one lives by its standards. This statement is undoubtedly incorrect, and yet the observer is certainly right in detecting many glaring inconsistencies between what many people claim to believe and the sort of lives they actually live. In fact, perhaps the greatest problem of the church today is the seeming divorce between theology and reality. It is all too common to find people who practise all the forms of religion with seemingly genuine devotion, but whose day-to-day life is completely out of phase with their worship on Sunday.

It has been said that more blood has been shed in the name of religion than for any other cause. Is it not strange that religions which advocate love and frown on violence have been used as a vehicle for hatred and bloodshed? And on a smaller scale, is there not something amiss about a heated argument over a religion which condemns anger? And are we right in the ill will we often show to those who do not believe as we do or in our personal attacks against them, despite the fact that we profess to deplore human condemnation? Apparently, there has been a serious break-down in the application of the principles of Christianity to real-life situations.

One of the first problems is that we tend to forget that Christianity gives us a well-defined standard to live by. It is an entirely incorrect concept of the grace of God to think that we have been freed from our obligation to live an exemplary life. Paul's answer to the question, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" is an emphatic, "God forbid." He says later, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servant ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness?" Perhaps it is well for every Christian to re-examine the dreadful consequences of carelessness in meeting his Christian obligations.

The Bible has something to say about practically every aspect of our lives. It allows for no resentments, bitterness, envy, gossip, character assassinations or the like. We are told how we may speak and

even how we may think, being permitted none but thoughts of truth and purity and righteousness.

Another problem is our blindness in failing to see the inconsistency between many of the things we do or say or think with the principles we supposedly ascribe to. Undoubtedly, many of the people who carried on persecutions in the name of religion were perfectly sincere, but very blind. The Apostle Paul is an example. There was nothing wrong with his zeal for God, but he was blindly kicking against the pricks.

How tragic when we are so blind to what we are really like that we fail to see how out of place some of our actions are. How can we give lip service to integrity and then be deceitful in our business dealings or income tax return? How can we agree to the value of patience and still "jump on" people who do not catch onto things as rapidly as we would like? Can we profess love for one another when there are petty jealousies, rivalries, ill will, and lack of understanding between us?

Perhaps it is so common for us to see flaws in everyone that we forget that it is God's purpose to free us from them. A man whose character has not been affected has a right to question the validity of his conversion. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we ought to be living holy lives. Our religious experiences are empty unless they affect the daily course of our lives.

Another problem is that we often fail to realize that God has provided the power for us to be overcomers on the grass-roots level. Christianity does far more than set a standard. We are told that in Christ we are new creatures in whom the power of the Holy Spirit has been released in order to bring us into conformity with the image of Christ.

Therefore there is simply no excuse for a defeated life; it is the result of our failure to appropriate spiritual power which is available to us. In fact, the perpetual moaning and groaning about our failures is probably more symptomatic of unbelief than of humility. Or perhaps we are stuck in our sin because we enjoy it quite a bit. But it is God's will that we conquer those rough spots in our character which mar our daily lives and bring discredit on the Name of Christ, and He has promised us the help we need.

It is well to remind ourselves that when the books are opened before God's throne, we will not be asked detailed theological questions. Nor will the ritual of our religion seem important. How well we could testify or preach, or teach Sunday school, or heal the sick, will all be secondary. But we will find a detailed record of how well we came to know the Lord personally, and to what extent this relationship was reflected in the thousands of incidents that daily life brings us. It is perhaps well to ask ourselves how our record stands.

Bread of Life

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The Lord Looseth the Prisoners

By W. ERNEST OLDFIELD

Pastor, Canarsie Full Gospel Chapel, Brooklyn

ONE OF THE PROOFS that the Bible is a supernatural book is its unity of plan and purpose. Written by a wide variety of authors, and covering a period of about fifteen hundred years, it is nevertheless like a carefully conceived structure of beauty and symmetry.

Because of this unity the Bible is its own best commentary. One part sheds light on another until the whole is illuminated. An old saint who treasured the Scriptures all her life and meditated much upon them was given a Bible commentary for her birthday. Asked how she enjoyed it, she replied, "Oh, I like it. But I'm so glad for the Bible; it throws a lot of light on that book!"

This unity of plan and progression of thought shows itself in some very interesting ways. There are three verses which come from three seemingly unrelated Psalms. They are not connected by any obvious reference to each other. Yet they reveal such a marvellous progression of thought, such an important truth of the gospel, that there is no doubt that the Holy Spirit is the Author of them all.

The first is in Psalm 79:11: "Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die." Now this may have had reference originally to captives taken in battle during one of the wars of Israel. They

were under sentence of death and waiting to die. But there is no question that a deeper spiritual truth is involved here. These prisoners of old represented lost humanity, bound by Satan. They, too, are under sentence of death, and will eventually die, for "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). They are in "the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (11 Tim. 2:26). Moreover, it is unfortunately true that many professing Christians are also bound by the devil. They are subject to the lusts of the flesh, to habits which they cannot break. They have experienced a measure of God's redeeming grace, but they have never been fully delivered. Unclean thoughts, critical attitudes, loose tongues have chained them, and are inexorably dragging them down to perdition.

Do they want to be set free? If they are truly saved, they certainly do. But like Paul's illustration in Romans 7 they may say, "When I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Then there is another way in

which Satan oppresses many people. It is through sickness, and this, too, is bondage. Jesus said about a woman which had a spirit of infirmity, "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (Luke 13:16). And Peter said that Jesus healed "all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38).

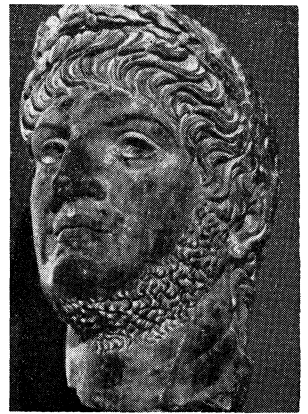
Can't you see the picture? Here is a dungeon full of prisoners. They long to be set free. They "sigh" for their liberation. Will God hear their sighing, and will He do anything about it? For a partial answer to this question turn to Psalm 102:19-20. "For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death."

It may seem for a time that God pays no attention to the plight of these miserable creatures. Did it not appear to be so when Israel was groaning under the lash of the cruel taskmaster in Egypt? Surely they must have thought that God had forsaken them! And yet it is written that "God heard their groaning" (Ex. 2:24). And He affirmed to Moses, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of

(Continued on page 12)

Momentous Events from The History of Christianity

The Neronian Persecution



The Emperor Nero

By J. S. C. ABBOTT

This article, the first of a series, has been taken from THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY, by John S. C. Abbott (1805-1877), a Congregational minister of New England and the author of some fifty-four books which were very popular in the last century. His HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY went through several editions and is still in great demand although long out of print. Doubtless the reason for this is that the author so well achieved the purpose he had in writing this work which he had so clearly stated in its preface:

"It has long seemed . . . very desirable that a brief, comprehensive, and readable narrative of the origin of Christianity, and its struggles and triumphs should be prepared, adapted to the masses of the people."

