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THE WONDERS OF SEEDS

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PREFACE

The writer of "The Wonders of Seeds" does not make any claim to superior knowledge in the field of Botany, nor is it his purpose to write as an authority in this area. His objective is to present spiritual truths taken from nature, which display the goodness and greatness of God as substantiated by the Scriptures. These truths reveal the love, wisdom and power of the Lord and should lead men to obey, believe and love Him.

The chapters which are presented deal with seeds of various kinds--seeds as they apply to the kingdoms of God, man, animals, and vegetables. As we consider seeds in these various areas, we will learn that they involve botany, biology and theology.

Truly, seeds are wonderful and interesting to consider. Seeds are God's means for the propagation of the species and also the sustenance of the different species. The spreading of the seeds over the face of the earth and the spreading of the gospel over all the earth are clearly set forth. Even as there are different techniques by which seeds are spread, so there are different methods by which the gospel seed is spread. The entrance of sin into the human race and the world has incurred the curse on God's creation and has become the occasion for a conflict that involves the kingdoms of God, man, animals, vegetables and minerals. This conflict is one of life and death. It has been waged over since the fall of Adam, and will terminate in due time by the

Lord God Who started this conflict. It will terminate in a glorious triumph for the SEED of the woman, even Christ, the God-Man, and eternal defeat and torment for Satan, that Old Serpent. Then Christ, the SEED of the woman, will inaugurate His glorious reign of peace, and evil doctrines will cease, weeds will be no more, the desert will blossom as the rose, and peace will be universal on the face of the earth. Then there will be harmony between God and man, and heaven and earth.

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01 -- THE COLLECTIVE MEANING OF SEEDS

The significance of the word "seed" as it is employed in the Scriptures is very broad in its meaning, and has at least eight connotations. It is both a proper noun and a common noun, and is both singular and plural in form. In addition, it applies to variety, and the varieties are very numerous.

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Christ The Seed Of The Woman

Christ is the SEED of the woman, the Seed of Abraham and the Seed of David. This refers to His Deity assuming a human, fleshly body which incorporates His birth, life, labors, death and resurrection. When Christ in His deity assumed a human body, it was for the purpose of perpetuity. Christ was born, lived, labored, suffered, died, was buried and arose in His human body. He ascended in His human body, was glorified in it, and will return again as the Son of Man in that same body. Never in eternity will He lay it aside. The assumption of His human body has brought hope to Adam and all of his descendants, since all live under the death penalty. Christ's being born of the Spirit in generation makes it possible that all sinners may be born again of the Spirit in regeneration. Christ, the SEED, means that He in His human body is the offspring of the woman. Having thus been propagated from humanity, He is a member of the human race and is eligible to become the Head of the redeemed race of the sons of God. Christ, as eternal Spirit, became a Man that human beings, dead in spirit, could be made alive spiritually.

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The Seed Of The Seed

The term "seed" also is employed in relation to these who have been born again as the seed of the SEED (Christ). These can only become the seed of God by virtue of having been born again of Christ, even the eternal Son of God, Who in humanity was born of a virgin. In a real sense all children of God are a reproduction of Christ, and therefore, are designated as the seed of God. Christ Himself stated, "The good seed are the children of the kingdom" (Matt. 13:38).

* * *

All Men Are Seed Of Adam

The term "seed" in a very general manner refers to all men as the children of men, having been generated and descended from their parents. This term is employed throughout the Scriptures and is a true way of expressing the birth of succeeding generations, even as being the seed of man. In Paul's address to the Athenians, he states that, "God made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17:26). This is a great biological statement. The "one blood" means Adam, from whom all men descended. Even Eve came from the living cells and substance of Adam.

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Sinners Are Designated As The Seed Of The Serpent

In Genesis 3:15, "thy seed" applies to sinners, and the children of the devil. John the Baptist designated the Pharisees and the Sadducees as a generation of vipers (Matt. 3:7). These two classes of Jews had poisoned the Mosaic doctrines with man-made traditions. Christ said of certain Jews that the devil was their father, and they were children of Satan. All Christians are designated as the seed of God by virtue of having been born again and of having the truth of God abiding in their hearts. The term "seed" also is employed in relation to sinners and the wicked, in that they are the offspring of Satan in their spiritual relation. The Bible speaks of the wicked as being the tares which are the children of the wicked one (Matt. 13:38).

* * *

The Word Of God Is Seed

The gospel truth is designated as "good seed" and also as "wheat" (Ps. 126:6; Matt. 13:19; Mark 4:14). The preaching of the gospel is likened to sowing seed, and the human heart is likened to the soil. The Word of God, the Bible, the Truth and the Gospel, are stipulated as Seed and Wheat, and when accepted and believed it brings forth seed, the children of the kingdom.

* * *

False Doctrines Are Evil Seed

Just as the Truth and the Bible are likened to seed, just so the lies of the devil, error, and false doctrines are designated as seed and tares. All who accept the lies and the evil doctrines inspired by Satan become the seed of Satan, even sinners by choice. The seed that the devil sows is called tares by Christ, and brings forth "children of the wicked one" (Matt. 13:38).

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Offspring Of Animals Is Seed

The word "seed" also is employed in relation to the procreation of the animal kingdom and its offspring. When God commanded Noah to make an ark, He said that a pair of all the beasts, that is, male and female, be taken into the ark, and that the clean beasts and birds should be taken by seven pairs "to keep seed alive upon all the face of the earth" (Gen. 7:2, 3). This term "seed" is also employed in relation to the product of the fowls as well as of the animals.

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Seeds Are Ripened Ovules Of Plants

Seed, in the most employed and the best understood sense, relates to the vegetable kingdom and the reproduction of all grains and fruits. The matured fruit of these is designated as seed. We read, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass . . . and the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after her kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:11, 12).

As we have noted, the term "seed" is very broad in its meaning as employed throughout the Bible. Seed is mentioned six times in the first chapter of the Bible, and almost three hundred times throughout the rest of the Bible. From the Word we learn that "seed" applies to Christ, the Son of the Virgin Mary, and also as the Son of Man; to men, the descendants of Adam in their natural generation; to believers (Christians) by reason of having been born again in a spiritual regeneration; to sinners in their spirit-relation to Satan; to the gospel truth and the Word of God; to error and evil doctrine; to the product of the animal kingdom, and to the product of the vegetable kingdom.

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02 -- VEGETABLE SEEDS DEFINED

The question which now confronts us is, "Where did seeds come from in the beginning?" There was a time when neither man, animals, birds, nor plants of any kind were in existence. God is the Creator of all things, and in His own time He created and formed all of these creatures and plants. In the creation of man, the animal world, and the vegetable kingdom, God gave two commandments which relate to all forms of life. First, to multiply and fill the entire earth. Second, that all should bring forth after their kind, for which process God made a gracious provision.

Vegetable seeds are composed of a very complex structure which includes a seed-coat, a plant embryo, and a supply of stored-up food for it when it is planted, so that it may obtain the proper elements to grow. When seeds or grains are eaten, they become food for man or beasts. Seeds are fertilized, ripened ovules, or eggs of plants, each of which contains a rudimentary plant. While seeds are in their dormant state, they are protected by various coats. In or around the seed leaves is a supply of stored-up food which constitutes the right elements, such as minerals, vitamins, proteins, carbohydrates, fats, and trace elements in sufficient quantity to start their own active life and nourish the seedlings until their roots and leaves begin to function. Then they

become dependent upon the soil, rain, sunshine, warmth, and the air for their continued growth and maturity, and in this manner another generation of self-same plants is started.

The purpose for planting is an increase and another generation of seeds just like the mother-seed. The increase may be thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or an hundredfold. In many plants, the increase may be a thousandfold, and sometimes ten thousand seeds may spring forth from just one tiny seed.

God has inscribed His laws so deeply within seeds that when the laws for reproduction are carried out, each seed will obey the command of the Creator and bring forth after its kind. Of course, seeds do not have a will nor resistance to the divinely-ordained laws of the Creator.

It is written that God "made everything beautiful in His time" (Eccl. 3:11), and "out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (Gen. 2:9). All grasses, plants, shrubs, and trees as God originally made them were beautiful. However, the seeds are the most important part of a plant or tree. The roots, stem, branches, leaves, and flowers exist so there can be seeds. Of course, plants and trees serve other purposes beside bearing seeds or fruit. Trees furnish shade and shelter, become a wind-break, furnish homes for birds and squirrels, provide lumber for building purposes and fuel for fire. Many plants, beside bearing seeds, furnish fodder for animals and substances for food, both for man and beasts. In the final summation of all God's creation, He declared that it was "very good." The prophet Nahum states that "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum 1:7). This is unalterably true, and since the Lord is good, all that He does is also good. In the creation, God has wisely considered the comforts, necessities, and pleasures of man, the animals, and fowls.

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03 -- THE GOD OF NATURE AND GRACE

People often speak of nature as though it exists independently of God and of His concern. They look upon nature as though it originated itself, without any outside influence, and as though it maintained itself.

We hear much about the God of grace, the God of holiness, the God of glory, but He also is the God of nature. God created nature, ordered the laws of nature, and maintains nature. Back of all laws there must be a law-giver, law-sustainer, and a law-enforcer.

The inanimate, as well as the animate creation, is governed by God. The "laws of nature" cannot mean anything but God's method of control of nature. The "laws of nature," so called, owe their existence to the will and appointment of God. God's providence controls the material universe. This control is by the immediate power and wisdom of God. God governs nature perfectly in all of its complicated parts throughout the mighty universe of hundreds of millions of milky ways. The sun through thousands of years was never one-hundredth of a second late in rising. From the infinitely great matters of guiding all worlds in their course, to the infinitesimal or incalculable matters in creation, God presides over all of them. Even from the birth of one

seed to its maturity and the possibility of reproducing itself, God's knowledge, love, and care are exercised. Though they may be so tiny that it requires 175,000 seeds to weigh an ounce, each is the object of His care.

His divine providence also extends over the vegetable creation. We read in the Bible that "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man" (Ps. 104:14). The Psalmist extols the great God "Who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food and to the young ravens which cry" (Ps. 147:7, 9). In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ said, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, . . . yet your heavenly Father feedeth them... Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field," He then makes the application by asking the question, "shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 6:26-30).

Vegetation is controlled on principles in accordance with its characteristic vegetable life. The peculiar aptitudes and properties of seeds, grasses, and grains, as well as the quality of the soil and the nature of the climate are all taken into account. God exercises His providence through these different agencies and according to the laws He has ordained in regard to each different tree, shrub, or plant. This is what we call secondary causes pertaining to vegetable nature; nevertheless, these are dependent upon the gracious providence of God. The multiplication of the loaves and fishes in the feeding of the five thousand by the Saviour was based on His beneficent and miraculous power. The difference is this: the miracle was the instantaneous expression of the miraculous power of Christ, while the raising of a crop of wheat, or a bed of tulips is by the mediatorial work of God through man's compliance to God's ordained laws of nature.

The most nutritious vegetable foods eaten by man are seeds. The six true cereal foods are wheat, corn, rice, barley, rye, and oats. The legumes are the fruit or seed of leguminous plants, such as peas, beans of various kinds, and soybeans. These are wholesome and rich in proteins. The fruits of the nut trees are rich in proteins and oil, and are very healthful in their natural state.

God did not intend all seeds to grow. It would not be possible for the ground to bear nor to have space for all plants. God's purposes for seeds are that they shall provide food for man, animals, and birds, build up the soil, and eventually reproduce their like.

God did not only create man "fearfully and wonderfully" (Ps. 139:14), but He also made a gracious provision for his subsistence. He has given fruits, vegetables, and grains, together with fruitful seasons, to sustain his body. No respect of persons is manifested by Him, and in the natural blessings upon natural men for their natural subsistence, whether they be saints or sinners. Jesus said, "For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45). Paul said, "He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). However, the laws of nature need to be obeyed to obtain the natural blessings. Man must cultivate the soil, sow the seed, and reap the harvest to obtain an increase. Obedience to God's laws and faith in His Word are essential for man to inherit His promises, even salvation and eternal life.

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04 -- WHERE SEEDS COME FROM

The great question which confronts many people is, "Where did life come from?" The source of life is a great enigma of the laboratory. Several decades ago a scientist made the discovery in his study that life is eternal and of necessity must be so, for life could not have had a beginning. Such a discovery and belief would of necessity lead a person to believe in the eternal God. One of the great interests of a biologist is the study of biogenesis, which deals with the development of living organisms and the fact that living organisms can be generated only by pre-existing living organisms or parents. God of necessity must be eternal, and therefore is a Spirit. All material substances had a beginning. The Bible teaches that God is eternal, that He did not have a beginning, neither could He have had a beginning. The Psalmist said, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it" (Psalm 139:6). God does not demand that we must understand everything, but that we shall believe His Word.

Suppose that we consider that God had a beginning, we would then be confronted with another startling question, "Who created Him or brought Him into existence?" This would complicate matters more and lead us to wonder, "Who created or brought into being that which created God?" Such reasoning would lead us deeper into the dark without any satisfactory conclusion. We must all admit there is an infinite, independent, omnipotent, eternal cause behind the mighty creation of all worlds, angels, men, and creatures. This eternal cause is the eternal God, Who is revealed in the Bible.

God Himself asked Job a purely scientific question when He asked, "Job, where wast thou when I laid the foundation of the earth?" (Job 38:4). To some people this may sound like a ridiculous question, but God is not to be so charged. The meaning is, "Where did Job obtain his life, and how did he and his forefathers, also the first man Adam, enter into the stream of life?" The answer is, "God is life." All forms of life, from the highest, even angelic life and human life, down to animal life, vegetable life, and to the very lowest forms of life, all originated with God. There is provision made for the different forms of life on earth to give expression in reproducing themselves, whether with man, animal or vegetation.

Originally, God made the plants with seed-producing organisms for self perpetuation. God told Adam and Eve to dress the garden and to keep it; therefore, God turned the world with all that He had made, over to man to possess, manage and perpetuate.

Many plants need care, and the seed needs to be harvested and stored in a dry place until the next season comes, then, when the soil warms up, the seeds need to be planted. The part of the plant that produces the seeds is the flower. When flowers are permitted to mature, they become dry and the beauty fades, then the seeds are being developed. There are more than 130,000 types of plants which produce seed. This reveals the goodness and wisdom of God in producing so many types of trees and plants for the benefit of man and the animal kingdom. In the contemplation of God's goodness David was made to cry out, "Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works, which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they

cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered" (Psalm 40:5).

