**THE EAGLE LIFE - STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BY JOHN H. JOWETT**

**43. OR RATHER! by JOHN H. JOWET**

*"But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God."*

*Galatians 4:9*

The latter way of stating the believer's wealth was to Paul far the more wonderful. It was a "rather" that opened out vistas that were unutterable. Whenever, in any of his letters, he comes in sight of the glory his soul breaks forth in rapturous doxology. In a certain way Nathanael knew Jesus, but when he discovered that He was known of Jesus the fountains of a holier wonder began to flow. And so it was with Zaccheus; he had a faint elementary knowledge of the Christ, but when it unexpectedly dawned upon him that he was known of Christ springs of joy welled forth which he had never experienced before. But in the loftier and still more sacred sense, a sense into which Nathanael and Zaccheus entered at a later day, the Apostle Paul gloried in consciousness that he was known of the redeeming God, who had gone forth among the children of men in the saving ministry of love and grace.

For God's knowledge of Paul was not the mere knowledge of perception, or of discrimination, or of dry intelligence, but the knowledge of which love is the organ, the yearning, imparting, hallowing communion of the Father's heart. Perhaps we may get a glimpse of different kinds of knowledge by comparing the mere botanist's knowledge of flowers, and the gardener's knowledge, and the poet's and the lover's. I read a book on the "Scenery of Switzerland"; it was by a geologist. And then I read Wordsworth 's sonnets on the same scenery. Each revealed his own type of knowledge, but one entered into secrets of which the other did not dream. If all these ministries of knowledge could be combined in one searching, kindling, quickening light, a light that not only reveals but makes alive, a light that conveys the mystery of life, like a mother's yearning knowledge over her child -- such knowledge might give us some elementary insight into God's knowledge of the Apostle Paul and of all who hide with him in the shadow of the Almighty.

When, therefore, Paul speaks of God's knowledge of him he does not think of it as dazzling, heavenly rays falling upon him as the beams of a searchlight fall upon a cottage on some bleak and desolate shore. It is the knowledge of a communion -- perhaps a road more than a light -- a road filled with divine commerce, even the marvellous riches of redeeming love. In that knowledge are combined the secrets of heavenly wisdom, the gifts of divine love, and the ministries of eternal grace. In that knowledge Paul found his rest, and his hope one day awakening in the likeness of his Lord.