Certain it is that Abbott's HISTORY is an interesting narrative of many of the "sublime, exciting, and instructive" events which are not found in the average church history and therefore not readily accessible to the general Christian reader.

The editor's attention was called to this work through Martha Wing Robinson, whose writings are familiar to the readers of BREAD OF LIFE. An eager student of church history, Mrs. Robinson used this history as the basis of some studies in this field and entered the valuable fruits of her investigations in her own copy. These have been incorporated in this condensed edition of Abbott's HISTORY.

THE inspired narrative of Luke, contained in the Acts of the Apostles, brings down the history of Christianity through a period of thirty years after the ascension of our Saviour,—to A.D. 62. Luke in his narrative, conducted Paul to Rome, then proud mistress of the world, containing a population variously estimated from two to four millions. Rome was the central and apparently impregnable fortress of pagan superstition; and it was in Rome, in deadly struggle with her wicked emperors and her degraded populace, that some of the greatest victories of Christianity were won.

It will be remembered, that, when Jesus was crucified as a malefactor upon Mount Calvary, Tiberius Caesar, the adopted son and heir of Octavius Caesar, or Caesar the August, sat upon the imperial throne. It was in the eighteenth year of the reign of Tiberius that Jesus was crucified. It is stated by Justin Martyr and other early writers, that Pontius Pilate, after the crucifixion of Christ, wrote to the Emperor Tiberius, giving an account of his death, his resurrection, and of the miracles which he had performed; and that Tiberius proposed to the Roman senate that Jesus should be recognized as one of the gods, and that his statue should be placed in a niche in one of the temples of paganism. The senate, for some unexplained

reason, did not accede to this request.

The death of Tiberius (A.D. 37) strikingly illustrates the depravity of the times. He had retired to the Island of Capreae, where, in a place of the most luxurious surroundings, he surrendered himself to almost every conceivable indulgence of sin. For six years he remained there, while conspiracies and revolts agitated the empire. There was a young man in his suite by the name of Caligula, son of the renowned general Germanicus, whom Tiberius, through jealousy, had ordered to be put to death.

Caligula was one of the vilest of the vile. He ingratiated himself in the favor of the tyrant by pandering to all his wickedness, and by the most sycophantic adulation. At length, the death-hour of Tiberius tolled. The wretched emperor, reclining upon his couch, was taken with a fainting-fit. His physician, feeling his pulse, said "His life is ebbing fast." All thought him dying. The courtiers abandoned the powerless monarch, who had no longer any favors to grant, and gathered tumultuously with their congratulations around Caligula, declaring him to be emperor. In the midst of their hilarity, Tiberius, to the consternation of all, revived; but he was weak and helpless, and could be easily put out of the way. A few of the courtiers entered his chamber, and pressed a

pillow upon his face; and, after a brief and feeble struggle, the smothered king lay still in death. Caligula was now decorated with the imperial purple.

Caligula elated by his accession to sovereign power, surrendered himself to the uncontrolled dominion of lusts and passions, which had already been rendered furious and untamable by long years of indulgence. The cruelty of this idiotic monster was equal to his folly. Senators, untried, uncondemned, were wantonly murdered at his bidding.

The guilty, cowardly wretch was ever trembling in every nerve in apprehension of assassination. Suspecting one of the most beautiful women of his court of being engaged in a conspiracy against him, he placed her upon the rack to enforce confession, and dislocated every joint in her body. Her shrieks and mutilation roused the courtiers to the energies of despair. Cherea, a Roman senator, approached the emperor, and, plunging a dagger into his heart, exclaimed, "Tyrant, think of this!"

Anarchy succeeded. As some drunken Roman soldiers were rioting through the palace, they found a half-crazed old man named Claudius, an uncle of Caligula, hidden behind a pile of lumber in the garret. They seized him, and partly in jest, and partly in earnest, proclaimed him emperor. The army took up the joke, and ratified the choice. In Claudius, the worst of conceivable bad elements were combined: he united the stupidity of the idiot with the ferocity of the demon. He commenced his reign about the forty-sixth year of the Christian era. This is the Claudius Caesar referred to in Acts 11:28 in whose days there was a "great dearth" which had been prophesied about by Agabus.

Claudius, having become weary of his first wife, connived with another for her assassination. Then he married Agrippina who had already given birth to the monster Nero. For a short time, she ruled her imbecile husband with a rod of iron. Three wives had preceded her. One day, Claudius, in his cups, imprudently declared that it was his fate to be tormented with bad wives, and to be their executioner. Agrippina weighed the

words. Claudius loved mushrooms. Agrippina prepared him a delicious dish, sprinkled poison upon it, and with her own loving hands presented it to her spouse. She had the pleasure of seeing him fall and die in convulsions at her feet.

Nero, a lad of seventeen, whom Claudius had adopted as his heir, succeeded to the throne. At the commencement of his reign, he gave indications of a humane spirit; but this period was so short as scarcely to deserve notice. The character and career of Nero were such, that, from that day to this, the ears of mankind have tingled with the recital of the outrages he inflicted upon humanity. The sceptre of the world was placed in the hands of this boy in the year of our Lord 54.

The knowledge of the doctrines of Jesus had already reached Rome. The teachings of Jesus were hateful to Nero. He hated that religion which condemned him. He hated those who preached it. He deliberately determined to blot out that religion from the world; to silence in death every tongue that proclaimed it. It was apparently an easy task to do this. Nero was monarch of the world. A resistless army moved unquestioning at his bidding. All power was apparently in his hands.

The Christians were few and feeble. To turn against them popular indignation, atrocious libels were fabricated. The Christians were in the habit of taking their infants to church to be baptized. Pagan slanderers affirmed that they were taken there to be offered in bloody sacrifice. The Christians often met to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper: they ate of that bread which represented the body of Jesus broken for us; they drank of that wine emblematic of the blood of Jesus, shed for our sins. The pagans declared that the Christians were cannibals; that they secretly met in midnight feasts, and, having murdered a man, ate his flesh, and drank his blood.

Thus a terrible prejudice was created against the Christians. Many were deceived by these cruel slanders who would possibly have joined the disciples had they known the truth. Thus shrewdly Nero prepared the public mind for the

outrages he was about to inflict upon those whom he had doomed to destruction.

One day, some one repeated in conversation, in presence of the tyrant, the line, "When I am dead, let fire devour the world." Nero replied, "It shall be said, 'When I am living, let the fire devour the world.'"

Rome then contained, according to the general estimate, about four million inhabitants. They were crowded together in narrow, winding streets. Nero ordered his emissaries to set fire to the city. The wind was fresh; the buildings, which were mostly of wood, were dry; the flames fierce. Nero ascended a neighboring tower to view the cruel, sublime, awful spectacle. For nine days and nights the flames raged in quenchless fury. Uncounted multitudes, caught in the narrow streets, perished miserably.