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05 -- VARIOUS USES FOR SEEDS

God has made a gracious provision for the subsistence of men, the animals, and the fowls. These were all made from the dust of the ground. For this reason, many men have been prompted to express that the ground is "Mother Earth." The mother who gives birth to a child is the proper person to give nourishment to the child. The child in the period of formation or gestation is nourished from the nutrients the mother furnishes, and nature provides for the mother to continue to nourish the child in its infancy. This principle is true in the animal kingdom as well as in the vegetable kingdom. These were formed of the dust of the earth, and of necessity it is Mother Earth that must sustain them. It is not possible for man, the animals, and birds, which have animal life, to directly eat the soil and subsist on it. For the subsistence of animal life, God made the vegetable kingdom out of the dust of the earth to furnish food, for all these. The medium between the animal creation and their stomachs and the ground from whence they originally came, is vegetation. This vegetation has also come out of the ground and has been transformed into living and life-giving substances. The vegetable kingdom includes fruits and nuts that come from trees; and grains, such as wheat, corn, rye, oats, barley, millet, and others. There also is a great variety in the herb family, such as potatoes, beets, lettuce, and cabbage, and a multiplied number of other vegetables.

Seeds are God's gifts to man and the animal kingdom. They serve as food for men and the lower creatures. Seeds also are the means for the reproduction and increase of their own kind. The Lord did not only create man and animals, but He also sustains these. Again, and again in the Bible we read of God's providential care for His creation. Christ said that His Heavenly Father feeds the birds so that they do not need to have storehouses, or to lay up grain for their subsistence. Then He adds that men are of much greater value than many sparrows, and that He provides for men as well as for all creatures, whether on land or in the sea. The Psalmist David said, "The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing" (Ps. 145:15, 16). Also, "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry" (Ps. 147:9). If men would have to feed and provide for all the wild animals and birds as they do for domestic fowls and animals, all the meats, foods, fruits, and grain would be consumed in a little while, so that men and animals would perish from the earth. God is good to all creation, and seeds are His gift to men, animals, and birds. All have the capacity to enjoy eating, and eating is one of the great pleasures of life which God recognizes. Thus God demonstrates that the happiness of all His creatures is one of His great concerns.

As has been stated before, two of the great uses for seeds are food for animal life and replanting for a reproduction with increase. However, there are other uses which come from seeds. Oils are extracted from seeds for food, salads, and cooking fats. Medicines, soap, perfume, printers' ink, glue, linoleum, varnishes, synthetic rubber, plastics, industrial alcohol, and insecticides are some of the many articles made from seeds. After the oil has been extracted from

seeds, the pulp is used for chicken and cattle feeds. Let us be thankful to the Lord for a variety of seeds.

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06 -- SEEDS ARE GOOD FOOD

There is a little rhyme relating to a grain of wheat and its potential that reads like this:

"You may take a grain of wheat,
And store it up to keep.
Or, you may grind it to eat,
Or, you may sow it to reap."

A major part of our food comes from grains which are seeds, even grains such as wheat, rye, barley, corn, millet, and rice. These kernels are seeds, and when ground, the best seeds will make the best food. Some grains may not be fully matured when harvested, or may have been stunted in their growth. These are not good for seed, but may be used for food.

Whole grain flours contain all the elements of the entire grain, which includes the bran, the life germ, with the gluten and starches. These make the best flour, that is, the most wholesome and healthful, and are best for food when consumed in their entirety, even as God made them. The whole wheat as it grows and comes from the sulk contains sixteen elements, with a number of trace elements, that make it a whole food, containing everything essential to subsistence. White flour is mostly starch, and lacks some of the essential elements for life and health, because it has been deprived Of specific elements which the Creator has placed in the grains of wheat. Such seeds as beans, peanuts, and nuts, also make a staple food. God delights in variety and has given a great variety of foods to the children of men. A change of food is good for the appetite, and good for man's entire system. Man also delights in variety. There is another variety of seeds which furnishes the substances to make beverages such as coffee, cocoa, and the like.

Seeds have many uses. The chaulmoogra nut oil is used in the treatment of leprosy. Some seeds furnish delightful flavors that are pleasing to the taste and scent, such as dill, caraway, and fennel; while others are processed as spices, pepper, nutmeg, and mustard. Some other seeds provide oil for paints, soap, and lubricants. In all this we see God's goodness and thoughtfulness for the health, happiness, and sustenance of man.

The Bible, like whole kernels of wheat, is to be read, believed, and practiced. Doing so will be food for the soul. Also, the entire Bible is necessary, and none is to be rejected or neglected. All of the doctrines and commandments of the Scriptures are to be observed and kept. After the Word of God, which is seed, has been planted in the heart of man and sprung into life, it produces a quickening, even a new birth, which makes the believer a son of God. He then needs to take the same Word of God and feed on it to sustain the soul.

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07 -- GOOD SEEDS MUST BE SOWN AND REAPED BY MAN

It is written, "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Gen. 2:9). Before the fall of Adam and Eve, man's food consisted mainly of fruits and nuts, even that which grew on the trees. After the fall, God commanded man to also eat of the herbs of the field (Gen. 3:18). When the fall occurred, which brought the curse on the earth, it became necessary for man to cultivate the ground and to sow good seeds for his subsistence. Sin brought a deterioration and degeneration to man, the animals, and vegetation, as well as to the ground. It was then that the ground brought forth thorns, thistles, and weeds. These need to be destroyed and restrained, because they choke and suppress the good plants, herbs, and grains which were to be the food for man and animals. It is not possible for men and animals to subsist on weeds, thorns, and thistles. From the fall of Adam on, life for man has become a battle for his health against disease, between life and death, truth and error, and holiness and sin, which involves man's soul and destiny. Choices must be made either for salvation or condemnation, heaven or hell.

Before the fall, man's home was in the Garden, an earthly paradise. His work was a delightful task and not laborious nor tedious. He enjoyed the blessings of the Creator-God. Since the fall, the major part of man's life, time, energy, and means is expended in providing a home in which to live, ample food on which to subsist, and clothes in which to be comfortable and modest. All of these comforts were provided for man in the beginning, but by reason of sin were forfeited. To labor for a livelihood became the best for man's present life and his eternal good.

The Lord God said to fallen and disobedient man, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it (the ground) all the days of thy life... in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:17-19). Here we learn that man's subsistence involves sorrow, labor, and sweat so long as he lives. The articles which are good for food, even the product of seeds and grains, which come from plants and trees, must be raised by man. The soil needs to be prepared and the seed sown in the proper season, the weeds must be destroyed, then the harvest must be reaped and the grain stored both for food and seed. This is man's task.

It is good to know that the Lord renewed the probationary period to men through Christ His Son. He made provision for men to be redeemed, and some day to be promoted to be on a level With Christ's glorified humanity when redemption is consummated. For the time being, labor is a necessity for subsistence. Being subject to old age and death should be a constant reminder to prepare for heaven and the hereafter.

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08 -- HOW SEEDS GERMINATE

A seed is an undeveloped plant with a protective coat wrapped around it. Before sowing

the seed, the sower needs to wait until there is the right temperature and the soil has been cultivated, so that it will retain the moisture. When the proper time has come to sow the seed, it is placed in the ground at a proper depth and covered. Then, through the warmth of the sunshine, it absorbs the moisture which causes the life germ to become active, and it says as it were, "I want to grow; I need more room." When this occurs, certain substances in the seed, called enzymes, convert stored starches into sugar. These contribute to the growth of the plant cells and tissues. This swelling increases the size of the embryo in seeds from one-fourth to twice the original size, which causes the seed to go to work, take off its coat, and push out in every direction. The food that is stored around the life germ is absorbed and digested by the embryo, and the seedling is on its way to grow. The root-forming tips of the hypocotyl then emerge. This is distinctly advantageous, since the root system anchors the seedling and absorbs moisture and minerals, which must be established before the epicotyl begins its rapid development into the shoot system. The story of the seed is completed only when the seed has germinated and the seedling has become established. This is the crucial period in the life of the plant, for the seed and the seedlings are subject to numerous environmental hazards which may kill the plant before it has a chance to start. The hazards during germination are so great that some plants are able to persist as a species only because seeds are produced in such great numbers.

The seed and the seedling may be eaten by insects, birds, rodents, or other mammals. Also, the seedling may fail to grow because of a lack of light and water, or by reason of unfavorable temperature. Seeds may be buried too deeply in the soil, which will prevent them from pushing through the hardened crust of the soil. Seeds may be planted so near the surface that not enough moisture can be absorbed for them to geminate. It is to be observed that seeds do not possess a will; therefore, have no choice in the whole matter of being planted, the place of planting and the depth of planting. Neither can a seed preserve itself from destructive elements, such as rodents or birds.

We may learn a gospel lesson of gospel truth from seeds. The gospel is seed, the human heart the soil, and the preaching of the gospel the sowing of the seed. Of course, men possess a will; therefore, they need to go where the gospel is preached and listen to it, or if in printed form, read it carefully. When the sinner hears the gospel preached, the Holy Spirit will witness to the truth and produce conviction. The Holy Spirit may produce conviction without the sinner's consent, but He will not proceed any farther in quickening the gospel seed until the sinner cooperates, repents, confesses his sins, and believes in Christ. There are certain conditions the sinner must meet before the Spirit will proceed with Christ's redemptive work. The Holy Spirit proceeds in His work in response to man's faith. He then will quicken the Word, and instantly the gospel seed will spring into life. Then his sins will be forgiven and newness of life will be imparted, which makes him a babe in Christ. The new convert needs to feed on the Word of the Lord, grow in grace, become mature, and reproduce himself that is, make another Christian.

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09 -- HOW SEEDS GROW

It is interesting to note how seeds grow. Sound, healthy seeds will germinate or sprout when conditions are right, that is, the proper temperature, good preparation of the soft, careful

planting at the right depth and sufficient moisture are all involved. It is then that spontaneously the seeds will grow. Grain seeds, whether eaten or planted, will have served their God-appointed purpose.

Seeds grow in a similar manner to that of men, animals, and insects. The seed germs of men, animals, and plant seeds possess life, but of course, in different forms. All life germs must have nourishment before they can grow. When the seeds cannot obtain enough nourishment to sustain life, they die, just as little chickens would die if they were not nourished. It is interesting to know that when seeds are planted and they start to grow, the seeds can move and turn themselves around and get into the right position for gathering up their food to send the root downward and the stem upward.

When a seed is opened through the center and examined under a magnifying glass, it may be observed that two tiny leaves are pressed together face to face and that there is a stem at the lower end. The leaves and stem are called the embryo, which means the beginning of life. This embryo is surrounded by a white, thick, pulpy plantlet until it starts to grow. Just as soon as the seed begins to accumulate the moisture and the warmth of the sun, the tiny plant or germ on the inside begins to feed on the white pulp inside the husk, or shell, until all is consumed. The moisture in a seed forms a type of gluten, in which the starch of the seed is dissolved, and converted into sugar, the sugar into carbonaceous sap, and the sap into cellular tissue and woody fiber as the leaves present themselves to the influence of the air and light.

Regardless of the position the seed is placed in the soil, the root always grows downward and the stalk upward; however, the plant grows downward before it grows upward. The tiny stem of the lower corner naturally likes the darkness of the ground underneath, so just as soon as it bursts through the husky shell, it turns itself downward to find its proper place in the soil. Here also we learn a gospel lesson. The gospel which is seed also is food. When a person has been converted through the Word of the Lord, he then is to feed on the Word of the Lord. The mother who gives birth to a child is the proper person to provide nourishment for the child. In like manner, the gospel not only contains the "spermatic Word," but also becomes food to the new-born soul. Growth to the new-born soul comes in proportion to the person's feeding on the Word.

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10 -- FOOD FOR THE SEED

The Creator-God has wisely combined the elements which are essential to the various types of seed. The mother plant stores within each seed a life germ with the proper minerals and vitamins to give that seed a healthy start in life when it germinates and starts on its own course to reproduce itself. This principle is carried out in all of God's creation, whether in the new birth of the soul, the birth of man, animals, or vegetation. From the chemistry of seeds, we learn that within every seed there are liberal amounts of minerals, such as calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, iron, sulfur, and iodine. The plant stores in the seed the same elements of which it was composed.

The most precious elements in seeds probably are their contents of B vitamins and vitamin E. Also some vitamin A and unsaturated fatty acids called vitamin F are included. These elements are a very essential part in the food for men, a lack of which may cause a variety of physical disorders. Often these essential elements are eliminated or lost in the process of milling and baking. However, these are not only essential for the health of man, but are very essential for the health and sturdiness of the little plant that is to develop from the seed when it is sown and starts to grow. The germ that springs into life must have food to feed on when it is quickened. The necessary elements must be present to feed this baby plant until it can become established in the soil and through its roots absorb the minerals out of the ground to continue its growth and produce after its kind.

God, the Creator, made a provision that the mother or mother-plant shall support her own infants. Before the days of commercialized and well-balanced chicken feeds, our mothers fed the baby chicks their first two or three feedings of hard-boiled eggs, pulverizing the shell, the white, and the yolk. The entire egg provided a complete or whole feed for the chicks. Since chicks come from eggs, it is reasonable to assume that eggs make good food for chickens, especially as a starter.

All who have been born of the Word of God will do well to feed on the Word, because it is a complete and well-balanced ration for the newborn soul. The Word contains everything that is essential to feed and sustain the soul. The beauty of the Word of God is as follows: It is milk to the babe in Christ and meat for the mature soul.

