

[R1952 : page 58]

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS.

Pennsylvania.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Major Whittle is drawing large audiences, but there is no excitement. He tells too much truth to work up an "old-fashioned revival." I was told that he said recently, "The longer I continue in this work, the less faith I have in exciting revivals."

I heard his two lectures on the second coming of Christ. If he were not depending upon nominal Christendom for the sustenance of his wide reputation as an evangelist, I believe he would be able to see the truth. In a private conversation he said to me, "Aside from two things, I think Brother Russell is in harmony with the Scriptures." What do you think these two things are? "Future probation, and in regard to the divine, spiritual body of Christ." His argument is based upon Acts 1:11 and Luke 24:39.

Yours in Christ,

J. M. BLOSE.

[REPLY: – We are gratified to learn of this approach to a clear appreciation of the great truths due in this harvest time on the part of one whom we have long esteemed as honest in his convictions, and fervent in spirit serving the Lord, although with a zeal that was not in accordance with a knowledge of many of the truths now due to the household of faith. Early teaching and long accustomed habits of thought are not easily overcome even by clear truth in [R1952 : page 59] minds that are naturally conservative, as most minds are. Yet even over these difficulties the honest-hearted will be led by the spirit of God slowly, if not rapidly, to clear apprehensions of the truth, which is unto all the household of faith meat in due season.

We note the texts thought to be contrary to our teaching that our Lord is no longer a being of flesh – a human being. The brother has probably not taken into consideration the fact that before our Lord "was made flesh," he, in common with other spirit beings, angels, could assume a human body, a body of flesh and blood and bones (Gen. 18:19; Judges 13; Dan. 10:5-21), and that his subsequent humiliation in being "*made* flesh" (John 1:14) and thus becoming "the *man* Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5) was a totally different thing from merely *appearing in* a body of flesh, like a man. Indeed, no Christian will dispute this difference, we presume; but when they come to consider Luke 24:39 they forget to apply the same rule. They forget that our Lord was "*made* flesh" only for a limited time, and was not humbled to a lower nature *forever*; and that the object of this humiliation is clearly stated to have been "for the suffering of *death*." (Heb. 2:9.) "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened [made alive] in *spirit*." And as he said before his death, "Yet a little while and the *world* seeth me no more," so we find that he "showed himself" (made himself to *appear*) to none except his disciples after his resurrection, and to them only a few times, and not after his former manner; – coming in while the doors were shut and leaving them by *vanishing*: as though he would tell them thus, – I am "*changed*," I am now a "quickening spirit," yet what you *see* is flesh and bones and not spirit, so do not be affrighted, but permit me to talk with you and expound to you the Scriptures.

The Apostle Paul expounds this subject thoroughly in Philippians 2:6-10. He shows our Lord's pre-human glory, his humiliation to be made a man, and then his still further humiliation to "the death of the cross," and then tells us that God exalted him subsequently to the highest glory. How inconsistent then to suppose him to still have the body of humiliation! He that ascended from the human nature is the same who first descended to the human nature. He is now glorified with the same spiritual glory which he had with the Father before the world was [made], but with added majesty. Our redemption cost enough at Calvary: it is not necessary that our Redeemer should bear a marred and scarred body of humiliation for our sakes for all eternity.

The resurrected bodies of the Church are described particularly in 1 Cor. 15:42-44, as not only glorious, but *spiritual*. So then if our Redeemer have a scarred and fleshly body of humiliation while we have glorious, perfect, spirit bodies, the "body of Christ," the Church, would eclipse the "head" in glory. But not so: our Lord is now exalted, the express image of the Father's *person*; and we shall be like him.