The motives which led to this diabolical deed were probably complex. It is said that Nero, satiated with every conceivable indulgence, longed for some new excitement. The spectacle of the dwellings of four millions of people in flames; the frenzy, the dismay, the running to and fro, of the perishing millions,—men, women, and children; the rush and roar of the conflagration, flashing in billowy flames by night to the clouds,—all combined to present a spectacle such as mortal eye had never gazed upon before.

The estimated population of the Roman empire at this time was about a hundred and fifty millions. By the assessment of enormous taxes upon these millions, funds could easily be raised to rebuild Rome in hitherto unimagined splendor. It is said that this ambition was one of the motives which inspired Nero to his infamous deed.

Nero commenced with great energy, levying taxes, and rebuilding the city; but the cry of the starving, houseless millions could not be stilled. The tyrant was alarmed. To shield himself from obloquy, he accused the Christians of the crime, and visited them with the most terrible retribution.

"Not all the relief," writes Tacitus, the renowned Roman historian, "that could come from man, not

all the bounties that the prince could bestow, nor all the atonements which could be presented to the gods, availed to relieve Nero from the infamy of being believed to have ordered the conflagration. Hence, to suppress the rumor, he falsely charged with the guilt, and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons called Christians.

"Christ, the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judaea, in the reign of Tiberius. But the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through Judaea, where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also, whither all things horrible and disgraceful flow from all quarters as to a common receptacle, and where they are encouraged. Accordingly, first those were seized who confessed that they were Christians; next, on their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of burning the city, as of hating the human race.

"And in their death they were made the subject of sport; for they were covered with skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and, when day declined, burned to serve for nocturnal lights. Nero offered his own gardens for that spectacle, and exhibited a circensian game, indiscriminately mingling with the common people in the habit of a charioteer, or else standing in his chariot. Whence a feeling of compassion rose towards the sufferers, though guilty, and deserving to be made example of by capital punishment, because they seem not to be cut off for the public good, but victims to the ferocity of one man."

It was during this persecution by Nero that Paul suffered martyrdom at Rome. He had been there prisoner in chains for some years. With his accustomed power and success, he had preached the gospel of Jesus; and those pure doctrines had gained access even to the palace of the Caesars. A large and flourishing church had been gathered in that city, which in corruption equalled, even if did not outvie, Sodom and Gomorrah.

Chrysostom says, that a cup-bearer of Nero and one of the

most distinguished females of his court, became, through the preaching of Paul, disciples of Jesus, and recoiled from the sin and the shame everywhere around them. This so enraged the tyrant that he ordered Paul immediately to be beheaded.

About this same time the apostle Peter visited Rome, where he was arrested and imprisoned in the prison of Mamertin, which was constructed of damp and gloomy underground vaults, extensive in their range, and crowded with the vic-

(Continued on page 12)

Food for Growth

By ROBERT D. KALIS

*Associate Pastor,
Emmanuel Pentecostal Church,
Elizabeth, New Jersey*

"I DON'T BELIEVE in making resolutions because I never keep them anyway." I suppose you have heard this "song" before as well as I, and I'm sure the devil sings a good alto to go along with it.

Can it be that the children of light, who have the assurance, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," are less wise than the children of this world? At the start of the new year all kinds of purposes and goals are set. Business firms purpose to increase their sales. Families resolve to increase their savings. Corporations plan for expansion and set aside a portion of their budget accordingly. Students determine to get better grades. Both the achievements and failures of the past are overshadowed by the hopes for the New Year. Even the Mets say, "Wait till next year."

These purposes and goals are not always achieved, and often before attainment there are dis-

couraging setbacks. This does not, however, prompt the abandonment of the whole purpose. The firm whose sales drop instead of climb calls a business meeting. The family that misses the weekly deposit tries to make it up the next week. Students who fail take extra homework. Even the Mets will trade for some new player to inject a little more hope into the disappointed team.

We, as the Lord's young soldiers, ought to have a purpose firm, like Daniel who purposed not to defile himself with the portion of the King's meat. This purpose in young Daniel stayed with him and became a trait in his later life. So, the purposes of our young lives will stay with us in later life. "As the twig is bent, so grows the tree."

Let us ask God's guidance in making resolutions and goals for the coming year. A resolution now in youth, to faithfully read the Bible and pray for a certain time each day, will certainly bear fruit in later life.

My resolution in the first year of high school to work hard, pay attention, and not miss school was rewarded quickly by good marks and even a scholarship award at the end of the year. Should we do less for our heavenly education? Can we not resolve to study hard, pay attention, and be faithful in attendance for an everlasting record?

Let us, then, with God's help establish our goal and set our purpose. And if we fail, there is no reason to abandon the whole program and sit down in defeat. We may learn from each failure how much we need God's help and go on with increased determination to reach the goal.

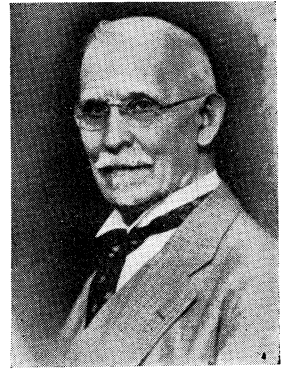
The Fighting Elder

Conflicts in the Narrow Way

As Experienced in the Life of Elder Eugene Brooks

By GORDON P. GARDINER

PART VIII



EUGENE BROOKS (1856 - 1954) entered the ministry of the *Christian Church* in 1885 at the age of 29. For the next ten years he held pastorates in Ohio, Colorado, and Missouri. It was while serving the congregation in Findlay, Ohio, where within two years he had 500 additions to the church, that his health broke completely. At this time God graciously brought to him the truth that Jesus Christ is the healer of the body as well as the Savior of the soul. This resulted in his complete healing from a complication of diseases. About June, 1896, he resigned from his Findlay pastorate and for about two years was engaged in a successful independent ministry in Virginia, his native state.

"In February, 1898, I returned to Chicago and joined Dr. Dowie's organization, though not until after I had made my complaints to Dr. Dowie personally concerning some of his methods and actions which I could not conscientiously endorse."

Three things in particular disturbed Eugene Brooks about Dr. Dowie and his church. The first was that the choir members wore robes. To Mr. Brooks this savored of pride and ritualism and as such was completely contrary to the simplicity of dress and worship enjoined throughout the New Testament. (The latter point especially had been stressed by the Disciples, and the least suggestion of ritualism was anathema to them as contrary to their rule of faith—the Bible.) This criticism Dr. Dowie answered in a most plausible and understanding way. He explained that there were many poor girls in the choir who could not afford to dress as elegantly as some of the other members and would feel self-conscious and conspicuous. This should not be; the poor were as precious to God as the rich, and they should be able to serve God without embarrassment. Therefore, it was more fitting if no difference in appearance was permitted, but all were equal in this respect. In this way the spirit of the Bible was indeed being obeyed.

Mr. Brooks' second objection was to the grand

coach and horses which Dr. Dowie owned. Dr. Dowie explained that often he was called to pray for the sick, sometimes late at night and at quite a distance. His congregation, mindful of this and in an effort to expedite his ministry, had given him this conveyance. It was really a means to more efficient service.