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11 -- A SEED IS BORN OF TWO PARENTS

The term "birth" is employed in several different manners. Generally the term is employed in relation to the generation of animal life. It also is permissible to employ this term in a sense of beginning, origin, to bring forth, and of descent. That which is born must of necessity, have two parents. This fact is clearly revealed in the reproduction of seeds; therefore, the title states that seeds are born and have two parents. The growth of flowers and the germination of seeds are very similar to those of all forms of life. Flowers may be composed of as many as four different sets of organs. These are the petals, sepals, stamens, and pistils. In the flower the little white stems with yellow ends are called stamens and anthers. It is the anther that produces the pollen. There are also other little stems called pistils, which are the central organs; of all perfect and pistillate flowers. These pistil tubes whose upper ends are extended are somewhat sticky. At the lower end of the pistils are little germs of seeds, ovules, which do not become seeds without the pollen from the stamens. When the pollen grains are shed from the anther, they are disseminated by various agencies. Some of them may be by one means or another, which reach the stigma of the same or another flower. This transfer of pollen from anther to stigma is known as pollination. As the small grain of pollen dust touches the sticky end of the pistils, it adheres, extending its influence down through the tiny tube to the little ovules which will become seeds. No seeds are formed without the union of pollen and ovules, a process called fertilization. This is the manner in which a seed obtains its origin and life to start on its way, just as did its parent plant.

Various agencies are employed in securing the transfer of pollen, such as wind, water, insects. Even birds may act in this transfer. There are some plants which cannot be fertilized unless the wind blows and scatters the pollen to the sticky ends of the pistils. Plants with inconspicuous types of flowers are most likely to be wind-pollinated. Grasses and trees, both deciduous and coniferous, are wind-pollinated. Flowers of these plants are usually without nectar glands, and produce an unusual amount of dry, powdery pollen. These do not require odors to attract insects to assist in their pollination.

Fertilization also is accomplished by insects which carry pollen to the pistils. The insects come to visit the flowers to gather the nectar. They become dusted with the pollen, and in working with the flower, some of the pollen reaches the pistils. Really, many flowers need the insects, and the insects need the flowers.

The odors and colors of flowers also serve an important purpose. The importance of these is to attract insects that effect pollination. The odors are pleasing to the human sense of smell and the colors to the sight of men. There is a language in flowers, and florists use the slogan, "Say it with flowers," for advertising purposes. Flowers may be designated as "the poor man's gems." In weddings, funerals, the sick room, and formal gatherings, flowers cheer the hearts of men and serve a pleasing and wholesome purpose.

The Creator has designed that reproduction shall be by the process of generation. It is stated that God created man; male and female created He them (Gen. 1:27). This same principle applies to animals, birds, insects, fishes, fruits, nuts, grains, flowers, and all seeds. It is necessary that there be male and female since all forms of life develop from two common parents. So we see that seeds are born and possess two parents.

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12 -- THE BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SEEDS

Birth is the gate into life, whether it is in the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, or the Kingdom of God. The reproduction of life is by the process of generation. The young in each of these different kingdoms are delicate, tender, and frail, but God has made provision for them and their safety until they can provide for themselves.

There is beauty associated with the period of infancy in the different forms of life. The blooming of flowers and their fertilization is the beginning of the birth of another generation of seeds, which when matured, then planted, will develop into more flowers. The purpose of birth is growth, maturity, and reproduction of its same species, making provision for another generation of its own kind.

The flowers of fruit trees are beautiful and possess a fragrance, and also a sweetness. This attracts bees, flies, and insects which live on the sweet substance that is in the flowers. In many trees, the new seeds which are formed in the flowers are covered with fruits, which constitute food for man and animals.

There are two important and interesting periods in the life of fruits in which there is a combination of beauty, fragrance, and sweetness; namely, the time of birth, or flower stage, and that of maturity. The reason for this is origin, preservation, and purpose of existing. When fruit trees bloom in the spring, in the process of fertilization, there is both color and fragrance in the flowers. This attracts bees which aid in the pollination of the seeds. Soon the blossoms fade and fall, and the fruit for the next several months is on its way to develop and mature. During the period of development there is not much beauty that accompanies the fruit. If the fruit can survive pests, wind, and storm, managing to hold on until autumn, that fruit will mature, become juicy, sweet, fragrant, and beautiful in appearance. The seed inside matures with the development of the fruit. Then the fruit is ready to be eaten or preserved for future use. Another interesting fact is that when the fruit has held fast to the branch through wind, storm, and rain, and is fully matured, it becomes ready to be hand picked. If left, it will drop by reason of its own weight.

There are two important and interesting periods in the life of a human being in which there may be beauty and fragrance manifested. These are youth and old age. Nature and grace can make a human life beautiful, sweet, and fragrant. God places within the lily a beauty, a fragrance, and a sweetness that blooms for one day, then perishes or fades the next day. He Who made men immortal, and destined them to live forever, can also make men and women beautiful in disposition and character, sweet in nature, and fragrant in influence for time and eternity. It requires time to develop character, and if men can hold on to God and grace, be faithful to old age, He can enable them to face old age gracefully and patiently. When their work is done, they may ripen for heaven, be like hand-picked fruit ready to be gathered into the heavenly paradise.

There is no dishonor for men to become aged, stooped, full of wrinkles, possessed of gray hair or bald, if they were converted in youth, walked with God, and labored for the Lord to old age. Solomon said, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (Prov. 16:31). Not only does the Lord take care of the little ones in their infancy, but those who have lived for Him and become infirm and feeble by reason of many years; to these He extends His care. He said, "And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Isa. 46:4). Here lies the beauty of becoming converted early in life, walking with God through life, and attaining old age in the faith of the Son of God.

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13 -- PROVISION OF POLLEN TO FERTILIZE SEEDS

God gave the following commandment to vegetation, animals, and man: "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth... And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after his kind, and every winged fowl after his kind... Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping things and the beast of the earth after his kind... and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind... And God created man in His own image, in the image of God

created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and said unto them, 'Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth'" (Gen. 1:11, 21, 24,25, 27, 28). All commandments which God gave were good and possible to be obeyed. It is necessary for man to exercise his will and by choice to obey the God-given commandments. The animal kingdom is to follow the instinct of nature. In the vegetable kingdom, the laws for increase operate without the will or instinct, because the Creator inscribed such laws within plants that they function in full harmony with those laws.

When a flower blooms and the little germs of seeds or ovules are formed, it is essential that the pollen, which is produced by the stamens, fertilize the ovules for the seeds to develop and contain a life germ to continue the cycle of reproduction. Only one grain of pollen is necessary to pollinize one ovule. Nature is so prolific that it produces thousands of these pollen-grains when only one is necessary to fertilize one ovule to make possible the reproduction of itself in like kind, but many fold. The Bible speaks of the sowing of seed in which some brought forth thirtyfold, some sixtyfold and even an hundredfold. This means that thirty, sixty, and a hundred times more seed was harvested than sown.

Of course, some plants are more prolific than others, among which are orchids. Their seeds are extremely minute; several hundred thousand, even to a million are found in a single seed pod. Since these seeds are so tiny, there is very little food or nutrition in the seed to give the life germ a vigorous start. These seeds are dependent upon the external source of food until the first leaf appears above the soil, perhaps several months, even two years after germination. Since these seeds are so tiny, helpless, and delicate, the wise design of the Creator is seen in making the plant so prolific that the proper propagation of the orchids will be perpetuated. For many years orchids were grown commercially by sowing the seed on a pile of compost containing soil fungi. This did not prove to be very satisfactory, as germination was generally poor and involved a great expense in growing. In 1922, a botanist discovered that orchids could be germinated in bottles or flasks in the greenhouse. The bottom of each flask was covered with a jelly-like layer of agar, with some essential mineral elements and sugar added. These seeds which are supplied with food material in soluble form assist these tiny seeds to grow. When the seedlings are a few months to a year old, they are transplanted to pots in the green house.

Nature, which was ordained by God, is a great parable, teaching us many lessons about God Who is great, powerful, wise, good, and loving, and Who maintains all the laws which He has made.

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14 -- BEES POLLINATE FLOWERS

Honey bees are one of the most interesting and useful insects in the Apian Family. Having been associated with man for over 4000 years, they are regarded almost as one of his domestic animals. They serve a greater purpose than merely making honey and storing it up for themselves and man. Flying from flower to flower, they come in contact with the pollen and carry it with them to the pistils, thus assisting in the process of pollination of flowers, enabling plants to fruit. The worker bees that are covered with pollen of one species will not pollinate

different species of flowers. Bees will not fly from a rose to a lily, but will fly from rose to rose, lily to lily, or from white clover to white clover. Before going to another species of flower, they will strip themselves, or brush off all the pollen of one type of flower before they will gather the sweet, juicy fluid of another type of flower.

It is only necessary for one little grain of pollen to fertilize an ovule to start a seed. God, through nature, has made a provision for an abundant supply of pollen. Were it not for this abundance, many ovules would not develop into seeds. Much pollen is wasted by the blowing of the wind. It may be possible when some fruit and nut trees are in full bloom that a dashing or continued rain will wash away most of the pollen, then very few of the blossoms will grow into fruit, because the pollen did not reach the ovules.

Many species of fruit trees, shrubs, and plants contain both the pollen and ovules in the same plant, while in other species the two elements are in different plants and trees. In our common fruit trees, the pollen and the ovules are produced in the same tree. Some trees are of the other class. In this class there is a male tree and a female tree. The date-palm is one of this type. The staminate, or male flower, grows on one tree; and the pistillate, or female flower, on the other tree. The ovules from the latter must receive the pollen from the former before fertilization occurs and fruit will be born. It is necessary when the pollen of a date-palm is ripe, to cut a cluster of flowers from the male tree and take it to the female tree and shake it over every cluster of the female blossoms. In these modern days this pollination is done mechanically with an instrument made especially for this purpose. Each tree produces its own sex in the sprouts at its base. Date orchards are made up mostly of young plants taken from the roots of bearing trees, with only sufficient male plants to furnish the pollen to insure fertilization.

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15 -- GRAIN SEEDS AND GOSPEL SEED

Seeds, of necessity, must have a life germ in them to become reproductive, and if they are not reproductive, they cannot properly be called seeds. Seeds greatly vary in their size and the covering they wear. However, on the other hand, there is a likeness in all of them. This likeness is that every seed has a tiny plant in it and some food for the little plant to live on as it starts to grow.

Seeds of different plants and trees do not look alike at all. Seeds vary in size and in the coat they wear. The covering of a dandelion seed is very thin, but the coverings of walnut and coconut seeds are thick and very hard.

In the vegetable kingdom nature ever seeks to reproduce itself and grow to maturity. Plants which have been known to acquire a late start in the season and that ordinarily grow tall, have not grown to be very tall, but have produced flowers and born seeds before frost time. In so doing, these plants have served their purpose of growing for that season.

The gospel, which is holy seed, is to be spread over the face of the earth. No method has been given how the gospel was to be spread, only that of witnessing to make Christ known what

lie has done for them, and what He can do for sinners. Even as there has come an improvement of facilities for the sowing of natural seed from that of scattering it by hand, to large drills drawn by tractors, so there also has come improved facilities for spreading the gospel seed. First, the gospel was spread by mouth to individuals, then by printed page, and now by radio, and thus it is possible for thousands all over the country to hear the same message in their homes all at the same time.

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16 -- UNLIMITED SUPPLY OF GOSPEL SEED

Seed is reproductive and always brings forth after its kind. Christ said in Matthew 13:3: "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." The sower is the Son of Man, even Christ, and every Christian. The seed is the gospel or the Word of God. The product of sowing gospel seed will be the children of the Kingdom. The apostle Peter wrote concerning the new birth of a sinner that is brought to pass by obeying the truth through the Spirit: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Peter 1:23). The Bible is the Word of God, even the Word of Truth, which abideth forever. The Bible is forever the same -- a complete revelation of God's will to man--and never changes, increases, or diminishes. Here is the wonder and the beauty of the Word of God which is the seed Christian workers are commanded to sow. It never is more and never is less, but forever is the same. No minister, evangelist, missionary, or Christian worker has ever lacked for gospel seed.

The Word of God was preached by the twelve Jewish apostles among the Jews and Gentiles. Also, the gospel seed was sown among the Gentiles; namely, by Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Timothy, Sosthenes, Apollos, and Titus throughout Asia Minor and Europe. The early church fathers in the first, second, and third centuries sowed the gospel seed throughout the entire world. Tens of thousands of evangelists, and thousands of missionaries, with hundreds of thousands of ministers have carried the seed of the Christian way of life into practically every country in the world.

The gospel seed has been sown, by millions of Christian workers and Sunday School teachers. Then the Bible has been taught by multitudes in Bible Training Schools and Bible Colleges. In addition to the spoken word, the Bible and Bible literature have been translated and printed in hundreds of languages to be scattered throughout the world in the church age for more than nineteen centuries over the face of the earth. Again, let it be repeated, the virtue, joy, and glory of scattering the gospel seed is this: the gospel seed has not diminished, even in one word or letter, but is the same in amount as it was when the early church fathers proclaimed the gospel after the canon of the Scriptures was completed.

This should greatly encourage every gospel sower to scatter the gospel seed wherever there is any human soil, that is, a heart that has not been regenerated. Gospel sowers should sow the seed on all types of soil: the wayside soil, the stony ground, the thorny ground, and the good soil. These should ever sow on, weep on, and pray on, sowing until Jesus comes again, when the harvest will be reaped and garnered in the house of the Lord.

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17 -- POSSIBILITIES FOR SEED REPRODUCTION

The possibilities for small seeds are tremendous. Each little seed possesses a wonderful possibility for germination, growing, and developing into a stalk or tree. It is remarkable how great stalks and trees are developed from small seeds when the plants mature. When the seeds are stored, the possibilities lie dormant and are undeveloped, but when the seeds germinate and grow, the possibilities are slowly developed. The roots spread in the soil, the stem and branches grow and spread in the air, and upon these many leaves and flowers of beautiful shades and colors develop. An acorn that is only an inch in diameter and an inch and a half in length may develop into a sturdy oak tree that will grow to be 80 to 100 feet high and more than three feet in diameter.

It is remarkable that this acorn will not only break open the hard covering which protects it, and a hard crust of soil to send roots downward and branches upward, but also will bear thousands of acorns each year. In multiplying in a manifold manner, the little seed obeys the law of the Infinite Creator. The seed grows where it happens to be planted, expresses no resentment, neither makes any complaint, but follows the pattern of the law the Creator placed within the original plant, and the seed is produced. This law has been operative from the beginning even to the present time.