Respecting Acts 1:11. It seems strange that so many Bible students overlook the fact that the angel did not say anything about what kind of a body our Lord would have at his second coming, but merely that it would be "this same Jesus" – the same that was with the Father before the world was, and that for a time, and for a purpose, was made flesh and dwelt among us, and died for us and rose a quickening *spirit*: this same Jesus, whom, during the forty days since his resurrection, the world had not seen, and whom his disciples had seen only for a few times and for a few moments, when he occasionally "*showed* himself" to them, to demonstrate the fact that he was risen and changed: *this same* Jesus would come again. As to the "*manner*" in which he went away, it was quiet, unknown to the world, and so will be the *manner* of his second coming – unknown to any except the true disciples.

Since "flesh" cannot "*see,*" nor "*enter into,*" nor "*inherit*" the Kingdom of God (John 3:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:50), we should not imagine the King himself to be flesh. And, thank God! the members of his body, the Church, who are now in the flesh, must be "*changed*" and be made "like him," and then we shall "see him *as he is*" (1 John 3:2), not *as he was* when a man. We shall see him whom Paul saw as one born before the time – the Lord of glory, in glory above the brightness of the Sun.]

Denmark.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Some years ago a wealthy proprietor in Sweden, who had been a very pious gentleman, died, and left his son a loving admonition which I have translated into English, as follows: –

"My dear son: – Hereby I give you on parting this kind admonition. Be never diverted from these three things: the Word of God, your faith in Jesus Christ and **[R1953 : page 59]** the true fear of God. Hold on to the holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, and let them be a rule and guide for everything you think, believe, speak and do. Trust wholly in the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ for your hope of salvation. Strive daily after holiness, that you may more and more put off evil and increase doing good. If you continue these three things, you will never need to fear any error or seduction. But if you depart from the three things I have mentioned you are in danger of injuring your own soul, and of missing the eternal salvation.

"I will particularly recommend you three practices of godliness: prayer, meditation on the Word of God and self-examination, thereby better to learn to know your faults and weaknesses. If you get sleepy or negligent in any of these three practices you may know that your Christianity is retrograding. But the more fervent you are in prayer, the more eagerly and diligently you ponder God's Word in your heart, the more candidly you test yourself before the Lord, and confess your sins before him, the more powerfully you shall experience the workings of divine grace by the holy spirit in your heart. Appear toward God as a pious and humble child, to your neighbor as a kind brother or compassionate father, and towards yourself, and with regard to your faults, as a severe judge; that you never gloss over them, but readily confess them, and ask for their forgiveness. Be a minister in your own house, and set a good example for your own family and servants **[R1953 : page 60]** in words and acts. Point them incessantly to the right way, read, pray and sing with them, according as God gives you grace and power to do, and ask the heavenly Father to draw the hearts of them all unto himself. Set a good example for all to follow after, in meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, patience and kindness. Then God shall give you blessing and favor to win yours for the kingdom of Christ.

"Whenever God gives you an opportunity to show your affection, especially toward the poor, the sick and suffering ones, never let it pass

you by; for he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and this is the right mind for a Christian to have. Do not let it make you uneasy if you do not always feel joy in your heart, only be patient, and wait upon the Lord. He will surely in his own time make you glad again. Be not too hasty to judge another, for we judge a hundred times, and scarcely once hit the mark. Always leave to God what you do not understand.

"Dear son, I know the Lord will be merciful unto you and take you unto himself, if you faithfully attend to all this; and I would be glad if you would, once a week, especially at its beginning or end, read and consider what I have written. Have no company with seductive men. Do no one injustice in trade or business, and purpose by the help of God to go out into the world as an honest and pious Christian. Keep God before your eyes and in your heart all through life, and beware not to consent to any sin."

This seemed such excellent advice. I want you to see that some over here are friends of the Lord and of righteousness.

Yours in the Redeemer,

JOSEPH WINTER [*Colporteur*].

South Carolina.

BROTHER RUSSELL AND FRIENDS OF TOWER OFFICE: – I write to tell you my supply of tracts is exhausted, and to ask for more. I give a large part of them to country people returning from town to their homes.

