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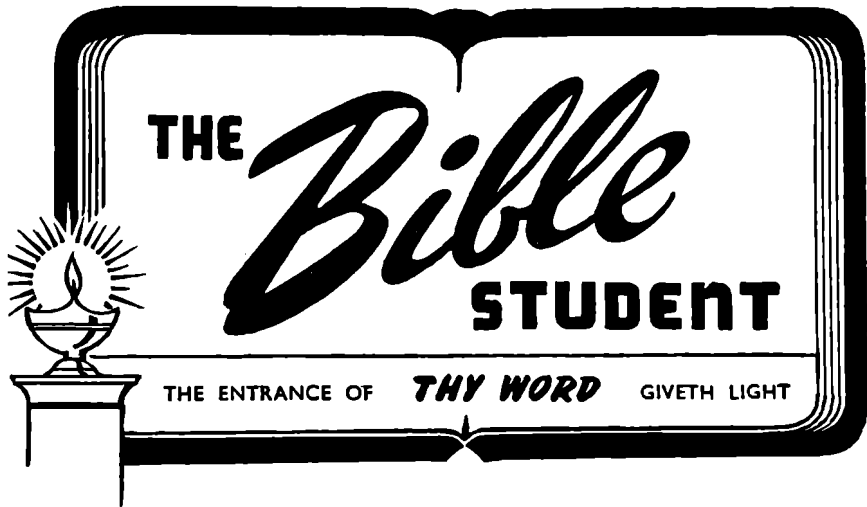
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Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

(c) *No lack of assurance* for '*He shall confirm you unto the end*'. The ability to do this is His, and, as we yield to Him and walk before Him, His confirmation will be manifest. The certainty of it should win our confidence and evoke a purposeful activity, dedicated to the furtherance of His glory. Such confirmation will tend to strengthen the resolve to go forward in His name; it will strengthen the character of the believer, as well as the inner consciousness of his communion with God; and this will continue 'unto the end', when the need of such will no longer arise as he will be 'at home with the Lord'.

'MINE OWN VINEYARD HAVE I NOT KEPT'

In that inimitable Idyll of love, the Song of Solomon, (which, by the way, calls for very real spiritual insight to truly appreciate and enjoy) the Bridegroom apostrophises the Bride as 'a Garden enclosed' (Heb., 'barred'—to all but Himself). Further down in the same chapter (4: 15) He says of Her: 'Thou art a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and flowing streams from Lebanon' (R.V.)

It is a thought that many a sacred writer has taken up and applied to the heart of the believer. Whilst some have pointed out that the title of Bride is not applied in Scripture to the individual Christian but to the Church as a whole; it still remains blessedly true that the relationship between the individual and Christ is one of such intimateness that it is comparable only to that between Bride and Bridegroom. And after all, what is true of the Bride as a whole must of necessity be true generally of each member composing the Bride. So that, if Christ finds such delight in His Bride as expressed in the words quoted above, He finds the same delight in the individual believer's heart—to Him it is a fragrant garden, wherein He may find those rare 'spices' of the Spirit that give Him great delight.

It is a garden enclosed.—It is barred to all but Himself. He alone has the right of entrance, for He has purchased it at infinite cost, and His are the title deeds. It is His to enjoy, and delight in. There is only one other who has a right to be there and he is the one whose heart is the garden. It is this that makes it possible for the Lord of the garden to enjoy it. It is not merely the flowers, the spices, the fruits, but the one who can share these with Him. This implies communion, fellowship and holy interchange of affections. Hence the Lord is very jealous of His garden: He can brook no rival: His love is very sensitive. Hence the Apostle of Love (John) was wont to make his tender appeal: ‘Dear children, keep (guard as with a garrison) yourselves from *idols*.’ The idol may be material or it may be of flesh and blood—it is not a question of the *kind*, but of its *presence* where it has no right. ‘Grant us Thy grace, O Lord, to keep our hearts barred to all but Thee!’

It is a garden of flowers and fruits.—And these fruits and flowers and spices are nourished from the ‘well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.’ How beautiful are some of these fruits*: Love—most beautiful of all comes first; then Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Self-control. Each has its place. Each is planted in the soil of regeneration. Each is watered and nourished by the Spirit—the Well that now springs up in life-giving streams from the heights above. What a contrast to what was once! Dearth, darkness, death—now life, beauty, plenty!

Man’s heart, that barren place,
 Shall blossom like the rose,
 Grow fertile in love, and abound in grace,
 Wherever that water flows.

There is nothing so appealing as a heart beautified by the Holy Spirit.

It is a garden to cultivate.—Strange seeds are liable to blow in. Weeds are not always absent. Under false guise and form

* Gal. 5: 22, 23.

they take root and often flourish where least expected. This necessitates constant watchfulness. Strange to say it is easier to detect these weeds in other gardens than in our own. In fact, so easy and appealing is this occupation that many are carried away by it to the detriment of their own heart. Hence the complaint of the Bride in chapter 1:6. 'They made me the keeper of the vineyards, *but mine own vineyard have I not kept*'. It is a common complaint, specially amongst active Christian workers. How busy we can be improving other people's lives, and how easy to neglect our own. And when the Master of the Garden comes hither He finds signs of neglect to grieve over—some of the signs being apparent only to His own eye. What a wealth of meaning lies in those words: 'Mine own vineyard have I not kept!' May it send us back to our own Gardens to make ready for His coming!

—A. McD. R.

(Continued from page 19)

suspect his theism, because we are well aware that he is dropping a remark, not reciting his creed, as the beloved disciple is doing in his sublime prologue.

To clinch the matter it suffices to scan Paul's deliberate differentiation of *theotēs* and *theiotēs* in Colossians and Romans respectively. He tells us in Romans 1: 20 how God's eternal power and divinity (*theiotēs*) reveal themselves by the light of nature to the heathen mind, but of Immanuel, that in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead (*theotēs*) embodied (Col. 2: 9). The *hand* of omnipotence may be traced in the countless orbs that bespangle the heavens, and in the marvellous coadjustments of our comparatively tiny globe; but in the Son we behold the *face* of God unveiled, the express image and transcript of His very Being.

In setting bounds to the utility of the papyri regarded as interpreters of the New Testament we are not acting without warrant. For Milligan himself in the final preface to his *Vocabulary* candidly admits that the Scriptural texts may be ranked intermediately between the literary and everyday scripts, the balance being adjusted in consonance with the range and subject-matter of the sacred writer in question. [From *Words Worth Weighing in the Gk. N.T.*; with acknowledgements to *The Tyndale Press*, London.]