The possibility within each little seed for development and increase lies beyond man's apprehension. In the book, *The Unique Person of Christ*, Dr. J. A. Huffman includes a paragraph that staggers our comprehension. He states: "A friendly mathematician has figured out that a grain of wheat sown in the soil, dying, and giving up its identity for a larger life of ten kernels annually, all of each crop being sowed consecutively would in twenty-seven years, produce enough wheat to fill two cubes, measuring a million miles each way. This figure may appear exaggerated but it is not."

The Russian thistle is a troublesome weed. It bears from 20,000 to 200,000 seeds per plant. Suppose one plant bore 30,000 seeds, and all of these seeds grew into plants equally productive, the offspring the next season would be 90 million seeds, and the third season 27,000,000,000 seeds. If each plant would spread out one foot in every direction, occupying four square feet, the third year's crop of seeds could plant about four million square miles, or an area equivalent to the United States and Mexico. Really, no flowering plant actually increases at such a rapid rate. The multiplication of seeds is limited by the competition of other plants of various species. In all forms of life, there is a competition for existence. Many seeds never germinate, and thousands which do grow, soon are choked by more thrifty plants, shrubs, and trees.

Christ spoke of Himself as being a grain of wheat that would fall into the ground and die to bring forth newness of life in a manifold manner, like unto Himself, even sons of God. Christ is the SEED of the woman spoken of in Genesis 3:15, and "the corn of wheat" that fell in the ground so that He would not remain the only Son of God, but life being carried through death would be multiplied (John 12:24). It is known only by God the innumerable number of sinners

who have been born again through the centuries and transformed into sons of God to be like Christ.

On the birthday of the Church, the day of Pentecost, 120 followers of Christ were filled with the Holy Spirit. Through the preaching and witnessing of these, there came a mighty increase that before nightfall three thousand were converted and added to the number of believers. This was an average increase of twenty-five persons for each believer who had been filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Bible admonishes us that we should not despise the day of small things (Zech. 4:10). It has been said:

"Sow a thought, reap a word,
Sow a word, reap a deed,
Sow a deed, reap a habit,
Sow a habit, reap a destiny."

Throughout the Bible we read of many small acts which led to great events and deeds. Eliezer requested only a little drink from Rebekah as a basis from which he could proceed on his mission of securing a bride for Isaac. Hannah made a little coat each year for her son Samuel and brought it to him on the day of the yearly feast. Inside this little coat there was the formation and making of a great prophet. It was a testimony of a little slave maid who witnessed to her mistress about a prophet in Israel who could recover her husband from leprosy. It was a little lad whose lunch became the means of a great multitude being fed. Little do men realize the wonderful possibilities for development there is in all of God's creation, from plants to men. The greatest of all possibilities lies within the will and heart of men to develop into holy characters that will reflect the image of Christ and become Useful in doing a great work for the Lord that may influence thousands to turn to the Lord.

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18 -- PARABLE OF THE SOWER AND THE SEED

Christ, the Saviour, taught the people a great gospel truth when He related to them the Parable of the Sower and the Seed. Matthew 13:3-23 and Mark 4:1-23 should be read to acquaint us with this Parable. Christ gives a revelation of the work He came to perform in His first coming. He stated that the Sower Who went forth to sow good seed was the Son of Man. The Son of Man also was the Son of God. The Son of God being eternal, also became the Son of Man. This means that in the Incarnation, He took on Himself a human body and nature to become a Man for the purpose of becoming the Saviour, bringing the gospel seed and sowing it in the hearts of men as a Man. Christ was not the son of a man, nor a son of man, but The Son of Man, indicating that He was the Representative Man to take the place of all men.

The going forth of the Sower to sow seed in the field was His first coming into the world. The command of Christ to His followers was to go into all the world to preach the gospel, The field of labor for gospel workers is the world. From this Parable we learn that the seed is the

Word of God and the gospel truth. Seed is reproductive; therefore, the gospel seed of necessity must be full of Christ and the good news of salvation. These are the only facts worth preaching. All other "isms" and teachings are false, and a curse is pronounced on those who preach or teach another gospel, which is not another gospel, but error.

The sowing of the seed is the preaching of the Word. The seed is sown by going forth to the sons of men and proclaiming to them the gospel. This message should issue from the heart and lips, to fall upon the ears of men so that it may enter through their ears into their hearts. The sowing of the seed may also be by scattering the printed page of the Bible, the source of gospel truth. The great objective is to sow the seed on all types of soil, which means all classes of men on the earth. All men deserve to hear the gospel truth.

Of course, there are different types of soil. First, there is the wayside soil that has been tramped hard by the feet of men. When the seed falls, the birds soon devour it; therefore, it cannot germinate nor grow. Much preaching falls on wayside soil, even hearts that are hard and unresponsive to the gospel. The birds of the air symbolize evil spirits, and these are present to steal the Word out of the hearts and minds of men whenever possible.

The thorny ground is not productive and does not yield a harvest. The seed that is sown grows, but while the plants are tender, the thorns choke out the plants so that they cannot yield a harvest. The thorns symbolize the cares of this world and the pleasures which are sought to satisfy self. These are so abundant that multitudes of people who make a start for heaven and the kingdom soon wither and perish.

The stony ground is very shallow and is not conducive to producing a crop. The good seed sown on this ground soon sprouts and grows. Having no depth of soil, the roots are unable to absorb the moisture and minerals, and soon wither and die. In like manner, the persecutions and trials that come to some Christians who lack depth of experience, causes them to wither, become discouraged, and fail God and themselves.

It is good to know that some seed will fall on flood ground, which will germinate, grow, and mature into a harvest, yielding thirtyfold, some sixtyfold and some an hundredfold. Every gospel worker should encourage himself in the Lord to continue sowing, for a portion of his sowing will develop into a harvest.

There are different factors which enter into the raising of a crop for a harvest. These are the sunshine with its warmth and light that penetrates the soil, and the rain that brings saturation for the seeds to germinate and grow. So do the favor and blessings of God result in bringing an increase. This is true in sowing the gospel seed and in reaping a harvest. The sunshine and the warmth symbolize God's favor and blessing upon the truth. The rainfall reveals the blessing and help of the Holy Spirit in witnessing to the truth. The saturation of the seed sown, may be aided by the tears and prayers of the saints. When the grain has ripened, then the sickle needs to be thrust forth and the grain harvested. Man must do his part, then the Lord will be faithful in honoring His Word. Ministers and Christian workers should impress upon their hearers to heed the gospel call, repent of their sins, and come to Christ for pardon and salvation.

Christ came into the world to furnish the gospel seed and to sow the seed, even till He ascended into heaven. The continuation of the sowing of the gospel seed should be carried on throughout this entire age. Every Christian should in some manner sow gospel seed as long as he is able, and should continue to do so until Jesus comes again to reap the harvest and garner the saints into His heavenly home where they will be safe evermore.

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19 -- IMPORTANCE OF SCATTERING THE GOSPEL SEED

In the vegetable kingdom, God through Nature has made a provision for seeds to be scattered. If this were not so, all seeds would fall in the same area, that is, within the space of the spread of the branches of a tree or plant, or the spot where the seeds grew and matured. If these seeds were to grow within that area, all would be so crowded that all would become spindlings, and none would survive.

God operates very efficiently in the realm of grace. Christ has furnished the gospel seed and also given the Holy Spirit to men that they may Cooperate in the spreading of the gospel seed. Christ came to save the lost sheep of Israel, and He also came to save the Gentiles. The gospel was given by Him to the Jews in Palestine. Palestine is known as Canaan, which in the Old Testament was the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean, bounded on the north by the Lebanon mountains and on the south by the desert. This land, occupied by the twelve tribes of Israel, included 12,000 square miles, or slightly more than one-fifth of the size of Michigan. The entire land surface of the earth is 57,461,928 square miles, which is over 4,788 times greater than Canaan. The Jewish population today is approximately 18 million, and the Gentile population three billion, which is more than 166 times greater than the Jewish population.

The gospel is for all people, and Christ's great concern is the salvation of all men. For the gospel seed to be reserved only for the Jews, while the Gentile world is perishing, is not Christ's plan. He provided ample gospel seed and made plans for the gospel to be scattered over the face of the whole world. Christ's command was, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19). Another command given before they went forth was to tarry until they were endued with power from on high (Acts 1:4, 8).

God's commands are generally associated with His promises. The early church lingered in Jerusalem, but was not to confine itself there permanently. Jerusalem was merely the starting point.

The early church did well in spreading the gospel in Jerusalem, but was slow to enter into Judea and Samaria. For several years they clustered in and around Jerusalem while the world was perishing for the gospel. There was ample gospel seed and ample power, but these were not utilized as Christ had commanded. To expedite the preaching of the gospel, the Lord allowed persecution to come to the Christians to scatter them. To some extent this persecution may be viewed as The Missionary Board. This Board was not composed of Directors and Committees who considered applicants for other fields, but it was a "Spanking Board." This

brought consternation and fear to the saints so that it became necessary for them to flee to preserve their lives. This persecution served a very good purpose in the scattering of the believers, so that in turn they would scatter the gospel seed. It is written, "They were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles" (Acts 8:1), also, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4), and again, "Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution of Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word" (Acts 11:19). At Antioch the word at first was preached only to the Jews and later to the Grecians. This pleased the Lord so well that He reached down His hand from heaven and a great number believed and turned to the Lord (Acts 11:21). This was the work of the hand of the Lord, because the believers were doing that which the Lord had called them to do.

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20 -- DIFFERENT METHODS OF SPREADING GOSPEL SEED

The oldest and most widely employed method for spreading the gospel has been by mouth, even the spoken word. This was God's method of revealing His will to Adam, and then for men to pass this truth on from generation to generation.

Another form of communication is through the written revelation of God. By its being written, it became more authoritative and permanent. The early Scriptures, manuscripts, and writings were all written by hand on animal skins, a technique which continued until the fourteenth century A.D. This was a laborious task that made the contents of the books of the Bible precious.

Next in importance to the spoken word of the Lord is that of the printed gospel. When Martin Luther had translated the Bible from the Latin into the German language, making possible the reading of the Bible to multitudes of the common people, the Lord at the same time arranged that a man by the name of Guttenberg should invent a printing press. The first complete book ever printed was that of the Bible. Now every year millions of Bibles and portions of it are printed in many different languages. The Bible and portions of it have been translated into 1226 languages. Many publishing houses print tracts, magazines, gospel messages, and millions of gospel pages weekly. These are sent forth throughout a large portion of the world.

The radio has also been, a great aid in spreading the gospel seed. This makes it possible for one minister to bring a message of gospel truth to more than a million people at one time.

The gospel also is recorded on tape and sent out to many foreign lands. Other means of spreading the gospel are by letters, airplanes, records, public address systems, films, pictures, and illustrated object lessons.

Never before in the entire history of the world have men been favored by hearing so much gospel from the pulpit, the printed page, and by remote control which comes right into the home, as has this generation. Great gospel light also brings great responsibility. When it is not accepted, it will bring greater condemnation. Christ said it would be more tolerable for Sodom in

the day of judgment than it would be for Bethsaida and Chorazin. In these two Cities, Christ performed many great miracles and gave forth much gospel truth. Christ said that their condemnation would be great because they rejected great gospel light.

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21 -- GOD'S LOVE AND CARE FOR SEEDS

Christ said that His heavenly Father clothes the grass and flowers, and feeds the animals (Matt. 6:26-30). God made all animals, fowls, and creatures to grow their own clothes, and all seeds. to grow their covering. Animals grow fur, sheep grow wool, swine grow bristles, and fowls grow feathers. However, with the human family, this is different. Job uttered a great truth when he said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither" (Job 1:21). Everything but the human family grows its Own clothes, which is a most evident sign that man sinned and fell from the state in which God created him.

The coats of seeds vary greatly. The coat helps to protect the little plant on the inside and also Preserves the food stored up to feed on when it starts to grow. When the coat is torn, or the shell that encases the germ is broken, this food will begin to deteriorate and oxidize. Modifications in the seed-coats serve in some cases as an aid in preserving the seed from being eaten by birds or animals, and are an aid in their dispersal.

Throughout the Bible, we learn that God has made a gracious provision for all the young, whether those of the human race, of animals, or of seeds. These become the special object of His love and care. From the universal testimony of the Scriptures, we are led to believe that infants of the human race are on heaven's priority list. In the period of gestation, they are wonderfully protected, and after birth, because of their helplessness, become the object of God's care and protection.

In the vegetable kingdom, the little seeds, while in their frail, soft, and milky state, are enclosed by husks or chaff. The husks serve a useful purpose which gives the infant seeds their form and protection. It has been said, "God tempers the storm to the shorn lamb." God has made a gracious provision for the protection of all infants whether seed, animals, or human beings during the period of gestation and early life. Coverings of seeds serve a good purpose until the seeds mature. The shucks die, dry up, and often open to allow the seeds to go on their way. Others hold until the seeds are harvested and threshed to separate the chaff from the grain.

God is a great, infinite, loving, heavenly Father Who loves His creation and provides for all; whether grass, lilies, birds, animals, or men. He is the great Creator and Sustainer, and as such He must be almighty in power, perfect in wisdom, and loving in nature. Seeds do not possess a will, and animals are not moral beings, yet God cares and provides for these. Children are born without their choice. These possess a will and an immortal soul, which makes them responsible for the choices they make when they come to the age of accountability. God does not hold infants responsible for their sinful nature, nor does He count it as sin when they do wrong, until they come to the age of accountability. If they die in infancy, He will save, cleanse their sinful nature, and take them to heaven without any repentance, faith, or righteous labors, all as an

unconditional benefit of the atonement which Christ made. Such is the love and goodness of God to infants.

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22 -- SEEDS ARE WRAPPED UP IN STRANGE PACKAGES

Different types of plants wrap their seeds up in packages of various shapes. Some are wrapped up with only one seed in a package. There are other packages that have hundreds of seeds in them, such as watermelons, cantaloupes, and pumpkins.

A cherry has only one seed in it. This is true of peaches, plums, coconuts, walnuts, and most nuts. The fruit of the Brazil nut tree is a round, hard-shelled nut, sometimes six inches in diameter, enclosing about twenty closely packed seeds within an apple. A gourd vine puts its seeds within a very pretty package. The gourds in reality are only packages of seeds. Gourds are not merely pretty, but are also oddly and interestingly shaped. When they become dry, they have been used for drinking cups and also for bird houses.