"I don't remember what my third objection was," said Elder Brooks as he related this crisis experience of his life, but he added that Dr. Dowie answered his objections so satisfactorily at this time that it paved the way for him to "swallow more" than he should have in the days and years ahead. And then over and above all of Dr. Dowie's most plausible and rational answers to any questions raised then or later was always the incontrovertible evidence of his ministry—sinners were saved, the sick were healed—and, most effective of all, didn't Mr. Brooks owe, under God, his own very physical life and enriched ministry to him? He had better listen to such a servant of God and concede that he knew God and His ways better than he.

And so Eugene Brooks joined Zion, as Dr. Dowie's church was called, and became an enthusiastic member and minister, one of the most zealous, for whatever he did, Eugene Brooks did with his whole heart. In doing so he gave up the complete democracy and freedom of the ministry of the Disciples of Christ—privileges he had cherished and boasted of as scriptural—for a highly organized and restricted ministry in a church whose head—Dr. Dowie—exercised absolute control over every act of his ministers. Elder Brooks' reflection on this change is interesting, instructive and illuminating: "This was just what I needed, for I was a free lancer, big-headed, bull-headed, and needed to come under such a strong hand as Dr. Dowie's.

"My visit in Chicago was a time of spiritual refreshing and edification, and the Lord accomplished the purpose for which He brought me there at the time. Dr. Dowie suggested places where I might minister, but I wanted to return to Findlay to bring help and blessing in the place of my former ministry." Therefore, he went to Findlay in March, 1898.

Characteristic of the man, Mr. Brooks felt that he owed his former brethren in the Christian Church a businesslike explanation of his course of action, and, therefore, before he officially opened his new church in Findlay, he wrote a letter to the editor of *The Christian Evangelist*. After all, he had been one of their most successful and most promising ministers. Unquestionably his withdrawal had puzzled many. Graciously the editor printed in part, his letter, entitling it,

"A CHANGE OF BASE"

"Having severed my connection with the Disciples, I seek this medium of declaring the fact and stating the cause.

"On Sunday, March 6, 1898, I united with and was ordained an evangelist in the Christian Catholic Church in Chicago, Ill., by Dr. John Alexander Dowie, the general Overseer of that church.

"This action has been taken after two years of Bible study, thought and prayer. I have not jumped blindly. It has been a struggle among the severest of my life. Every interest earthly forbade such action.

"My associations, friends and affections were bound up in that church. It was, therefore, the snapping of every tie. It was the "swearing to my own hurt." It means the desertion of friends, the ridicule and persecutions of enemies.

"I had told the people (oh, so often!), 'Where the Bible speaks we will speak; where the Bible is silent we will be silent.' That 'where God commands we will obey; where God has left us without a command we will exercise the right of private judgement.' These I found to be velvet slippers hanging on our ecclesiastical walls to be admired, but when put on pinch the feet into corns.

"Let me explain: Some two years ago God graciously healed me of my deathly diseases and saved me from all transgressions. The joy and peace that came into my life was inexpressible. What could I do but tell what God had done for me and prove that he was no respecter of persons and would do the same for others as Himself declared in Luke 4:18; Mark 16:14-20; James 5:13-17, etc.?

"But I did not tell the story often till the butt end of that unwritten Calvinistic creed fell with such force on my unsuspecting pate as to awaken me out of my Utopian dream about 'religious liberty.' The fact is that in eighteen months I have been permitted to enter only two pulpits in our brotherhood, and one of those was with the distinct understanding that I would not speak of Divine Healing except in the afternoon meeting when it was presumed no one would attend. The other was a church so dead that even Divine Healing could not split it!

"What is my heresy? It is that I am not preaching Bible truth? No, not that, but because I dare to exercise the privilege professedly granted by my church to think for myself, and have thereby violated some interpretations of the *fathers*.

"Brethren, why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should heal the sick?

"There is not a single word in the Bible to prove that Jesus is not the same Healer as well as Savior. We have listened to the ignorant pratings of theologians long enough; let us hear the Lord. Some of these ignorant fellows are fighting Divine Healing and then admit they don't know what it is, classing it with faith-cure, and so-called Christian Science!

"Brethren, I bring no railing accusations against you. I do not think the Christian Church is more guilty than other churches. It is the weakness of nearly all men to 'forbid' those 'who follow not us.' Why cannot we see that if it is 'not of God, it will come to naught?' Why do we not see that 'no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost'?

"But a greater mistake, if possible, and common to all denominations, is the erecting of ecclesiastical walls and writing over every gate, '*Ne Plus Ultra*.' The Christian Church is no exception here.

"And now, while I say farewell, it is with no feeling but love to all. I love the Christian brotherhood, and do pray God that they may lay down denominational jealousy and be willing to hear all sides. The benediction of 1 Thess. 5:23 be upon you all.

EUGENE BROOKS.

The editor of *THE CHRISTIAN EVANGELIST* deemed Mr. Brooks' letter of sufficient importance to warrant a reply equal in length, making it something of an editorial not only on Brother Brooks' withdrawal from the Christian Church but also on the subject of divine healing. In conclusion he said:

"But we have no desire to discuss the question of Divine Healing. We only intended expressing our regret at what we must believe to be a mistaken step on the part of our brother, and our kind regard for him, nevertheless. He shall not be 'persecuted,' so far as we are concerned, nor shall he be 'ridiculed.' We regret that he feels that he has been mistreated by his brethren with whom he has formerly labored. Perhaps they were too impatient with him, but he must admit that churches have the right to choose what kind of preachers and preaching they will have. We believe Bro. Brooks to be acting sincerely, and so believing, we cannot doubt that in a little while he will come to see that he has left a much broader platform of Christian liberty and Christian growth than that which he now occupies and will return to it. That he may do so is the best wish that we can make in his behalf."

Shortly after Evangelist Brooks, as he was now called in Zion, went to Findlay, he came into spiritual darkness in his soul as the result of inadvertently having done something which had grieved the Holy Spirit. The great joy and conscious manifestation of the presence of God which had been his since his healing had left him.

"I prayed for restoration, but in a desultory manner. When I got no help, I saw something radical must be done. Therefore I went to the church on a Wednesday and determined to stay there, fasting and praying, until the Lord would reveal Himself to me and show me what was wrong so that I could repent. By Saturday night I was quite weary, and as yet I had received nothing from the Lord. But about ten o'clock I heard a voice in my soul say, 'Third watch.' I thought about it a moment. Then I got the words in my soul, 'I will come at the third watch.'

"I interpreted these words to mean that Christ would come to me at that time, so I felt I must pray till three o'clock in the morning. Then the fight began. I was already weak and weary; I feared to sit or lie down lest I fall asleep. Therefore, I walked and prayed through the long midnight hours. When it was a quarter to three, I became completely exhausted; I felt that if I could but rest a minute all my weariness would leave me, and I would be ready to meet the Lord. I chose an old short couch in the study on which I thought I could rest my body but which would not permit me to sleep because of the discomfort it would afford me. As soon as I touched it, I was dead to the world.