I am kept so confined at home, and, seldom meeting any of the brethren of our hope and faith, I can make no report concerning the spread of the light here. Sometimes I have the unpleasing thought that there are too many DAWN and TOWER readers on whom the truth has taken but a slight hold, who in a languid sort of way apprehend the value of the harvest light, "approve the things that are excellent," but lack

earnestness of conviction, and perhaps lack the zeal and ardor awakened in the heart by the good hope that cometh through grace – the "hope that maketh not ashamed." But I do not like to think thus, and am deterred from it by the sense of my own deficiencies and shortcomings. Many times I am caused to feel that the lines have fallen to me in grievous places, with bitter humiliations, tears and sorrows. An alternating and changeful experience is mine. Sometimes I am in the glooms and shadows, sometimes in enough of light to bring back to me the peace he gives to them who are his, enough to keep alive some courage, and prevent me from sinking. Meantime I am sensible of an increasing nearness to him, and a slow but perceptible growth in spiritual light and the assurance of the faith. But it seems to me that but very little is being done in the Master's work, and my own sphere of action and liberty of service in the harvest is so confined, that the distress and fear of coming short of the prize – the promise left to the faithful, the vigilant, the overcomers – will come over me at times.

The TOWERS of 1895 are full of excellent matter. I now understand the Scripture term "the quick and the dead" – clearing up dark and difficult passages in harmony with the plan and system of revealed truth as a whole. This calls up the question relating to the meaning of the Master's words in Luke 17. In verse 5 the disciples desired of him an increase of their faith. Verse 6 can scarcely be called a reply. The question in the reader's mind is – Are verses 7 to 10 to be taken as part of the reply to verse 5? If so, the meaning seems to be that a continuous, humble and faithful service and discharge of duty will result in an increase of one's faith, to a degree greater than indicated by the mustard seed, which is said to be the smallest of seeds.

[We believe our brother has made the correct application of our Lord's words. We must not sit down and expect our Lord to serve us until after we have proved faithful in serving him. (See Luke 12:37.) And after having served him with our all, and to the best of our ability, we must not feel that he owes us a debt of gratitude, but rather that we have brought him nothing to which he was not already the rightful owner,

since "ye are bought with a price." We will still be *his debtors*; and the more faithful and diligent we are in his service, the more will it be to *our own* profit – to the increase of our faith, as well as to our upbuilding in character. – EDITOR.]

Pray ye, that my faith fail not; for I want to redeem as much of the time as possible, and use means and opportunities as the Lord will give me strength and grace to do so.

Yours in reverent and grateful love of Him,

D. M. FELTS

page 60

Pennsylvania.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: – Your kind letter at hand. We were glad to receive greetings from you, as we pray without ceasing for you and your household.

On Jan. 1 the Church here called a special meeting at which Brother _____ was elected "elder," Brothers _____ and Sisters _____ as assistants.

I have so many engagements I know not which I should fill. I do not like to miss one evening at the depot, as I can put out from 50 to 125 tracts every evening. I also have parlor talks, reading the DAWNS and TOWERS and explaining the chart at different places; and I have a very good field to work at home, which I am afraid I am neglecting.

I do wish you could see how my wife is growing in grace and in the spirit of Christ. My heart rejoices as she tells me how she goes to the Lord in prayer, and how she trusts him, and how the darkest hours are turned into brightness. My eyes overflow with tears of joy as I think during the day at work of going home in the evening to find her reading or singing praises to the Lord. Our home is a heaven, my life is sweeter

than I could have hoped or even thought, but not without seasons of trial. My step-daughter and son are 18 and 15 years of age. So you see I have to be very careful in my conduct, and in their training. They appreciate our happy home, and speak of it to their friends, who wish theirs were the same. I thank the Lord often for the precious truths we receive in the TOWER to strengthen and rejoice our hearts, and ask Him to keep you humble and strengthen you that you may withstand all trials and be a faithful servant. Oh, may we all be patient and faithful, and meet with our Redeemer in glory!