Some seed packages are called berries. Inside the berries, such as raspberries, blackberries, and blue berries, many seeds are included. Very interestingly, the strawberries place their seeds on the outside of the package. Who ever saw a gift package wrapped up neatly with the gift tied on the outside of the package? God through nature has wrought strange things which display His wisdom and power.

Other seed packages or wrappings are called shells. These are hard and must be broken before the kernel inside can be eaten. It is strange that the seeds in some packages are eaten and the package discarded, such as in nuts, dry beans, corn, oats, barley, and rice.

On the other hand, some parts of the food packages are eaten and the seeds discarded, such as apples, pears, peaches, melons and the like. Who ever received a gift, threw the contents away, and kept only the wrappings?

There are some other foods of which both the package and contents are eaten, such as green string beans, tomatoes, egg plant, and fruit. Also, most berries are eaten with the seeds in them.

Many grains or seeds, such as legumes, are wrapped up in strange packages called pods, a dry, dehiscent seed vessel. These seeds are dicotyledonous, that is, having two cotyledons, and the pods bear a little resemblance to the plant. This means that the pods are the capsule or package in which the seeds are formed, grow, and mature. This narrow and many-seeded capsule or package consists of two valves or separating tissues. The seams of the package are grown together, and when the seeds mature, the seams open by sutures at either margin.

Have you ever seen a gift wrapped up with many wrappings? The gift was inside a package, and this package was inside several other packages. We all like roasting ears. The ears

of Indian corn when formed are wrapped up very securely in many layers of shucks or husks. It requires many layers of husks to protect and preserve corn until it matures.

The word "corn" has various shades of meaning. Corn in England refers to wheat, in Scotland and Ireland to oats, and in the United States and Australia to Indian corn or maize.

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23 -- SEEDS NEED REST

All Nature has an instinct for rest and sleep.

Men, animals, trees, plants, grains, and flowers need sleep and rest. God has appointed that man shall rest one day out of seven, and sleep approximately one-third of his time, or eight hours daily. It may sound strange that trees, plants, and flowers sleep. Many flowers fold up or close up while they sleep. When they awaken, the flower opens, just like a child, upon awakening, opens its eyes wide. It has been discovered that among the many species of flowers there are twenty-four flowers that go to sleep at a different hour of the entire day, including light and darkness. There are other flowers which awaken at each specific hour of the day. In a park at Edinburgh, a living clock was made out of flowers, which indicated the exact time from six o'clock in the morning to six in the evening. The exact hour was indicated by the proper flowers opening their blossoms at the respective places, and each at its proper time.

Since flowers sleep, and seeds come from flowers, it may not sound so strange after all to hear that seeds need rest. This rest period is necessary before they can germinate. There are a few types of seeds that may sprout as soon as they are ripe, but most seeds need a period of rest and comparative dryness before they will grow. Many seeds mature in the fall of the year, and if they were planted immediately and germinated, they would not have time to bear fruit and mature by reason of the oncoming frosts. Then both seed and plant would be lost. The rest and drying period for seeds is important to make healthy plants. This we learn from the drying of seed corn. Farmers have discovered that kiln-dried corn has proven to yield sixteen bushels more per acre than air-dried seed of the same variety.

After seeds have had their rest period, the time required for germination, varies greatly. Some grains, grasses, peas, and herbs germinate in from two to eight days. On the other hand, the seeds of some vines and trees do not germinate and grow until the second spring after they are planted.

We may learn some spiritual lessons from plants and seeds which can be helpful to man. Man is both natural and spiritual, or to be more clear, there is an outer man and an inner man. The inner man dwells in the outer man. Both the outer man and the inner man need rest. Rest to the physical body comes from cessation of labors and a relaxation. Soul rest comes to the inner man by accepting the finished redemptive work of Christ through faith. Christ said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30).

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24 -- GREAT PLANTS PRODUCE SMALL SEEDS

The size of a plant and flower does not determine the size of a seed, neither does the size of a seed determine the size of a plant or tree. Also, the size of a plant or tree does not determine the number of seeds that are borne. Many small flowers bear large fruit. A watermelon, flower, though small in size, bears a large fruit, some melons weighing thirty or forty pounds. A tobacco seed is very tiny, and one seed pod may contain 40,000 seeds, and one plant may bear more than a million seeds. From one of these tiny seeds, it is possible for a large stalk six feet tall to grow. However, when there are so many seeds in a pod, all do not germinate when planted.

An example of a large flower that bears tiny seeds is the petunia, measuring three inches in diameter. The plant may grow 18-24 inches tall and two feet across. The petunia seeds are so tiny, it would require about 175,000 seeds to weigh an ounce, or 2,800,000 in one pound. Some rare varieties of petunia seed would cost at the rate of approximately \$25,000 a pound, which would be very costly seed. One pound would furnish enough seeds to plant a bed of 320 acres if each seed would sprout into a plant.

Another interesting fact is that it requires an oak tree about 100 years to grow to maturity, and five months to grow small acorns as a medium-sized nut. On the other hand, a pumpkin plant will grow several vines in every direction ten to fifteen feet long and produce a dozen pumpkins weighing twelve to twenty pounds in weight all in one season of four months.

Several years ago some linemen were repairing telephone lines. One lineman ate his dinner along the roadside, then climbed over the fence to lie in the grass in the shade of a tree to relax and rest. Near him in the field was a pumpkin vine with several large pumpkins on it. Looking up, he saw many acorns on an oak tree. Then he remarked that God was silly for making such little acorns on a large, sturdy oak tree, and such large pumpkins on a tender, short-lived vine. Remarking further, if he were God he would make acorns as large as pumpkins, and pumpkins as small as acorns. Just at that moment an acorn fell down and struck him on the head. He quickly jumped up and expressed disgust. Evidently, at that moment, he no longer doubted the wisdom of God. If an acorn had been as large as a pumpkin and had fallen on his head, it could have fractured his skull. Also, if pumpkins were only the size of acorns, pumpkin pie would be unknown or a rarity. God's love, goodness, and wisdom are not to be doubted.

The smallness of a seed is not to be underestimated in the great potential that lies dormant within it. The Lord often has made use of a short testimony in producing conviction in the heart of a sinner that led to his repentance and faith in Christ. A sermon is not to be judged by its length, but by its contents. A testimony, song, or sermon may contain the gospel seed that could lead to the salvation of a soul.

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25 -- SEEDS VARY IN SIZE, SHAPE, AND SHADE

God takes great delight in variety. This fact is manifested throughout all of God's creation, in colors, in sounds, in metals, in minerals, and in temperatures. There is a great variation among animals, birds, fishes, insects, plants, grains, fruits, and vegetables. Not merely is there a great variety in different species, but there is variety in each species.

Among trees there is a great variety. In the oak family alone there are 189 species, including the burr oak, the post oak, the chestnut oak, the swamp oak, the white oak, the pin oak, and the red oak to name only a few in this large group. One variety of the white oak is numerous in northern Europe, and 177 species are known in America. In Mexico more than 250 species of oak are reported. Certainly God delights in variety. Men also delight in variety which delivers them from monotony and adds spice to life.

It is interesting to observe that the seeds of trees, grains, and vegetables greatly vary in shape, size, and color. Some seeds are round, while some are flat, and others are oblong or shaped like an egg. Still others are triangular, some are long, slender, curved, or coiled like a snail. Some seeds have horns, some tails, and some have one wing, while others have two wings. Others are smooth, while some are ridged, and some prickly. This assists men in recognizing them. It would not do for all to be alike, for this would be tragic and lead to confusion.

The colors of seeds greatly vary. Some seeds are red, others green, gray, yellow, purple, black, white, striped, and spotted, and almost every color of the rainbow. There are seeds that resemble grains of sand and pebbles and some look like shining beetles. Carrot seeds look like hairy bugs. Beet seeds resemble crumbled dirt. This prevents them from being eaten by animals and birds. Almost every plant produces a different shape and size of seed. Some seeds are very tiny, while others are very large. Back of all these seeds that are small and great is a Master Mind, the infinite mind of God.

The God Who never changes or varies has taken delight in variety. One area in variety is that of the infinitely great objects and the infinitesimally small objects. Large as this earth is, it is very small when compared with the size of the sun, which is more than a million times larger than this earth. Alcyone, one of the stars in the constellation of the Pleiades, is one thousand times greater than the sun. The clause "both small and great" occurs several times in the Scriptures, and the Lord recognizes both, and is the Creator and Sustainer of both.

When we consider the seeds of plants and trees, and the size of the seeds, the Bible clause "both small and great" is applicable and true. Among the tiniest are orchid seeds, petunia seeds, tobacco seeds, and Palestinian mustard seed. In a previous article on seeds, mention was made that petunia seeds are so tiny that it requires 175,000 seeds to weigh an ounce. Among the larger seeds are the coconuts. Some coconuts weigh five pounds, which is equivalent to eighty ounces. When compared with a petunia seed it is eighty times 175,000 times larger, or fourteen million times larger than a petunia seed. A petunia seed is small when compared with a coconut, but nevertheless is a seed. The size of the seed has no bearing on the size of the plant that it will grow. The tallest tree in the world is the California redwood that grows from a very small seed. Pumpkin seeds are fairly large and produce low-growing vines, but large fruit.

Since a coconut is millions of times larger than a petunia seed, it stands to reason that its use is greater than that of a petunia seed. A coconut could sprout and grow into a coconut tree. It is interesting to know that the nut has more than 365 different uses, such as food for man, and oils which are used to make butter, toiletries, shampoo, and the like. In the Bible the Christian is likened to a palm tree, evidently a coconut palm. This teaches that a Christian should be useful in this world.

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26 -- SEEDS GIVEN A GOOD SEND-OFF

Seeds are very much like people in one sense, in that one generation comes while another one passes on; also, in the sense that each generation reproduces itself. Seeds are ripened ovules of plants, the progeny or children of the old seed or stalk, which has grown, matured, and developed into more seeds which then are expelled and disowned. There are some plants which continue to bloom while part of the fruit and seeds are ripening until frost kills the plant. Other plants will bloom, and when the seeds mature and are ripe, the plant having served its purpose, dies. Then the seeds, as it were, become of age, and are on their own in being scattered, preserved, and in starting another cycle of life. The last thing that the parent stalk or plant, that is an annual, can do is to give its seed (its children) a "send-off" to be on their own, while the parent stalk deteriorates and dies.

In the spreading of the gospel seed, mature Christians should bless their generation and leave their children a godly legacy. Parents should dedicate their children to the Lord for His service if He calls them. This will give their children a good "send-off" before the parents depart this life. Jacob blessed his sons before he died. Moses blessed the children of Israel before his death. Children who have been blessed by their parents, given good training, will be better qualified for their calling, whether it is to be ministers, evangelists, or missionaries, or to be day-laborers, even good lay members. This would be an ideal manner for parents to fulfill their purpose in life. Each generation should live for the glory of God and the good of its children.

A beautiful example of this is given in The Acts of the Apostles. The mother church at Jerusalem had given the gospel to the people in Jerusalem; then there came a time when it was necessary for the saints to scatter to escape persecution. It is proper that a church should send forth its trained young people to serve in other areas. Several of these saints went as far north as Antioch in Syria. Then a revival broke out, and a flourishing church was established. Many saints at Jerusalem had sold their goods and given the money to the church. A dearth came to Jerusalem, which brought suffering to the mother church. It was then that the church at Antioch sent an offering by the hands of Paul and Barnabas. The mother church gave of her sons and daughters. These went forth to reach another generation, sowing gospel seed. When physical need came, the child-church compensated the mother-church with financial support, and this church which had given financial, spiritual, and moral support to the saints now was compensated by those whom she had supported.

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27 -- SEEDS THAT HITCH-HIKE

When a person hitch-hikes, he obtains a free ride. A hitch-hiker takes his position at the junction on a highway that is traveled greatly, and simply stands and looks in the opposite direction he desires to travel. He is looking for a driver to come along in his automobile. A hitchhiker puts up his thumb and points in the direction he wants to travel. If he is fortunate in being picked up, he travels without any personal expense, then gets off at the point nearest his destination.

Seeds do not have any thumbs with which they may signal for a ride, and yet many hitch-hike their way and obtain free rides. There are plants which bear Spanish-needles having spears ova barb on the end. When these seeds are ripe, they are ready to leave the mother stalk and take their journey if a traveler comes their way. When an animal or a man comes along, the two hooks which are curly, will easily fasten themselves and hold on without thumbs-up. Then they are on their hitch-hiking journey. These seeds generally hold on so tightly that they must be extricated. The seeds of both the cocklebur and the burdock are covered with burs that easily cling to the fur of animals, the wool of sheep or the clothing of man. These also hitch-hike wherever men and animals come in touch with them. Then they travel and become scattered over a wide area.

The seeds of the Spanish-needles, cocklebur, and burdock have been called "beggars'-lice" because they adhere to living Creatures and annoy them. The seed of stick-tights, though not very large, are held by the mother stalk, then when they are ripe and any moving object comes along, they start on a hitch-hiking journey. These stick-tights have a manner of holding on so tightly that they will "stick closer than a brother."

Another manner in which seeds hitch-hike is when they fall into the mud, or are washed along a road bed. When a wagon or car comes along, some mud adheres to the wheels of the vehicle. If there are any seeds in, the mud, they may be carried along, and in this manner spread over a large area. Men and animals may carry seeds which are buried in the mud on their feet, and in this way scatter them over a wide area.

There is an interesting incident recorded in The Acts, chapter eight, verses 26-40, where an eunuch from Ethiopia came to Jerusalem to worship. The persecution had scattered the believers and he had not come in touch with the gospel. However, he evidently came in possession of the book of Isaiah. He started with a hungry heart on his long, homeward journey. The Lord made arrangements that he would not return home without the gospel light. Therefore, He called an evangelist named Philip, who was engaged in a successful revival in Samaria to leave by night and journey on the road that led toward Gaza and the desert. In some respects he became a hitch-hiker. He possessed the gospel seed, and the eunuch was fertile soil for the sowing of the gospel seed. While Philip was traveling the desert road, a chariot came along and this eunuch was reading Isaiah 53. As he was reading aloud, the Spirit instructed Philip to join the chariot. He heard the eunuch read, and asked if he understood what he was reading. The eunuch replied that he did not, and invited him up into the chariot. We read that Philip preached unto him Jesus. Philip sowed the gospel seed; the eunuch believed in Christ and was blessedly saved. This eunuch carried the gospel seed home with him, and tradition teaches that he sowed

the seed among his people, which resulted in a multitude being converted. The gospel seed spread from Jerusalem to Samaria, next into the desert, and from there into Africa.