"In this state I saw myself in a room where everything seemed astir. I looked towards the door, and there stood the Lord. I called, 'Lord, let me see You.'

"He answered, 'Wherefore would you see Me?'

"With that I fell on my face and exclaimed, 'Oh, how dreadful is this place!' Then He came and stood behind me and made me know that He wanted to come in; but I did not know what to do. Then I awoke. Now my conscience smote me, for I thought I had missed the Lord by sleeping and determined to continue till He would reveal Himself more definitely.

"At Sunday school the following morning a stranger came and sat in the class. He answered questions readily, and I soon sensed that there was something unusual about him. After the class he asked if my name was Brooks and inquired what I was doing. I told him the story just related and that I was going to continue fasting and praying. 'No, you're not,' he said.

"Then he told me that he was at Tiffin, Ohio, starting for a holiness camp meeting when a voice spoke to him, 'Findlay.' As he knew no one in Findlay, he continued on his way. Again the voice came to him, this time in a louder tone, 'Findlay.' He disregarded this, too, until the

voice came a third time and thundered, 'FIND-LAY!' Finally he obeyed and took the train to Findlay. Upon arrival there, the voice said, 'Brooks.' Then he inquired until he found me. After telling me this experience, he told me that I must go home and get my dinner. I knew I dare not refuse, for I saw the Lord had sent him.

"The period of fasting and prayer had been necessary to restore my soul to its joy, but the Lord graciously and miraculously sent this brother to prevent me from further exertion of my body and mind which would have been unnecessary and might have proved injurious. After a time, I realized that the Lord had indeed come to me in an unusual way in answer to my prayer. My darkness was gone, and I had the joy of the Lord restored to me. Had I known how to yield to the Lord, I believe that I would have had my baptism in the Spirit right there, for it was the greatest manifestation of the Lord I have ever had.

"During this time in Findlay there were some remarkable healings. The first one was that of Mrs. Burson who had quick consumption. I visited her repeatedly for two or three months, but no victory was manifested. She grew rapidly worse until she was unable to speak above a whisper and could not lift her head from the pillow. Finally, her husband called a doctor who said that both lungs were entirely gone, that she was simply breathing through her bronchial tubes, and that it would be impossible for her to live more than three weeks. It was just that to the day when I called on her and again prayed with her. In leaving the room I casually said, 'Get out of this bed.' Then I left her with the crowd of people who had gathered to wait for her to die.

"I returned to the home the next morning with mingled thoughts. I looked to see if the crepe was on the door. When I saw no crepe, I thought possibly she had died too recently to have it put on. I went to the kitchen door and asked the girl who answered, 'How's Mrs. Burson?'

"She answered, 'You can go and see.' My heart sank, for I thought, 'She's dead!' I went in and, behold, she was sitting up, laughing, but as thin as a rail.

"Then she told me that after I had told her to get out of bed, something seemed to say to her, 'Why don't you get up?' Then she argued with herself, 'Why, that was only a man that told me that.' 'Yes,' was the reply, 'but that's the way to trust God.' With that, she made the effort,

and God came to her. Throwing off the covers, she jumped out of bed and went all around the room praising God and clapping her hands.

"When her husband returned to the house, he found her out of bed and half dressed. In three weeks' time she dismissed her girl and did all her own work. She was perfectly healed, lived for a number of years, and never had a trace of her illness. So you see, God put new lungs in that woman, for the doctor's testimony and our experience were that those lungs had been spit up.

"When I saw this healing, I said, 'There isn't anything impossible with God. God can do anything. I tell you it was inspiration to my faith.'"

Two experiences in Elder Brooks' life convinced him "of the unalterable purpose of God to vindicate His word." The first was this healing of Mrs. Burson which convinced him "that there was no sickness that is impossible with God." The other experience occurred a number of years later after he was married and had two children. For one year "we were fed not day by day but meal by meal. After that I said, 'Now, God will never fail.' I knew that no matter how sharp the trial, God would never let you fail.

"During my ministry in Findlay, I preached in a number of the surrounding cities—Ada, Lima, Fostoria, Fremont, and Holgate. When we went to Holgate, there was just one person who believed in divine healing, but we got about a dozen people together. However, my preaching raised the devil. I got a letter from the marshal of the town advising me very earnestly to get out.

"On one of our visits there we had an unusually large audience. The house was filled. I was feeling good over the large congregation. Everybody was orderly until my sermon was over. Then I invited the members to come to the front for communion. The rest left hurriedly. Sensing that trouble was brewing, I locked the door. Immediately, pandemonium began. Stones, brickbats, clubs, or other missiles were hurled against the door. We saw their intention was to batter open the door and then rush in on us.

"I called the little company around the communion table to their knees at once. As I began to pray, God brought the dream of a night or two before to my attention. This dream was about the miraculous deliverance of a load of young people in a hay wagon. Behind this wagon, a runaway team was coming down the road with all its might. The road being in a cut, there was no chance to let the team pass; and they were so close to this wagon, there was no way to stop

them. I could see that they were bound to run over that wagon and kill everybody in it. In my dream I closed my eyes and waited for death. But this runaway team ran right up to the wagon, turned into the wall of dirt at the side, and neither the horses nor those on the wagon were hurt.

"Now while we prayed, this came to my mind, and I knew it signified God's deliverance. I jumped to my feet and said, 'Be not afraid; not a hair of your head shall perish!' Immediately that awful bombardment ceased; not a sound of any kind from that time was heard from outside. We were looking for that door to be broken any minute, but the whole thing stopped absolutely.

"I tried to find out afterwards what had happened, but never could. The mayor had refused to have anything to do with the quelling mob, and the marshal had said to the people, 'I will get out of the way. You can do what you please.' They had come down one hundred and fifty strong to mob me, but God certainly did something miraculously to quell that mob.

"Lima was another place where we held a meeting once a week. At the close of one of the services there, someone asked me if I would pray for a woman present. Then a small, pale, thin, timid woman came to the aisle, and we prayed for her. I thought nothing more about it until the next Friday night when the woman, Mrs. Snow, appeared and gave her testimony.

"On the previous Friday she had just had a hemorrhage of the lungs when one of our sisters happened in. The visitor asked, 'Why don't you come to our meeting? I believe God would heal you.' Mrs. Snow replied that if her very life depended on it, she couldn't go—not even to the streetcar only half a block away. However, as the evening drew near, she thought more of it and finally decided, 'Lord, if I die, I'm going to that meeting tonight.' At every step she took to the streetcar and service, her strength increased. When she was prayed for, she was instantly healed.

"A neighbor of hers who was not a Christian was so impressed when he saw her carrying out her washing the morning after her healing that he came with her to verify her testimony. He publicly expressed his astonishment at what he had seen, for he had known of her illness. Twenty years later while passing through Lima, I sought out Mrs. Snow and found her perfectly well and living a deeply spiritual life."

(To be continued)

The Threshing Floor

Question: *What is the meaning of I Cor. 14:27: "If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret?"*

Answer: This verse is frequently interpreted to mean that not more than two or three messages in tongues should be given in a meeting. It is a typical example of how the natural mind of man can misunderstand the Word of God. Such an iron-clad rule is not consonant with the nature of God or the way He works. You cannot put the Spirit of God in a strait jacket!

Notice the verse does not say, "in meeting." This has simply been assumed by those who make the above interpretation. Actually, the inference is that the two or three messages would be given at one time, not necessarily in one meeting. When the Holy Ghost has His way, meetings may be of varying lengths and kinds, and to limit every meeting to three messages in tongues would be unrealistic.

The fact that it speaks of "any man," and "let one interpret" indicates that the Lord is not referring to several people giving messages, but one person giving more than one message at a time. It would take a large gift to interpret more than one or two messages given without a break between. The Holy Spirit is simply giving us a little help warning us not to overreach our faith in the operation of the gifts. But it is unthinkable that God would limit the moving of His Spirit in a crude,

mechanical way such as that suggested above.

NOTE: We invite questions from our readers. Please forward them to: The Editor, BREAD OF LIFE, P.O. Box 11, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11227.

You and Your House

By HELEN WANNENMACHER

Minister, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

HOW WONDRFUL it would be, this coming year, if every one of us, like Joshua, would fully decide to serve the Lord, with all our hearts, and like him to go in to possess our inheritance.

God chose Joshua, upon the death of Moses, to lead His chosen people into the land that He had given them, to possess it. This Joshua did with great vigor and success. The secret of his victory as commander of the Lord's host was his absolute obedience to God's admonition and command (found in Joshua 1:8): "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein, for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." With the command God gave specific and wonderful promises for victory. "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you." "I will be with thee." "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." "Only be strong and very courageous" (Joshua 1:3, 5,7).

As we read the story of the conquest of Canaan, we find that Joshua, with the armies of Is-

rael, did go in and possess the land. Also, they subdued all the kings of the land, and there were thirty-one of them, after which God gave them peace.

God calls each of us to go in and possess our inheritance, for there is much land for us to possess. But with many of us there has not been an earnestness, as there was with Joshua, to subdue the enemies of our flesh, that so long have hindered us in living a victorious Christian life. We are aware of some of these: our touchiness, our envy, our jealousy, our impatience one with another, our self-will and pride. These are not flagrant sins, perhaps we say; nevertheless, if they are permitted to rule in our lives, they will hinder us and rob us of our spiritual possessions. Shall we not then be more earnest to rise up in faith and obedience to His Precious Word, refusing to yield to the dictates of our flesh, but rather, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to put them to death? Paul tells us in Romans 13:14, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." Be assured, our homes will be much sweeter and happier homes, as we allow the lovely fruits of the Spirit to come forth in our lives—His love and joy and peace, His longsuffering, gentleness and goodness, His faith and meekness and temperance.

Our churches will be fragrant with His Holy Presence, and in our own lives there will be a triumphing in Christ, so that the savor of His knowledge shall be manifest by us in every place (2 Cor. 2:14).

Will it not be worth our while to say with Joshua,—“As for me and my house, we *will* serve the Lord”?

The Lord Looseth the Prisoners

(Continued from page 3)

their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows" (Ex. 3:7).

So here in Psalm 102 we have an answer to the pathetic "sighing of the prisoner" in Psalm 79. God *does* hear, and from the height of His sanctuary looks down in pity and love. Be of good cheer, ye "prisoners of hope," for your deliverance is nigh.

The third passage in Psalm 146:7 comes like a mighty and triumphant climax to the bitter struggle. It is simple and brief, but it is complete, and there are no reservations: "The Lord looseth the prisoners." Satan's thralldom is broken. The chains are snapped. The fetters fall. The prisoner is free! Notice the present tense, "looseth." This is not a vague promise of some indefinite future deliverance. It is present; it is an accomplished fact; it is the Word of Almighty God!

It is worth noting that Psalm 146 contrasts the help of man with the help of God (vv. 3, 5). These are bands which man cannot break. Even "princes" are helpless to give aid. But God Himself has declared His will. He has announced His "Emancipation Proclamation." Believe it! Receive it! Reckon on it! "If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

History of Christianity

(Continued from page 5)

tims of tyranny. Two of the prison-guards and forty-seven of the prisoners, impressed by the character and by the teachings of these holy men, became converts. Peter baptized them. Nero now ordered him to be executed also. Paul being a Roman citizen, could not be subjected to the ignominy of

crucifixion: he was beheaded. Paul was led a distance of three miles from the city to a place called the Fountain of Salvienne, where the block of the executioner awaited him. On the way, forgetful of self, he preached the gospel of Jesus to the soldiers who guarded him. Three of them became converts and soon after suffered martyrdom.

Peter, being a Jew, was regarded as a vile person and was doomed to the cross. He was led across the Tiber to the quarter inhabited by the Jews, and was crucified on the top of Mount Janiculum. As they were preparing to nail him to the cross in the ordinary manner, he said, "Since my Lord Jesus Christ, who came down from the heaven upon the earth, was raised upon the cross upright, and He deigned to call to heaven me, who am of the earth, my cross ought to be fixed head downmost, so as to direct my feet toward heaven; for I am not worthy to be crucified like my Lord." Then, having reversed the cross, they nailed his feet up.

Subsequently Nero, out of jealousy, poisoned his half-brother, Britannicus, the son of Claudius and his own mother, Agrippina, and consequently the legitimate heir to the throne. Then, fearful that his mother would wreak vengeance on him, Nero finally secured her death in her own apartment by a band of assassins, the leader of whom struck her a heavy blow on the head with a club while the rest plunged their daggers into her heart. While he seems to have suffered a little remorse over this infernal act, at the same time his demoniac malice blazed forth more luridly than ever. His sister Octavia and his wife Poppaea soon fell victims to his insane vengeance: the one was placed in a vapor-bath, had her veins opened in every joint, and then had her head cut off; the other perished from a brutal kick.

Immediately there ensued a series of executions and assassinations of the most illustrious men of Rome, who were accused of conspiring against the tyrant. Rome was stricken with terror.

At length, human nature, even unspeakably corrupt as it had become in Rome, could endure the monster no longer. Servius Galba, a man of unusual virtues for those times, placing himself at the head

of his devoted legions, openly proclaimed war against the tyrant, and commenced a march upon Rome for his dethronement. The tidings outstripped the rapid movements of his troops, and garrison after garrison unfurled the banners of revolt.

When the wretched tyrant heard this appalling news, he attempted suicide several times, but each time his courage failed. Finally he fled to his country-seat, about three miles from Rome, and tried to conceal himself.

In the mean time, the Roman senate had hurriedly assembled. Emboldened by the insurrection, and by the approach of Galba, they passed a decree, declaring Nero to be the enemy of his country and dooming him to death "according to ancient custom." Some one of Nero's companions brought him the tidings in his hiding-place. Pallid and trembling, he inquired, "And what is death, according to ancient custom?"