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28 -- SEEDS THAT TRAVEL WITH THE WIND

It is interesting to know that God has made many seeds that are light in weight, such as those of cotton, milkweed, thistle, dandelion, and clematis seed. God provided these seeds with wings. The wings of birds are the organs which enable them to fly. The wings of seeds enable them to fly. In this manner, He has made provision for seeds to be scattered. It is to be noted that the wind is one of the greatest means to scatter seeds.

The wind, which is unseen, moves, and is powerful, is a majestic symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is unseen and powerful. It is through the power, influence, and operation of the Holy Spirit, Who employs Christian people, that enables them to spread the gospel seed.

The wind has borne many gospel messengers and also gospel messages by means of sail-boats in the past. At the present time, airplanes, are the most rapid means of transportation, and many missionaries have been borne to their field of labor in a very short time to give the gospel message to darkened lives. Gospel leaflets have also been dropped from airplanes, and the leaflets scattered abroad, slowly floating down to earth, were scattered abroad by the wind. Then the gospel also has been spread by means of loud speakers, and the message has been carried to greater distances than could have been carried by the mere human voice. In a remarkable manner the gospel has been sent out over the air by radio, making it possible for millions of people to hear the same message given by the same messenger at the same time.

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29 -- SEEDS THAT TRAVEL BY WATER

It is interesting to know that some seeds travel by water and are especially adapted for this manner of traveling. Seeds that travel by water or that float are the American lotus, coconut, and many winged seeds. Many trees grow by the sea and along river beds. Several times in the Bible we read of trees growing by the river side where they are nourished by the fertility that comes by soil erosion and the silt that settles around the tree. The roots are nourished by the abundance of water.

Coconut palms grow well by the sea, and the coconut seeds, or nuts, are well wrapped up in a package so that they can travel by water. Nuts which have fallen into the sea have traveled as far as a thousand miles. Most seeds die if they travel on the ocean for more than a few days.

Many seeds float short distances to new homes where islands are closely situated. Seeds will float on ponds and streams. Rivers also are good roads for some seeds to travel. The maple and elm tree seeds may be carried a long distance in a stream and then be washed up on a bank where they start to grow.

It has been the plan of God that gospel seed shall be carried across all seas to other countries where it will be planted in the hearts of all tribes. Paul, the great missionary apostle, traveled in part by way of the sea in each one of his missionary journeys and scattered the gospel seed in many new areas.

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30 -- ANIMALS WHICH AID IN PLANTING SEEDS

The wind and sea aid in scattering seeds, and so do animals. In the fall of the year, when nuts mature and ripen, squirrels store and hide nuts and acorns in hollow trees, stumps, and in underground passageways for food in winter time. Chipmunks and wood-mice store nuts under the ground, and these sometimes have sprouted and grown into trees. Frequently squirrels will take nuts, which are seeds, and bury them in the ground in a certain direction and distance from the mother tree. They will quickly dig a small hole with their front feet, or pull up the sod, and place a nut in the hole, then cover it up and pat the ground down where the nut is hidden. In the winter time when the snow covers the ground and the squirrel becomes hungry, it may wonder where it will find some food to eat. At this time it may recall the nut it buried in the ground and dig it up for a winter meal.

Several years ago in winter time when the snow was falling and already was over fifteen inches deep, the writer observed a squirrel starting to come down a tree. It looked in every direction to observe if it were safe to come down, then started out under the snow, making a tunnel as it went. It would come up every five feet and again look around, shake the snow out of its ears and coat, and then tunnel some more. At a distance of twenty feet from the trunk of the tree, the squirrel began to dig up a nut hidden under the ground. Coming back to the tree and going up on a limb, he began to gnaw the shell so he could get the kernel to feast on the nut. How the squirrel could measure the exact distance, locate the right direction and go to the exact spot where he had buried the nut that was now under fifteen inches of snow, was beyond the writer's comprehension.

If a nut had been buried by a squirrel and forgotten, or the squirrel had sufficient nuts to feed on throughout the winter without digging up the nut, when spring came, the sunshine would warm the ground, the nut would start to germinate, shed its coat, and grow. In this manner another nut tree would obtain its start.

It also is a known fact float ants plant seeds and cultivate them for plant lice to feed on. These plant lice are the cows of the ants and from them the ants obtain their milk.

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31 -- BIRDS AID IN SCATTERING SEEDS

One of the interesting and peculiar manners in which seeds are scattered is that which em-

ploy feathered creatures. Many birds feed on fruits. If the seeds are not too large, they eat the fruit and seed. They digest the soft part of the fruit and may not digest the seeds by reason of the hard coverings which protect them. These seeds travel on the inside of birds. The seeds go through the alimentary canal of the birds, and are then deposited on the ground where they germinate and grow.

Mistletoe seeds are among those carried by birds. This plant is not often seen by men except at Christmas time. The mistletoe plant has white berries and small green leaves. The birds like mistletoe berries. The seeds inside the berries are sticky. Often the seeds will stick to the bill of birds. The birds unconsciously plant these seeds on branches of the trees simply by wiping their bills on the branches.

Other seeds beside the mistletoe are eaten by birds, and sometimes the birds do not clean their bills. If they have been eating sticky seeds, some may adhere to their bills, and these seeds may ride there until the birds eventually will clean their bills. The seeds then will fall to the ground far from the place they grow. Also, seeds may take a long ride while adhering to the feathers of a bird or even to its feet, and may fall off at any time.

Then in the annual migration of birds, seeds are carried by the birds from one country to another. Barren islands have been covered with foliage and verdure as a result of the seeds brought to them by birds.

Blue-jays feast on acorns. These birds also store them, sometimes in a hole of a tree, as squirrels store nuts. The blue-jays also bury the acorns in the ground, employing their bills to hide them. These hidden seeds of the oak may sprout and grow the next season if they are not disturbed. Birds do help to scatter seeds.

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32 -- SEEDS THAT ARE SHOT FORTH

The manner in which some seeds travel is very peculiar. We have learned that seeds travel or are scattered by air, water, wind, birds, animals and man. Let us consider now some seeds that are shot out of the pods on the plant at the time when the seeds are ripe. Did you ever observe a touch-me-not when ripe? The seed pod bursts open and the seeds are shot forth.

The witch-hazel, pansy, and violet seeds are shot out of their pods also. A touch-me-not can, not shoot its seeds very far, neither can any of the other plants that shoot out their seeds. The seeds of a butter print plant, when the pod is dry, opens for the seeds to leave the parent plant before it dies. When the pods of the butter print, which are shaped similar to a teacup, are ripe and dry out, the way will open for the seeds to go on their own. When the wind blows, the seeds jump out of the pod. These seeds are good jumpers and are dependent upon the wind to give them a boost, but of course, they cannot jump very far from the mother plant.

In South America there are some trees which grow in wet lands, called the sandbox tree, which travelers have called the "Monkeys' Dinner Bell." The tree pops its seeds in very much the

same way as the touch-me-not shoots forth its seeds. These seeds are shot out with such force that the noise is similar to the shot of a pistol. The bursting of the pods makes so much noise that the people say the tree is calling the monkeys to dinner, hence the name, "Monkeys' Dinner Bell."

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33 -- SEEDS THAT TRAVEL BY PARACHUTE

A parachute is a folding, umbrella-like contrivance made of very light fabric, used for making a slow and safe descent through the air, especially from an air craft. God has designed several types of seeds, each with a parachute so they may travel. In this manner the seeds are scattered. Some seeds are blown great distances by the wind, while others are blown on the ground in the parent plant which rolls across the fields, and scatters its seeds as it rolls along. Some seeds literally jump out of their birth places. The parent plant, which has done its part in developing another generation of seeds, disowns them and gives them a send-off. Of course, these seeds do not travel very far.

The seeds which travel by parachute are those of the dandelion, cattail, cottonwood, and milkweed varieties. These seeds also are called "fly-aways." When these plants bloom, the ovules are fertilized by the pollen. The seeds grow and ripen while the blossom dies. When the seeds mature, nature provides them with a parachute to start on their journey. The plant which has fed these seeds until they mature will release the seeds, which are equipped with a parachute that opens; then, when the wind blows, they start on their journey. These seeds may travel a great distance and may journey across the road, a neighbor's yard or the fields of a neighbor, across rivers and over hills; then the wind becomes silent, the seeds will gently come down to earth and the parachute will have served its purpose. These seeds may lie dormant until the next spring when they may start their own career, or they may perish by reason of being smothered, or by rotting.

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34 -- CHRIST SOWING SEED WITH TEARS

There is a beautiful prophecy given in Psalm 126:5, 6, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The Psalms are prophetic and Messianic. The Lord Himself stated that the Psalms were written concerning Him (Luke 24:44). The personal pronoun "He" is singular, and specifically refers to Christ. He came from heaven, robed in a human body so that He could dwell with man, take man's place, fight man's battles, do the work which man could not do, defeat man's enemy, make atonement for man's sins to redeem man.

Christ is the good Sower Who went forth to sow the gospel seed. When Christ is seen in this text concerning sowing, weeping, and reaping, a new sense of meaning may be apprehended. Parenthetic phrases are added to the text, which will make the text read, "He (Christ) that goeth forth (His first coming into the world) and weepeth (which is exactly what He did in His first

coming) bearing precious seed (which is the gospel that is full of grace and truth) shall doubtless come again with rejoicing (His Second Coming in which He will give a shout of joy and triumph), bringing His sheaves with Him (all the saints will accompany Him at His return to set up His kingdom).

The Gospels clearly state that He wept. There is a language in tears that cannot be expressed in words. He wept at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35), and when He was on His way to Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). The writer to the Hebrews states that He prayed with strong crying and tears (Heb. 5:7) A winner of souls needs to become a weeper for souls. Christ's going forth to sow the gospel seed was a costly ordeal for Him. It is costly to sow the gospel seed. On the Divine side, God made an infinite sacrifice in giving His only begotten Son. Christ made the supreme sacrifice by giving Himself and being obedient to death. If the gospel seed will ever be spread in the manner that it deserves to be spread, there must of necessity enter into this ministry a greater element of sacrifice on the part of Christians. The joy and rewards that will come to the saints at Christ's coming will depend largely on the sacrifice that has been made by the Christian workers.

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35 -- MEN SOWING SEED WITH TEARS

The Bible was written in and around deserts and barren countries as well as fertile valleys. These barren lands did not contribute to the support of hungry people. Whenever there was a great drought, that led to a shortage or a failure of crops for one season. This brought on famine conditions. There is a record of thirteen famines in the Bible. Famines occasioned hunger and much sorrow and suffering, and sometimes brought starvation.

In times of famine, each farmer was obliged to reserve plenty of seed for the next season's sowing. It became necessary for him to look beyond a seasonal famine. When a farmer did not possess any seed to sow, regardless of a promising season, very naturally he could not reap any harvest. Just one year of failure of crops brought suffering. This reserved seed (which also would have been good food) became very precious. But amid all the hunger, suffering, and weeping, seed must be reserved. As the famine continued, the pangs of hunger would increase. The parents would add more water to the ground-up seeds, but this would not satisfy the hunger of their children. The children would beg for more food and could not understand why their food was rationed. The children also knew that a portion of grain was being stored and was on hand, and this would lead them to beg for more food. The father would attempt to explain to them that the Stored grain was too precious to eat, and was seed which must be saved for sowing, so that they could reap a harvest the following season.

As the pangs of the famine prolonged, another seed-sowing season arrived. The weather elements were promising for a good season: The father then prepared the soil for the Sowing of the seed. He took the precious seed and scattered it on the soil. His children being hungry, observed what to them appeared as casting the seed away. They inquired what he was doing, but not understanding said, "Father, we are hungry, give us the grain to eat. Don't throw it away." This touched his fatherly heart to know of their hunger and tears as they followed him. He, too,

was moved to weeping as he went forth, sowing that precious seed. He wept as he sowed, and his sowing was rewarded, for a bumper crop was the result of his sowing. That family managed to survive till another harvest time came.

This father, with his family, in joy returned to the field where he had sown the "precious seed" with weeping. The second time he, with his children, came to reap the harvest. The father said, "Children, rub the chaff free from the wheat and blow it out, then freely eat all you want." He reaped the grain, the children gathered the sheaves, and every one rejoiced greatly. The piles of grain increased as the harvest continued until all of the grain was reaped. Then there was an abundance for all.

May this not have been a true scene which the Psalmist witnessed when he wrote: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:5, 6)? There are two goings forth in producing a crop for feed, namely, the going forth of sowing, then the going forth of reaping before there can be any eating, or more seed stored. Many servants of the Lord have gone forth to sow the gospel seed under adverse situations, sacrificing as they labored, which involved many tears in sowing the gospel seed. These may be comforted, for there will come a harvest time which will be a time of rejoicing and rewards.

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36 -- CHRIST'S JOYFUL RETURN TO REAP THE HARVEST

Christ is coming again for He said He would.

His Second Coming will be as important as was His First Coming. His Second Coming will be greatly diversified from His First Coming. The contrast will be greater than that of a farmer going out into a field to cultivate the soil and sow the seed, and then later returning to the same field to reap the harvest.

Christ came the first time to sow the gospel seed, and He will come the second time to reap the gospel harvest. He came the first time to weep, and He will come the second time to rejoice.

The prophecy: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:6), predicts Christ's Second Coming as clearly as it does His First Coming. When He does come, it will be with a shout and rejoicing. With Him, or at His side, will be His sheaves, the redeemed saints. These will constitute an innumerable company and will be the result of His First Coming to sow the gospel seed.