The appalling reply was, "It is to be stripped naked, to have the head fastened in the pillory, and thus to be scourged to death."

The monster who had amused himself in witnessing the tortures of others recoiled with horror from this dreadful infliction. Seizing a dagger, he again endeavored to nerve himself to plunge it into his heart. A prick from its sharp point was all that he could summon resolution to inflict. He threw the dagger aside, and groaned in terror. Again he strove to talk himself into courage.

"Ought Nero," he said, "to be afraid? Shall the emperor be a coward? No! Let me die courageously."

Again he grasped the dagger, and anxiously examined its keen edge; and again he threw it aside with a groan of despair.

Just then the clatter of horsemen was heard, and a party of dragoons was seen approaching. In the delirium of despair, he ordered a freedman to hold a sharp sword so that he might throw himself violently against it. He thus succeeded in severing the jugular vein, and his life-blood spouted forth. As he sank upon the ground, the soldiers came up. He looked at them with a malignant scowl, and, saying, "You're too late!" he died.

DAILY MANNA FOR JANUARY

Verses compiled by MARTHA WING ROBINSON
with Comments By HANS R. WALDWOGEL

1. God's Supply. Phil. 4:19.

Contemplating my needs, so many and so great, would plunge my soul into despair, but God opens His treasury and undertakes to supply, not some, but every need of mine, not stintingly but according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Every need of mine becomes a vessel to be filled with the riches of His glory. Surely it must be a year crowned with His goodness.

2. A Pearl of Great Price. Psalm 18:16.

Risking their lives, pearl fishers descend to the floor of the ocean and bring up these gems coveted by kings and princes. So the Lord Jesus, not satisfied with the dazzling hosts of heaven, descended into the very depths of my lost condition and brought me out of the miry clay, out of the deep waters of sin to make me His own purchased possession and to inherit His glory.

3. Windows Toward Jerusalem. Phil. 4:8.

Thoughts are the windows of the soul. Keep them open to the world, and the world will possess your heart. How great will be the darkness! As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Set your mind on things above, not on things of the earth. Keep your windows open toward Jerusalem! God is light; in Him is no darkness at all. When my windows are open toward Him, that is, my thoughts are stayed on Jehovah, my whole body will be full of light.

4. A Most Delightful Job. Psalm 37:4.

Hasn't God picked out a wonderful way for us? My soul and mind to be occupied with contemplating and beholding so delightful an object as the Lord Jesus Christ, and then promises to give me the desires of my heart. Once the Holy Spirit has brought you under the spell of the beauty of this great Lover of your soul, Jesus will become your most desired and best beloved One, and His promise will be realized, because then all your soul's desires will be centered in Him, and your heart will desire only what He desires.

5. A Safe Way. Psalm 37:5.

I know the Lord will make a way for me. Moses said to the Lord: "Show me now Thy way that I may know Thee." Then God made a way from Egypt, from the house of bondage, to the land flowing with milk and honey. He brought them out, and He brought them in. And so it must be with me. He brought me out of the miry clay, and as I commit my way unto the Lord, He will be my guide and bring me safely to the Father's house.

6. Pilgrim's Progress. Jer. 10:23.

The way is straight and narrow. There are many devious side paths that might lead me astray. And we may well ask with Thomas: "How can we know the way?" But the answer Jesus gave to Thomas is also for all of us: "I am the way. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Let Him be your pilot and He will bring you to your desired haven.

7. Safety and Security. John 10:3,4.

Once a sheep gone astray, now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of my soul, I am in safekeeping. He calls His sheep by name. Can He forget me? Can He forsake me, having paid so great a price for my redemption? He that has numbered the hairs on my head not only knows my name but has engraven me upon the palms of His hands.

8. The Way of Holiness. Psalm 27:11.

The unction which ye have received of Him teacheth you all things. Like the pillar of fire of old went before the people of God to bring them into the promised land, so this unction will abide with me and show me the way. "The Spirit shall guide you into all truth."

9. A Helping Hand. Ezra 8:22.

When Peter cried: "Lord help me!", Jesus put forth His hand and lifted him. I discovered that as soon as I began really to seek after God that His hand was upon me. And I found out that He had been seeking me long before I sought Him.

10. Out of Great Tribulation. Psalm 50:15.

Exceeding great and precious promises are mine, and I had better avail myself of them, because we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom. But when God offers to save me in the day of trouble, if I call upon Him, then I ought to obey Him and not be anxious about anything, but in all things, by prayer and supplication, make my requests known unto God. He will deliver, for He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him.

11. A Great Teacher. Psalm 32:8.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for instruction in righteousness." When Solomon asked God to give him wisdom that he might be a faithful and wise king, God was pleased with his request. God has promised to guide me with His eye, to direct my steps, to teach me in the way which I shall go. And so I have no right to go astray, but it is my privilege to submit to Him and to acquaint myself with the Holy Scriptures which are able to make me wise unto salvation.

12. Access with Boldness. Heb. 4:15, 16

I cannot please God with a wavering faith but only by coming boldly unto the throne of grace. Can you think of a time when the need of God's people was greater than right now? But His gracious promise is good for today. Verily I say unto you, that He will avenge them speedily, namely His elect, who cry day and night unto Him.

13. *True Lovership. Col. 3:2.*

They that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the affections and lusts. When my sights are focused on heavenly things, my heart will become heavenly minded, and my conversation will be in heaven. That alone constitutes the true waiting for the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, who has power to subdue all things unto Himself.

14. *Fountain of Joy. Phil. 4:4.*

The Lord could have picked out a different way for us. He might have said, "Now you have to mourn and weep over your unfaithfulness to Me." Instead of that He tells me to forget the things that are behind and to find my joy not in myself or in my attainments but in the Lord, who has done all things for me, who has been made of God unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Here is the true Israel of God, who do not glory in the flesh, but rejoice in the Lord always.

15. *A Perfect Heart. I Sam. 16:7.*

When David discovered sin in his heart, he cried to God to create in him a clean heart. And God answered his prayer and made out of him a man after God's own heart. This is the covenant of grace. And by the blood of the everlasting covenant, Jesus Christ will do that for any man, who so prays, "Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me."

16. *A Hiding Place. Psalm 91:1.*

Jesus, who always lived in the bosom of the Father and was always directed and controlled by the Spirit of God, has gone to prepare a place for us and has come again through the power of the Holy Spirit to introduce us into this wonderful secret place of the most high God. It is secret to those who don't seek Him with all their hearts, but God promises to those who want Him to hide them in the secret of His presence. Wonderful hiding place! "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

17. *A Father's Love. Psalm 103:13.*

Beloved, now are we sons of God. He that spared not His own son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not with Him freely give us all things? The Son of God is the unspeakable gift that keeps giving. And what does this gift give me? The glory that was His, the glory of sonship. O how great was the price that God had to pay to reconcile me unto Himself, to make me—a poor lost sinner—a child of the living God. Surely His mercy toward me is higher than the heavens.