All of this constitutes the great harvest of the Lord. Every act associated with this harvest is great. Christ is the great Lord of the harvest. He is the Creator-God and Redeemer-Man. The harvest of the Lord involves the greatest business in the world. The field is great, which incorporates the entire world of all classes, colors, races, and peoples. The sowing of the gospel

seed has been great, extending over a period of nineteen centuries. The seed is great in its quality, in that it brings forth after its kind, even sons of God. The quality of this is great because it is ample for the entire human race and cannot diminish. The coming again of Christ will be great, and is associated with great glory and power. His rejoicing will be great, and the rejoicing of the redeemed will be great, and so will the number of sheaves which He will bring with Him be great. When the ransomed of the Lord will return to be gathered to be with the Lord, it will be with rejoicing, then sorrow and sighing will forever flee away.

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37 -- CHRIST THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

The word "seed" occurs 272 times in the Bible.

Seed in its fullest meaning makes possible the propagation of man, the animals, birds, fishes, insects, and plants. Not only does it make possible the propagation of the different forms of life, but it makes possible the subsistence of all life.

This matter of seed is even greater than the propagation and subsistence of all life, for it involves the redemption of the human race and all living things that shared in the curse. Before the Fall, these were not sinful, degenerate, diseased and in a dying state; but healthy, and in the state which God created them, which was "good" and "very good" (Gen. 1:12, 25, 31). All life was commanded to bring forth after its kind. The predominating purpose of God's creation was holiness, health, harmony, happiness, and life, for this was the state in which God made everything. Sin brought forth the curse, which involves death, disease, degeneration, disintegration, disharmony, and sorrow.

Since the penalty for sin was death, and God must keep His word at all costs, if man is going to be redeemed, it can only be by the Lord God, Who is the Son of God becoming a Man -- the Son of Man, to take man's place, overcome man's enemy, do man's work, atone for man's sin, and restore in him the image of God.

The first intimation of redemption is given in attacking Satan, defeating him and at the same time bringing redemption and restoration to a sinful human race. The great Messianic promise and prophecy is, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his, heel" (Gen. 3:15).

Seed is reproductive. If it is not reproductive and capable of bringing forth after its kind, it is not seed. In this great promise we read of two seeds. These are "thy seed" and "her seed." This promise was directed to the serpent and Satan; therefore, it is clear that "thy seed," refers to Satan who is designated "that old serpent" and to sinners who are children of the devil. The bruising would come to Satan and all of his followers who reject the salvation offered by Christ. "Her seed", that is, the woman's seed, is Christ and all of His spiritual descendants.

By carefully considering Genesis 3:15, the student will observe that the Speaker is the Lord God, and also antecedent of "I," who places the enmity between Satan and the woman, and

the children of the devil who, are the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman Who is Christ and all the believers in Christ. In time to come, which then was 4,000 years in the future, the Lord God, Who was the Second Person of the Godhead, would also become the SEED of the woman, or a Man in the Incarnation. This refers to Christ's humanity and human body. One interesting fact throughout nature and seeds is that generation is paternal and not maternal. However, Christ could not be the seed of man and of God, for then He would neither be perfect God nor perfect Man, nor have a perfect divine nature, neither a perfect human nature. When Adam and Eve fell, they lost the image and likeness of God; therefore, they begat sons and daughters in their own image and likeness. Since then, all men were generated with a fallen or sinful nature. Christ, the Redeemer of men, could not have been generated by two human parents, for then He, too, would have had a fallen nature. Yet, at the same time, Christ must be a member of the human race to give Him the legal right to become the Redeemer, while at the same time He must be God, to give Him the capacity to redeem men. Jesus Christ was not generated by man, but begotten by God and the power of the Holy Spirit. The birth of Christ is clearly explained in Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-32.

The Holy Spirit, by a creative act in the virgin Mary, formed a human body in which the Second Person of the Godhead might dwell. Christ as Man specifically was the SEED of the woman. It is to be noted that He was not a son of man, nor the son of a man, for He did not have a human father. His birth was a miracle, even wrought by God, Who created the world, Adam and Eve, all the animals, fowls, and fishes, and these originally did not have any parents. God, through His omnipotent power, brought these into being and made them self reproductive. He is the SEED of the woman. This is one of His many names. We learn this from Galatians 3:16 where we read, "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ."

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38 -- CHRIST THE MIRACLE SEED

In the beginning the Lord God did not create seeds first, then plant them, and cause them to grow according to the slow process of divinely ordained Nature. All plants, flowers, grains, and trees were made fully mature, loaded full of sap, green leaves, flowers, and fruits, ready to be eaten, all in a solar day. These were then commanded to bring forth seed after their kind. All of these were mighty miracles in their inception, and were made fully mature to reproduce themselves by the process of seeds which became natural. This self reproduction from then on no longer is considered a miracle.

All animals, fowls, and fishes were originally created fully mature with the capability of reproducing themselves and bringing forth after their kind. All of these were created on the sixth day and also were a mighty miracle. The reproduction and multiplication of these species after them was by generation and gestation, which incorporates a process of time, and no longer is considered as a miracle, but only as natural.

The creation and formation of Adam, a fully grown, mature, and intelligent man, all on the sixth day was indeed a mighty miracle of God's omnipotent power, wisdom, and love.

Putting Adam to sleep, opening his side, taking out a rib, forming it into the most beautiful woman, healing his side, and presenting her to Adam on the same day was another mighty miracle of wisdom, power, and love. These were made male and female, and were commanded to, reproduce themselves. This self reproduction from then on no longer is considered as a miracle, but as being natural.

The bringing forth of all of these is the fulfillment of biological laws, which the Lord God ordained, and now are maintained through the obedience of these natural laws. God is "the God of Nature" as well as the God of grace, the God of holiness, and the God of miracles.

The principle of making man male and female is also carried out in the animal and the vegetable kingdoms. Every seed has a father and a mother. This is but natural. However, let us remember, generation is paternal and not maternal.

The birth of the SEED of the woman is the Miracle of the Ages. It is the miracle of miracles. The birth of Christ was maternal and not paternal. Christ was the SEED of the woman and not the seed of man. Never was there a birth like His birth, and never, forever will there be another birth like that birth.

Naturally, all generation is paternal -- all seed is masculine, therefore, naturally there can not be any "seed of the woman." for no, life is generated except in the male cell. Throughout the Bible we read that it was the father who begat a son and not the mother. Paul wrote, "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man" (I Cor. 11:8). In reproduction, both the man and woman are necessary, but the fact remains that we are all the seed of man and not the seed of the woman. In relation to redemption. God Himself made the statement that "the SEED of the woman" would bruise the serpent's head.

The Redeemer, of necessity, must be a man as well as God, and must be a member of the human family to grant him the legal right to redeem man. However, God could not be the seed of man, for in Adam all die. As the seed of man, He would have been born under the death sentence. Sin is registered in man's name, and carnality comes through the paternal side of generation and is designated as "Adamic" and as "the old man." Again, Christ could not be the seed of man for that would have involved Him in carnality which is inconceivable to any soundly orthodox reasoning.

The birth of Christ was the wonder miracle of the ages. One of the greatest prophecies of the Old Testament predicting the great wonder miracle was, "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa, 7:14). God, the omnipotent One, gave this sign. This "sign" (in Hebrew is "oth") means a wonder or a miracle. God would perform this miracle. If the birth of Christ was common, ordinary, or natural as those of other men, then it was not a wonder, neither was it a miracle. The term "virgin" means more than being a virtuous woman. A woman legally married and having borne children could and should be virtuous. Virgin here means a woman who, has never known a man. This is in accord with Matthew 1:18-25. The human body of Christ demands a biological miracle. The great biological miracle recorded in the Old Testament was that of the creation of Adam without a father and mother, out of the dust, and the inbreathing of

the breath of God. The great biological miracle of the New Testament was the bringing of Jesus Christ into the world as a member of the human family without a human father and without carnality in His nature. What a mighty miracle!

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39 -- THE SEED OF THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

God created Adam to be the head of the human race and to bring forth after his kind, that is, a holy race. He failed to stand the test, fell, and became sinful, and is recognized as the head of the fallen race. By the process of procreation, all men by nature are designated as being in Adam. The Lord God did not leave man in his ruined state however, but planned to save lost man and develop a new creation. In this new creation Christ the God-Man is the ordained Head.

Christ, the Son of God, became the "SEED" that in accordance with His own law, which He ordained as the Creator, everything that had life should bring forth, yielding seed after its kind. Christ Himself said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). He is this Corn of Wheat. He became a Man so that He could die as the righteous SEED. As a result of His death, life being carried over in the resurrection, there would be a reproduction, a mighty harvest of many sons of God who would be like Himself. Christ and the innumerable sons of God would constitute the new creation, He being the Head.

The followers of Christ are those who have been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, even the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever.

Christ came into the world as the SEED of the woman to die, and thereby pay the penalty for the sins of men. A seed when planted dies, the life of the seed-germ being carried through into newness of life would bring a reproduction of life after its own kind. The bringing forth would be man increased manner. Through the death of Christ there will come a reproduction of an innumerable number of sons of God.

Christ also came into the world as the Sower of the good seed, which was the making known the good news of Himself and the truth essential to the salvation of sinners. The gospel is designated as the good seed. Christ sowed the good seed Which is the truth, the Word of God, the gospel that produces a life germ in it; which when accepted and believed will make children of God, or the seed of the SEED, and will prepare these for the kingdom of God and heaven.

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40 -- THE SEED OF THE OLD SERPENT

Satan, the old serpent, is the one who tempted the first human pair. Adam and Eve were holy, but by their obedience to him, became servants to Satan. In Romans 6:16, this fact is clearly revealed: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." Man obeyed Satan; he became a servant to Satan. Through his

obedience to Satan, he lost the moral image of God; therefore, became deprived of his holiness; consequently, he became sinful, depraved and like his master, Satan. Satan injected sin and a carnal nature within man's nature, and this nature became innate and constitutional.

In Genesis 1:28, God gave the command that Adam and Eve should multiply and bring forth after their kind. This law was not revoked or altered after the Fall. Since there came a degeneration in the Fall, all forms of life thereafter brought forth in a degenerate state because of the curse that fell on man and the whole creation.

In Genesis 3:15, the pronouns "thou" and "thy seed" refer to Satan and sinners. Satan, through the accomplishment of the Fall, procured a progeny which includes all descendants of Adam and Eve who sin willfully and do not believe God, but willingly retain the spirit of Satan by obeying his rule (Rom. 6:16; I John 3:8, 10). Satan possesses a host of carnal progeny. All who are sinners are of Satan or his progeny. These are designated as the seed of Satan. Satan has a great following. Christ said to the Jews who rejected Him, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). Satan is the father of liars, unbelievers, murderers, and sinners. Here we see it is possible to become sinners and children of the devil, that is, his seed, through unbelief in God and a belief in Satan's lies.

The reality and personality of Satan and demons are clearly revealed in the Scriptures. Demons are Satan's emissaries (Matt. 12:26, 27). They are wicked spirits and are capable of entering and controlling both man and beasts (Mark 5:8, 11-13), and earnestly seek embodiment, or the employment of human bodies and minds, without which, apparently they are powerless for evil (Matt. 12:43, 44). The demons maintain a conflict with believers who strive to be holy (Eph. 6:12; I Tim. 4:1-3). From these Scriptures it is not to be considered as incredible that sinners are the seed, even the children of the devil.

John the Baptist recognized the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to be baptized as sinners, as children of the devil, and as having the seed of the Old Serpent in them. They did not will to repent or change their erroneous, traditional beliefs. He called them a generation of vipers. Such they were, for they had the seed of the serpent in them, and had poisoned the religious system by their traditional teachings that proved spiritually fatal to all who believed them. John recognized them as hypocrites, sinners, a generation of vipers, children of the devil, and as the seed of Satan (see Matt. 3:7). So did Christ in Matthew 23:33.

Paul called Elymas the sorcerer, "thou child of the devil" (Acts 13:10). The Apostle John wrote, "He that committeth sin is of the devil" (I John 3:8); and "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (I John 3:10). All who sin and do not righteously are designated as the children of the devil, or his seed. There is no neutral ground: everybody is either a child of God or a child of the devil.

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Christ went forth to sow the good seed (Matt. 13:3, 37). Satan also goes forth to sow seed (Matt. 13:25, 39). The seed that Christ sowed was not only called good seed, but the gospel, the truth, and the light. In the parable of the sower and tares, it is called wheat. The seed that Satan sows is evil seed, error, evil doctrines, and is named tares. Christ also employs His followers to sow the good seed. Satan employs wicked men to sow evil seed.

Not only is there a conflict between Christ and Satan, but also there is a conflict between saints and sinners, and between the sowing of good seed and the sowing of evil seed.

In the parable of the wheat and tares, we learn that Christ was the Man Who Sowed good seed in His field. Christ returned to heaven. Then we read, "while men slept," indicating that after Christ ascended, some men went to sleep at their duty and did not watch carefully, giving the enemy an opportunity to slip in and do his dastardly work. We read, "His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way" (Matt. 13:25). Satan is aware that when seed is sown it will grow, whether it is good seed or evil seed, the gospel truth, or evil doctrine. After awhile the servants of the householder came and said to him, "Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?" (Matt. 13:27). He said to them, "An enemy hath done this." Here we learn there is a great conflict being waged between the sowing of good seed -- the gospel, and the sowing of tares -- evil doctrines. The one makes converts and children of God, while the other makes sinners and tares for the lake of fire. Throughout the entire age from Pentecost on, even to this present time, Satan has vociferously attacked and persecuted those who have sowed the gospel seed. Sowing the gospel seed has been costly, and multitudes have laid down their lives for the sake of the preaching of the Word. Not only does Satan oppose the preaching of the gospel, but wherever the gospel has been preached, or the seed has been sown, he will go to work and sow tares or evil doctrine to offset the growth of the gospel, or to choke out the good seed.

Truth will eventually triumph over error, even as Christ will triumph over Satan. The sequel will be that the tares are going to be gathered out. Both will grow until the harvest, at which "time the tares will be burned in the fire. Christ said, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father" (Matt. 18:43).