18. *Green Pastures. Psalm 95:7.*

What a marvelous pasture He created for Adam and Eve before they ever came forth from His masterful, creative hand. Six days God worked to create a suitable place for them. And now they came into this wonderful garden, graciously furnished with all things that pertained to the comforts of life. But the pastures of redemption are greener still. Unsearchable

riches, heavenly treasures, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. Surely I can say: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

19. *Life Insurance. Psalm 91:4.*

Marvelous provision for me day by day in this land full of enemies, in this place where pestilence walketh in darkness and destruction wasteth at noonday. Safety and protection for every child of God, for He makes me His charge and takes the responsibility for keeping me from all harm.

20. *Full Satisfaction. Jer. 31:25; Psalm 27:14.*

Oh, to acquaint myself with the unsearchable riches of Christ! The Apostle Paul seems to exhaust his vocabulary to find superlatives to describe the unsearchable riches of Christ. How sad that so many people seek satisfaction elsewhere when God Himself offers to be the indwelling life of the soul and has come down from heaven to sup with me that I may sup with Him, to give me gold tried in the fire that I may be rich.

21. *True Worship. Psalm 19:14.*

He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto God. Glorious provision for the New Testament Church. Jesus knew the natural man could not please God, and so He sent from heaven this which ye now see and hear, the Holy Spirit. And through Him and by Him do we worship God in spirit and in truth. But this promise is unto you and your children and to all that are afar off. Why not claim it?

22. *Perfect Hiding Place. Isa. 49:2.*

The mighty hand of my Saviour, by which He laid the foundation of the earth, also reached to the depths of my sin to lift me to the height of His throne. Pierced for me on Calvary's Cross, He has engraved me upon the palm of His hand.

22. *Beauty for Ashes.—Psalm 84:5, 6.*

God always aims at the heart. When the heart belongs to God, everything belongs to Him. When Jesus Christ has possession of the heart, He will make it His throne, and He will make me a vessel unto honor, unto glory, a channel through which the life-giving waters of the Spirit of God can flow.

24. *True Abiding. John 15:10.*

Have you become acquainted with His commands? To know them is to love them. His commandments are not grievous. Every commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ is an offer of His grace whereby He communicates to us His own divine nature—His love, His joy, His peace.

25. *Divine Boastfulness. Phil. 4:13.*

Knowing Jesus Christ, I found out that in myself dwelleth no good thing so that denying myself, forsaking myself, has become a great blessing, so that

I might dwell forermore in this wonderful Saviour and find in Him the strength that is made perfect in my weakness.

26. *Perfect Preservation. Psalm 32:7.*

That is the great call of God to His people, to hide in the Lord Jesus Christ. I hide by setting my affections upon the Lord Jesus Christ, by paying attention to Him, and then He will hide me. He will shut the door and hold me forever in His holy place.

27. *Trust in the Lord. Nahum 1:7.*

The greatest promises in the Bible, perhaps, are to those who trust in Him. Some trust in chariots, some trust in horses, but we will trust in the name of our God. They are fallen, but we are risen and stand upright because the Lord is a stronghold unto His own.

28. *Filled with Love. I Cor. 13:7.*

The Bible tells us that God Himself is this love and that if I dwell in God, I will dwell in love, and that love will make me perfect unto the day of judgment.

29. *The Comforter. John 14:15.*

The Comforter has come to abide. How sad to think that so many dear Christian people have not yet found the great joy of abiding in Him and being cared for by Him, being controlled by the Spirit of the living God!

30. *Strong Refuge and Helper. Psalm 46:1.*

That's exactly what I need, for the time of trouble is always. I need strength that is not derived from natural resources, but God offers Himself to His children—to me—to be my strength. Glory!

31. *Jesus Lover of My Soul. Song of Solomon 2:16.*

Here is not only intimacy but identification. Here is the Bridegroom of my soul who on the Cross of Calvary has proposed to be my all. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood—what a mystery! Well, He tells us that we are made partakers of Christ, and the greatest testimony any human being can give expression to is that He is mine and I am His. Let me see to it that this is settled forever.

“I AM the Lord that Healeth Thee”

A BIBLE STUDY

By CHARLES N. ANDREWS

*Pastor of the Fredericksburg Pentecostal Church,
Fredericksburg, Virginia*

THE WORDS, “I am the Lord that healeth,” from Exodus 15:26 have also been translated, “I am the Lord thy healer,” or literally, “thy physician.” They make us to know that the Lord who is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever,” always has been and always will be the healer of His people.

For this Bible study on divine healing or sickness, its causes and cure, we suggest that you get a notebook in which to write the scriptures and answers to our questions. To get the most out of this study we further suggest that you set aside a definite amount of time each day for it, spending half the time reading, meditating, studying the passages assigned and half of the time in praying the assigned prayer.

Hebrews 11:6—Note the two things needful if we are to become pleasing to God:

1. Believe _____.
2. Believe that He is a _____.

Make this your theme. Say, as you read the Bible, “This is God’s Word;” and then pary, “Lord, speak to me out of your Word.”

1. Exodus 15:26.
—Lesson one: What is the basis for being kept from sickness and disease?
2. Numbers 12:1-16.
—a. Why did Miriam become leprous?
—b. How long did it take for her to become leprous?
—c. Give the steps taken that resulted in her healing?
3. Numbers 16:41-50.
—a. What was the cause of the plague that killed 14,700 people?
—b. How was the plague stopped?
4. Numbers 21:4-9.
—a. What was the immediate cause of sickness and death here?
—b. What was the real reason behind this?
—c. Give the steps taken that resulted in healing.
5. Numbers 25:1, 18 and Revelation 2:14.
—a. What was the immediate cause of the deaths of 24,000 people?
—b. What appears to be behind the people turning to sin?

Read Numbers 22-24 and compare it with Revelation 2:14.

Pray: Psalm 25:1-5.

A Prayer for the New Year

*Throughout this dawning year, O Lord,
Make firm the precepts of Thy word.
Establish strong Thy righteousness;
Thy waiting saints in power bless
For coming conflict-pressing sore—
For higher ground, Thou dost assure;
'Gainst foes that will our path assail,
O Christ of God, do Thou prevail!*

*Within my life, my inner soul,
Make known the workings of Thy will,
And show me all that grieves Thee most;
The pride, the self, the foolish boast
Of power to work apart from Thee.
O wondrous Lamb of purity,
Let now Thy blood for me avail;
O Christ of God, do Thou prevail!*

*And for a world in darkness lost,
Bruised, broken, crushed, and tempest-tossed,
Count dear the value of Thy blood
To ransom them from sin to God.
Call out Thy people, Lord, to go—
Ambassadors, Thy love to show;
No longer in Thy cause to fail:
O Christ of God, do Thou prevail!*

*Thou art prevailing; faith burns clear
With brighter light this glad New Year.
Past tokens of Thy wondrous power
Prove Thy sufficiency for this hour
And foretell vict'ry deep and strong,
The glory of that triumph song:
"Thou worthy art to loose the seal—
O Christ of God, Thou dost prevail."*

ALICE REYNOLDS FLOWER.