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42 -- BRUISING THE HEEL OF THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

The fall of Adam brought sin into the human race, and this created a conflict between right-ousness and sin. This involved not only man, but also God the Creator, and Satan the instigator of the Fall. The great conflict between the SEED of the woman and the seed of the Old Serpent will result in two bruising. Each contestant will sustain a bruising. This is not a sham battle. In pronouncing the curse upon the serpent, the Lord God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed" (Gen. 3:15). In the great issue between God and Satan that relates to the human race, it is a matter of life and of death. Since the penalty for sin was death, and man sinned, these wages must be met. Christ became a Man so that He could be involved in this great conflict. In a conflict or battle, some will be wounded, while

others will die. In the conflict between Christ and Satan, each one would be bruised. In relation to Christ the SEED of the woman, His heel would be bruised by Satan, His antagonist, and by Satan's followers. Satan also would obtain a bruising from his opponent; his head would be crushed. Since Satan employed wicked men to inflict the bruising on the heel of the SEED of the woman, which was the body of Christ; Christ will employ righteous men, the overcomers, to bruise the head of the Old Serpent (See Rom. 16:20).

The two extremities of a person are those of his head and his heel. Satan could strike or aim at the heel of the SEED of the woman. Christ will aim at the head of the Old Serpent and will crush it. In the bruising of a heel, there would be a survival, as in the case of Christ's bruising; but in the crushing of a head, there would not be any survival. It will be the Old Serpent's head that will be bruised. He will never recover from the bruising he will receive.

The heel of the SEED of the woman refers to Christ and His lower, or human body and nature. It was necessary for Christ to take upon Himself a human body, for Deity could not die. His Deity cannot be touched or bruised by Satan. Before Satan could Attack or bruise Christ, He must become a Man and a member of the human family. The Redeemer must be a Man in order to have a legal right to redeem man, to take man's place, to be tempted as a man for man, to fight, to defeat, and to overcome man's enemy, to do man's work, and to make expiation for man's sins.

Christ possessed two perfect natures. These were the perfect nature of God, and the perfect nature of a sinless Man. His Deity was His higher nature, and His humanity was His lower nature. When a person walks, it is his heel that leaves the lowest print of his being. The "heel" of the SEED of the woman was His lower being, even the human body of Christ. The bruising of the heel of Christ by the Old Serpent was the humiliation, temptation, suffering, and death Of Christ. The enmity of Satan in relation to Christ culminated in His crucifixion and death.

Death is the last enemy that a saint will face, then no more demands can be made upon him, for he is dead. When Satan occasioned the death of Christ, he went to his limit, and now he was forever through in directly attacking Christ. However, Christ is not through in making attacks on Satan. Not only did Christ die, but He lives again. This makes it possible for Him to resume the conflict, to attack Satan, and to bring eternal defeat to him. The purpose of this great conflict was to pay the penalty of sin, to redeem man, to develop a new creation, and to destroy sin, Satan, and death.

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43 -- CRUSHING THE HEAD OF THE OLD SERPENT

In addressing Satan, the Lord God said, "It shall bruise thy head" (Gen. 3:15). The antecedent of "it" is the SEED of the woman whose heel Satan would bruise. The "heel" being the lowest part of the body, means the human body of Christ, even the lower nature of Him Who, also was divine; His Deity being His higher nature. Satan perpetrated a diabolical and illegal act upon Christ when he bruised His heel. In reality, Satan possessed no legal right to kill Christ, because He had not done anything worthy of death, neither did death have any claim upon Him.

Furthermore, He was born sinless and also had overcome Satan; therefore, all that Christ was, and all He did, He legally procured the right to live, and Satan had no legal right to bruise His heel, that is, occasion the death of Christ.

It is blessed to know that after Christ was crucified and died, He arose from the dead and is alive forevermore. It will be this heel, which Satan bruised and that survived, which will be the power, the legal right and means, to step upon the Old Serpent's head and crush it. In other words, it will be the death of Christ and His being raised again, that will give Him the legal right to redeem sinful men and also to bring eternal defeat to Satan and his hosts. The contest between the two seeds resulted in a bruised heel for Christ, which was painful, but not permanently fatal. A bruised head will be painful and also fatal. The enmity of Satan against Christ, which was illegal in every act, after all, will result in blessed repercussions.

In the first coming of Christ, by which His heel was bruised, Christ was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, He never opened His mouth, neither did He offer any resistance. In this connection Christ Himself said to wicked men, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke 22:58).

At the time of His Second Coming, when Christ inflicts the bruising on Satan, He may justly say, "This is My hour, and the power of light, truth, righteousness, justice, and triumph." This time Christ will speak and act, and Satan will be speechless and not allowed to offer any resistance, but will be forced to surrender to the Almighty Christ, Who will inflict upon Satan, as the head of the hosts of wickedness, eternal defeat, from which he will never recover; then ultimately incarcerate him in the lake of fire and brimstone from which he will never be released.

The head is the anterior division of the human body and contains the brain, enclosed in the skull, the chief sense organs, and the mouth. The SEED of the woman will bruise the head of the Serpent. This means that Satan will be so crushed, overmastered, defeated and silenced, that he can never, forever employ his intelligence, leadership, conniving, prowess, speech, or any function of the mind, or entire being, but will be tormented forever and ever. When seed is bruised, that is, crushed, it will begin to deteriorate, and can never be reproduced. So will it be with Satan when his crushing occurs; there will never be any production of sinners for the kingdom of darkness and hell. This will bring his career to an end; then the cause of righteousness will continue without any rebellion. The divine conflict will have been ended and righteousness will be triumphant, and eternal peace will never cease.

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44 -- A WEED SEED THAT IS LIKE SIN

God made everything good in His time, even man, the animals, trees, plants, and all vegetation. Through the fall and sin there came a degeneration to creation. Many weeds are troublesome. They are pests having great reproductive powers and possessing the capacity for rapid growth, thereby shading good plants, and thus weakening and destroying them. Weeds have the ability to resist drought and frost to a great degree and are more resistant to plant diseases and insects than good plants.

Weeds are harmful because they take the moisture away from good plants. They rob the soil of valuable minerals. Weeds harbor parasitic fungi and insects. Some weeds are injurious to cattle, and may cause the milk to be ill-scented.

Weeds are much like sin. Especially is this true of the cocklebur plant and seed. The burr is the rough or prickly envelope of a fruit, such as the chestnut and the burdock family. The cocklebur gets into the wool of a sheep, or the hair of an animal. It becomes entangled and is difficult to extricate. Sin also entangles people, becomes habit-forming, and enslaves, so that the sinful habit is hard to be cast off.

Inside each prickly covering of the cocklebur is a twofold seed. There is a thin partition that separates the seeds. Each seed lies in the opposite direction from the other seed. Sin is twofold in its nature. There is the nature of sin and the act of sin. One is the being of sin, while the other is the doing of sin. The one is innate; the other is actual. Sin is inherent; sins are committed. Sin is a principle, while sins are practices. Sin is the old nature, while sins are the manifestations of the old nature.

In destroying the cocklebur plant, it requires two cuttings to completely destroy it. Since sin is twofold in its nature, the provision of the atonement Christ made is twofold. Man's need is twofold and the operations of the Holy Spirit are twofold.

When a cocklebur seed sprouts and grows, only one seed in the burr is quickened. The other seed in the same burr lies dormant until the next year. Then it springs into life and produces another crop of cocklebur seeds. However, if the first plant should be cut off, not having borne any seeds, the second seed in the burr would instantly spring into life, without waiting until the next year to grow, to produce seed, mature, and propagate itself. How much like sin is the cocklebur and its growth.

The startling question is, How do these two seeds in the same burr know which one will grow first and which one will wait and lie dormant until the second year? Or, how would the second seed know when the plant of the first seed was cut down without having borne any seed, take up its duty, spring into growth, and produce seed? This creates no problem for the seed at all. It possesses no ability to reason in this matter, nor does it need to make any choice in this issue. It simply and naturally is responsive to the law of nature that is innate and was born in it.

It should be observed that this is not a perfect analogy of sin in its twofold nature, neither does it reveal how we get rid of sins, nor how we are cleansed of inherited pollution. The Bible is the only divine authority that properly diagnoses sin and prescribes the twofold remedy.

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45 -- THE FRUIT OF CHRISTIAN

God has ordained that every form of life on earth should bring forth after its kind (Gen. 1:11, 21, 24). In the Scriptures it also is stated that the saint of God should bring forth fruit after

his kind. (See Isa. 65:22; Ps. 92:14). Christ said that He was the true Vine and the believers are the branches. It is the branches that bear the fruit. The Christian is commanded to bring forth "fruit," and to bring forth "more fruit" (John 15:2), and also, to bear "much fruit" (John 15:8). Christ also said, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16).

Solomon, the wisest of men wrote, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30) The tree of life symbolizes Christ, Who is the great Saviour and Soul Winner. The Christian is to be like Christ, and also is symbolized by a tree. Since Christ is the "Tree of Life," each Christian is "a tree of life." Christ won souls, and each Christian should win souls. The tree of life is described in Revelation 21, as being an evergreen, an ever blooming, and an ever bearing tree, that bare twelve manner of fruit, yielding her fruit every month. This suggests there are several types of fruit each Christian should bear.

The first type of fruit the Christian should bear is that of the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit is designated as "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22, 23). It is to be noted that a Christian cannot produce this fruit by himself. It is the fruit of the Spirit, not the fruit of self; however, the Holy Spirit produces this fruit in and through the believer. These are the true characteristics of a Christian, and every Christian who does not enjoy these products of the Holy Spirit should pray that there may be a fullness of these qualities enjoyed in his heart life and manifested in his conduct.

The second type of fruit a child of God should bear is that of Christian labors. Every young convert, as soon as he is born again, should witness for the Lord and let his light shine, so that everybody may know he is a Christian. Then he should faithfully read the Bible, that is, feed on the Scriptures. Working for the Lord and feeding on the Word of the Lord will develop a healthy Christian.

The third type of fruit is that which comes from a Christian's prayer-life. Fervent praying is an arduous task. One of the great delights of the Christian's life is to experience answers to prayer. There is a close relationship to answers to prayer, witnessing for the Lord, working for the Lord, and reading the Word of the Lord. Christ said, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will; and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). Christ also said, "Ye have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you" (John 15:16). Answers to prayer should be fruit that every Christian bears.

The fourth type of fruit Which every Christian should bear is that of self-reproduction. The Christian should bring forth after his kind. The fruit of a Christian is another Christian, even as the fruit of an apple tree is apples, and that of a peach tree, peaches. Every Christian should win souls, either directly or indirectly. It would be a very good policy or practice for every Christian to pray daily that God would help him to win souls. Most likely, if a Christian would pray earnestly, faithfully, and daily, every day in the year, God would enable him to lead a soul to Christ. Evidently God would grant him the desire of his heart before a complete year would pass into history. May this be the blessed practice, privilege, and reality of every one who has read this book.

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46 -- THE INCORRUPTIBLE SEED

Whenever natural seeds are sown, and they germinate and grow, these seeds will have given up their life, identity, and substance for the new crop that has sprung forth. The seeds which are planted are no more. Their life and substance were reabsorbed in another generation of plants after the kind of seeds planted. Of course, a new crop of seeds in identical kind is reproduced. These seeds which were planted and the seeds which were reproduced are corruptible. This means they will lose their viability in a few years, that they are susceptible to deterioration and decay, and that when planted they will lose their identity and be no more.

Many seed companies do not carry their garden seeds over from one year to the next to be sold. Some companies test their seeds to discover the percentage of germination. The viability of corn is from three to four years; beans, three to eight years; cucumbers, ten years; and wheat has been known to germinate after thirty years. From this we learn that seeds lose their viability in the course of a few years. All of these facts combine to confirm that the natural seeds of trees, grains, grasses, and herbs are corruptible.

Christ is the incorruptible SEED, and the Bible is the incorruptible Word of God which also is incorruptible seed. Christ is the living Word, and the Bible is the written Word. Each reveals the other; that is, Christ reveals the written Word, and the written Word reveals the living Word. He was born sinless and did not possess a sinful nature, neither did He ever commit any sin. Death had no claim on Christ. The only manner in which He could die was to do so voluntarily, by giving up His own life. It was prophesied that in His death His body would not see corruption. Disintegration sets in sometimes before death, and always immediately after death. However, in Christ's body not one cell deteriorated, but His body was inviolate the entire time of His death. In dying, He gave up His life to take it up again. In doing so He did not deteriorate in His body, nor did it see corruption. Death could not prey on His body, because when He died, He gave death such a terrific and stunning blow that death could not Corrupt or disintegrate His body. Neither did Christ lose His person, power, vitality, substance, or identity, or cease to be, such as other seeds when they are planted and absorbed by the plants which spring forth from those seeds. His life can be reproduced in an unlimited manner. All who are born of Christ, the incorruptible One, will become like Him, even incorruptible, and will abide forever. All who accept Him will become like Him, bear His image, and will forever live with Him. This is what is meant by Christ's being the incorruptible SEED.

Unlike other seeds, which lose their identity and dissolve, Christ did not dissolve, neither will His body the Church be dissolved, but it will increase until it is perfectly completed. This fact also is true in relation to the Word of God, which also is designated as incorruptible seed, and is unlimited in its possibility for reproduction. All persons who have been born again of the incorruptible seed of Christ and the Scriptures will abide forever.

In some future day, all who have been redeemed, that is, received the seed of God into their hearts and been made alive, even regenerated and made sons of God, but who have

deceased and their bodies have disintegrated, will be resurrected in body. The experiences of regeneration and sanctification are inner works of grace, and relate to the inner man. In these works of grace the believer is made like Christ in spirit, nature, and character. However, this does not complete the process of salvation, for man is material as well as spiritual. The experiences of regeneration and sanctification deal with the inner man. The outer man was cursed in the Fall and became a dying man. He, too, will share in the benefits of Christ's atonement. In the resurrection, the body of the redeemed will experience a mighty work of grace called glorification. Then the body of every resurrected saint will be brought into conformity with the resurrected and glorified body of Christ. The body also will be brought into conformity with the regenerated and sanctified experience, so that there will be no mental or physical defects, incapacities, or limitations that hinder the longing of the inner man. This may be designated as an outer work of grace, affecting the outer man. Christ the SEED, which is reproduced in life and nature in every person who receives the seed of God, will become just what Christ in His human body became. Since Christ and the Word of God are incorruptible Seed, the saints, then, will never see corruption, weakness, shame, or dishonor. Christ is their Saviour, Pattern, and the Firstfruits of all glorified saints.

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THE END